



Outcome data measurement Unfinished business

*Evaluation of data for outcome measurement for
selected Indigenous service delivery programs*

July 2002



Office of Evaluation and Audit
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission

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Foreword

This report, entitled **Outcome data measurement: unfinished business**, presents the results of a special evaluation undertaken by the Office of Evaluation and Audit. This evaluation was designed in response to the concerns within the Commission that the absence of high quality and timely data on program delivery is a major barrier to the development of performance monitoring, measurement and evaluation of service delivery programs. These concerns were heightened by the data initiatives and strategies of COAG and MCATSIA as well as the reporting of performances of mainstream programs in the Annual Report on Government Services of the Productivity Commission.

The evaluation proposal was developed in November 2001 and forwarded to a Consultative Committee comprising Senior Officials of the Commission and a representative of the Office of Reconciliation and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs. Due to resource constraints and short time frame, the examination of data was limited to four service delivery programs (Law and Justice, Health, Education and Housing and Infrastructure). This report outlines the national data sources available, their usefulness as a source of Indigenous outcome measurement and provides a short directory for the above four sectors.

The sectors selected for the evaluation cut across a number of program responsibility areas within the Commission as well as several mainstream service delivery and statistical agencies. The report was prepared by research, examining numerous websites and most importantly by face-to-face meetings with program managers of the Commission, individuals in several agencies and experts in the field.

The assistance and cooperation from the following agencies is greatly appreciated: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Australian Council for Educational Research, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Australian Institute of Criminology, Department of Education, Science and Training, Department of Family and Community Services, Department of Health and Ageing, Health Insurance Commission, Monash University National Centre for Coronial Information, National Centre for Vocational Education and Training, and the ACT Magistrates Court.

I wish to thank all program responsibility managers, all members of the Consultative Committee and Bryan Palmer of OATSIA for their support and interest in the project.

Franz Kriven undertook the initial work on this project and Pat Farrelly worked as a short-term consultant. Ian Willis commented on the earlier draft of the report and Karren Williams proofread the draft and assisted in formatting the report. Kip Deveson assisted in designing the cover page.

My special thanks goes to Gaminiratne Wijesekere for undertaking the major part of the work and for compiling this report within a tight time frame.

I commend this report to all Program Managers within the Commission to use as an aid in further developing outcome data measures for the Commission.

Rod Alfredson
Director of Evaluation and Audit
19 August 2002

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Abbreviations

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACE	Adult Community Education
ACER	Australian Council for Educational Research
ACIR	Australian Childhood Immunisation Register
AEP	Aboriginal Educational Policy
AHL	Aboriginal Hostels Ltd.
AHMAC	Australian Health Ministers Advisory Council
AHS	Australian Housing Survey
AIC	Australian Institute of Criminology
AIFIS	Integrated Finance Information System
AIGC	Australian Indigenous Geographical Classification
AIHW	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
AJJA	Australian Juvenile Justice Administration
ANAO	Australian national Audit Office
ANIHI	Agreement on National Indigenous Housing Information
ANTA	Australian National Training Authority
ANZSIC	Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification
APS	Australian Public Service
ARIA	Accessibility/Remoteness Index of Australia
ARIS	Aboriginal Regional Information System
ARHP	Aboriginal Rental Housing Program
ASCO	Australian Standard Classification of Occupations
ATSIC	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission
ATSILS	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service
AVETMISS	Australian Vocational Education and training management Statistical Standards
CAEPR	Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research (Australian National University)
CAP	Crisis Accommodation Program
CAR	Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation
CD	Collection District
CGC	Commonwealth Grants Commission
CHINS	Community Housing and Infrastructure Survey
CHP	Community Housing Program
CJS	Criminal Justice System
CMIH	Community Managed Indigenous Housing
COAG	Council of Australian Governments
CRA	Commonwealth Rent Assistance
CSHA	Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement
CSDA	Commonwealth/State Disability Agreement
CWGIEH	Working Group on Indigenous Environmental Health
DAA	Department of Aboriginal Affairs
DHA	Department of Health and Ageing
DCITA	Department of Communication, information Technology and the Arts

DEST	Department of Education, Science and Training
DoFA	Department of Finance and Administration
ERP	Estimated Resident Population
FaCS	Commonwealth Department of Family and Community Services
GDS	Graduate Destination Survey
GIS	Geographical Information System
GMS	Grant management System
HES	Household Expenditure Survey
HIC	Health Insurance Commission
HMAC	Housing Ministers Advisory Council
HOP	Home Ownership Program
HPA	Home Purchase Assistance
HRSCAA	House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs
HRSCFCA	House of Representatives Standing Committee on Family and Community Affairs
IESIP	Indigenous Education Strategic Initiatives Programme
IMR	Infant Mortality Rate
ISO	Information Services Office
ISS	Indigenous Social Survey
JJNMDS	Juvenile Justice Minimum Data Set
LAC	Legal Aid Commission
LAS	Loan Administration system
LFS	Labour Force Survey
MBS	Medical Benefit Scheme
MCATSIA	Ministerial Council for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs
MCCOD	Medical Certificate of Cause of Death
MCEETYA	Ministerial Council of Education, employment, Training and Youth Affairs
MDS	Minimum Data Set
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MUNCCI	Monash University National Centre for Coronial Information
NACCHO	National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations
NATSIS	National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey
NCATSIS	National Centre for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics
NCSIMG	National Community Services Information Management Group
NCSU	National Crime Statistics Unit (ABS)
NDCA	National Data Collection Agency
NGOs	Non-Government Organisations
NHS	National Health Survey
NHDA	National Housing Data Agreement
NHIMG	National Health Information Management Group

NHS	National Housing Strategy
NIHIIC	National Indigenous Housing Information Implementation Committee
NCELS	National School English Literacy Survey
NCEVR	National Centre for Vocational Education Research
NPO	National Policy Office
NPSU	National Perinatal Statistics Unit
NSSC	National School Statistical Collection
OATSIH	Office of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health
OEA	Office of Evaluation and Audit
OATSIA	Office of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs.
PBS	Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme
PEP	Program Evaluation Plans
PIPS	Performance Information in Primary schools
PISA	Program for International Student Assessment
PPMRS	Program Performance Monitoring and Reporting System,
PRA	Private Rent Assistance
RC	Regional Council (ATSIC)
RCIADIC	Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody
RRMA	Rural, Remote and Metropolitan Area classification
RRSNC	Rural and Regional Statistics National Centre
SAAP	Supported Accommodation Assistance Program
SCRCSSP	Standing Committee for the Review of Commonwealth/State Service Provision
SDAC	Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers
SHS	Social Housing Survey
SLA	Statistical Local Area
SRA	Supplementary Recurrent Assistance
SSS	Supplementary Sample Surveys
TAFE	Technical and Further Education TIMISS Third International Mathematics and Science Study
TSI	Telecommunications Services Inquiry
VET	Vocational Education and Training
WHO	World Health Organization

Executive Summary

Official statistics on Indigenous peoples have only have been collected since the referendum of 1967. However, it took more than a decade to establish a regular reporting system of Indigenous statistics relating to mainstream service delivery programs. Although there have been significant developments to improve the availability and quality of Indigenous data collections, there still remains considerable room for improvement.

In many cases these developments were facilitated by the guidance of relevant ministerial councils and advisory bodies. As part of the movement for Indigenous data collection initiatives, minimum data sets, data dictionaries, and standards and classifications have been developed for some sectors and are being considered for many others. These statistical developments are, however, not necessarily reflected in the programs administered or funded by the Commission.

The absence of reliable and comprehensive data on service delivery programs of the Commission, or those funded by the Commission, has been a major impediment to conducting program evaluations. Subsequent to the COAG Commitment of 1992, progress reviews of mainstream Indigenous service delivery programs by MCATSIA and the requirement of reporting performance indicators for mainstream programs in the annual report of the Steering Committee for the Review of Commonwealth/State Service Provision, all mainstream agencies have commenced establishing and developing data reporting systems for outcome measurements. Again, the Commission has been slow in implementing these statistical initiatives. Information on outcomes and program performance is highly relevant to inform and monitor the current Program and Policy Reform Agenda of the Commission.

In its broader evaluation and monitoring role, the Office of Evaluation and Audit (OEA) is looking for cheaper and more cost-effective ways of doing evaluations. A number of recent initiatives of COAG and MCATSIA have placed greater emphasis on the use of data for program monitoring and outcome improvements for Indigenous peoples.

In response to both internal data requirements and external data initiatives, OEA initiated an evaluation project in January 2002 with two objectives. These are to:

-
- identify the scope and nature of data on outcomes and program performances to improve outcomes for Indigenous peoples; and
 - report on the availability of the data and on their potential use in evaluation, program and policy formulation and delivery.

The evaluation task was restricted to four sectors to ensure that it could be completed within a short time frame, especially given the limited resources available. Service delivery programs (sectors) selected for this evaluation were:

- law and justice;
- health;
- education and training; and
- housing and infrastructure.

This evaluation was also limited to national data sources or those of high importance in terms of their relevance to the measurement of socio-economic outcomes for the Indigenous population.

In all, over 75 data sources were examined as part of the evaluation. An assessment of each of these data sets was made to determine the extent to which they could be used for measuring program outcomes and performance. These are included as appendix tables (see appendix tables 4.1 to 7.6). For some datasets only commentary was made in the text of the report.

Based on the quality of the data, and the extent of coverage of identification of Indigenous peoples, each of these data sets was categorised under one of the following categories.

- reasonably good quality;
- should be used with caution;
- not useful due to small number of Indigenous peoples in the sample or collection; and
- not relevant because datasets do not identify Indigenous peoples (or clients).

Obviously, classification of data sets according to the first two categories is arbitrary. This categorisation should only be viewed as a broad guideline for program managers on the usefulness of specific datasets covered in this evaluation. Program managers should form their own views about the usefulness of the data sets by referring to the short data dictionary provided for each key data set in the appendix or the commentary provided in the text of the report.

Of the total datasets examined 22 were considered to be of reasonably good quality to be used to measure program outcomes for Indigenous people. These data sets, although considered of good quality, are also subject to data quality issues for example, problems associated with the identification of Indigenous people at population censuses.

Nine national data sets were not relevant for outcome measurements, as they did not include an Indigenous identifier. Some 42 data sets, although containing valuable data for outcome measurement, are not recommended because of one or more of the following limitations:

- poor coverage on identification of Indigenous peoples;
- small sample sizes (or small number of clients); or
- poor data quality or incomplete information.

Because of the lack of reliable data, coupled with the absence of statistical and research support to program managers, the Commission is presently not well placed to develop suitable monitoring and evaluation programs. A statistics unit, to coordinate and undertake research and analysis within the Commission is soon to be established in the National Policy Office. This unit will, hopefully, play a key role in filling gaps in data and assist managers in developing appropriate performance indicators for outcome measurement. Areas focused on material presented in this report should provide a good springboard for major activities of the statistics unit.

In this respect it is necessary for the Commission to focus on building its statistical and research capacity. The Commission should commit itself, in a cost-effective manner, to improving the availability of high quality data for program monitoring and evaluations.

Program managers need to build data capture mechanisms into the design of programs. A sound system of statistical reporting, supported by a regular program of research is vital to the development and monitoring policies and measuring program outcomes. The evaluation draws attention to the importance of the linkages between policy developments and monitoring and underlying statistics, as well as the need for uniform and standardised data and frameworks that assist measurement of policy outcomes.

As part of its evaluation effort the Commission should maintain an effective partnership with external agencies such as ABS, AIHW, AIC and the SCRCSSP so that statistical objectives and priorities will provide a sound background for policy development and outcome measurements.

Commission programs should allocate resources for statistical development and research, which should be an integral part of the program budget. This is crucial as the conventional data sources do not provide sufficient information required for policy development and outcome measurement for Commission programs.

A recent proposal by the Commission for program managers to conduct their own evaluations is a welcome initiative. These evaluations should be carried out to inform key decision-making points in a timely manner during the life of a program.

This evaluation report should be widely disseminated among all program managers including those in the Regional Councils. Program managers are encouraged to undertake similar data reviews of their own programs. They should review their performance indicators already in use to make sure that they are actually serving the intended purpose—and not just counting activity levels. In programs where proper performance indicators have not been developed, performance indicator development and underlying data initiatives should be undertaken as a priority.

Background to the Evaluation

Introduction

01. The *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission Act 1989* (ATSIC Act) established the Office of Evaluation and Audit (OEA) with functions to evaluate and audit the operations of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (Commission) and other portfolio agencies. The purpose of OEA's establishment was to assist the Commission to maintain appropriate standards of accountability for public funds and ministerial accountability to the Parliament. OEA does this by performing regular evaluation and audit programs. The evaluation program gives priority for projects significant in terms of policy or resource implications.

02. The OEA evaluation program focuses on outcomes and results, and examines where relevant, the extent to which client needs and program objectives are met. Evaluation of projects aim at outcome measurements and assessing accountability relies heavily on information on program performance. Lack of reliable data on program outcomes and performance causes significant delays and increases the cost of evaluations. While it is important for program managers to monitor program performance, including systematically collected data on inputs, processes, outputs and outcomes, measurement of outcomes and assessment of effectiveness and efficiency of programs fall within the purview of evaluation.

Evaluation project proposed

03. In response to the internal data needs for outcome measurements and evaluation of Commission's programs and other key initiatives external to

the Commission, OEA proposed an evaluation project to improve the outcomes data for Indigenous programs. This proposal was submitted to a Consultative Committee comprising of selected Senior Managers of the Commission and the Office of, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs (OATSIA) in December 2001 (see appendix A1). The evaluation project on data availability for outcome measurements of Indigenous programs included the following work plan:

- to identify data sets on key Indigenous programs available from the Commission, and mainstream sources, and where relevant highlight data gaps. This work is to be completed in consultation with key managers of the Commission and other relevant agencies and appointment of a Steering Committee to oversee the project.
- to assess critically available outcome measures and performance indicators against stated objectives, and where relevant develop appropriate indicators for outcome measurement; and
- to set up a Data and Research Unit within the Commission to monitor data development and on-going monitoring of outcome measures and performance indicators. This unit would also be responsible for coordination of statistical activities with other agencies and ABS.

04. The Consultative Committee approved the following terms of reference:

Terms of Reference

- identify the scope and nature of data on outcomes and program performance to improve outcomes for Indigenous peoples.
- report on the availability of the data and its potential use in evaluation, and program and policy formulation and delivery. and
- present to the Key Managers Conference in early 2002 information on progress, including data availability and its potential applications.

Organisation of the evaluation report

05. The main aim of the evaluation project is to inform the Commission's program managers of the data availability for outcome measurement, including a commentary on their quality, source, and frequency and the

extent of their use by program managers. Data sources covered in the evaluation will be confined to the data sets that have a national focus, and will include those maintained by the Commission, and other Commonwealth, and state/territory agencies.

06. Chapter 1 contains the background to the present evaluation including reviews that are relevant to the evaluation. The remainder of this evaluation report is organised into six chapters. Chapter 2 provides an overview of key data sources coming from the national statistical system on a regular basis. Chapter 3 describes the data reporting system within the Commission, and provides a brief account of the Information Management System, mainly, the financial and output information extracted from the Grant Management System and Financial Information System, as well as regional data from the Indigenous Regional Information System. Chapters 4 to 7 present information on key Indigenous programs selected for the review—Law and Justice, Health, Education and Housing and Infrastructure respectively.

07. For each program there will be a brief discussion on the program content, agency (ies) responsible for delivery, and an up-to-date inventory of available data. The major data gaps will be highlighted where possible, with a commentary on existing outcome measures. Chapter 8 focuses on the evaluation program of the Commission and comments on the need for the managers of the Commission to do reviews and evaluations in addition to the cyclical program of evaluations conducted by OEA.

Indigenous data initiatives external to the Commission

08. Heads of Government at the Special Premiers' Conference in 1990 asked for a report on achieving greater coordination of delivery of services and programs by all levels of Government to Indigenous people. The Council of Australian Governments (COAG), representing the Commonwealth, state and territory and local governments, endorsed in 1992 the *National Commitment to Improved Outcomes in the Delivery of Programs and Services for Aboriginal Peoples and Torres Strait Islanders*.

09. The Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (RCIADIC) report, released in 1992 recommended (Recommendation 194) that Commonwealth and state and territory Governments negotiate with Indigenous communities in establishing appropriate performance indicators for Indigenous service delivery programs. Since the publication of the Commission's report there have been annual reviews of the implementation of recommendations by different agencies and jurisdictions.

10. In July 2000, the Ministerial Council for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs (MCATSIA), disappointed with the lack of progress in Indigenous socio-economic and welfare since the 1992 commitment, appointed a Working Party to develop action programs to achieve the 1992 COAG commitments. The Working Party was asked to develop action plans, performance reporting strategies and benchmarks to facilitate progress reviews and monitoring of Indigenous programs and services. The Working Party was specifically asked to develop a planning framework¹ which:

- identifies needs, and establishes clear measurable objectives, agreed outcomes and performance indicators;
- defines clearly the responsibility among each level of government in planning, funding and the delivery of services;
- recognises the need to understand the cause (input) and effect (output) relationships as an essential part of effective planning and service delivery;
- reviews by MCATSIA on an annual basis the progress of improved outcomes of Indigenous programs; and
- improves the reporting of outcome measures on services provided to Indigenous people.

11. COAG agreed in November 2000 to a framework to advance reconciliation (*Reconciliation framework*), and the efforts to improve the information system and performance assessments thus became an essential part of the *Reconciliation framework*. Under this framework each agency is

¹ *National Commitment to Improved Outcomes in the Delivery of Programs and Services for Aboriginal Peoples and Torres Strait Islanders*, endorsed by the Council of Australian Governments, Perth, WA 7 December 1992.

required to develop meaningful indicators of Indigenous disadvantage to monitor the reconciliation process. COAG commitment and the review of progress accompanying it have helped the agencies to develop, maintain and monitor data initiatives relevant to outcome measurements for Indigenous service delivery programs.

12. COAG identified three priority areas for action: community leadership; reviewing and re-engineering programmes and services to achieve better outcomes for Indigenous people; and improving links between the business sector and indigenous communities to advance economic independence. COAG also agreed that Ministerial Councils would be asked to develop action plans, performance reporting strategies and benchmarks.

13. MCATSIA was required to continue its overarching coordination and performance-monitoring role, including its contribution and coordination of the work of the *Steering Committee for the Review of Commonwealth/State Service Provision* (SCRCSSP) of the Productivity Commission (see section on Review report on Government services below).

14. In May 2000, the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation (CAR) submitted a number of recommendations to the Government², and requested COAG to focus on supporting on-going reconciliation processes; flexible and pooled funding to Indigenous programs and coordination of services; family violence and community leadership and the development of a national system of regular and public performance reporting.

15. Accordingly, COAG issued a Communiqué on the Reconciliation framework acknowledging that COAG could provide leadership and guidance for the reconciliation actions, by individuals, communities and governments. COAG recognized the need to advance reconciliation by addressing Indigenous disadvantage and improving governance and service delivery to achieve improved outcomes.

² Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation (2000) *Road Map to Reconciliation*, Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation, Canberra.

Box
Definition of Terms

Accountability

Responsibility for expenditures, decisions or/and results. The responsibility to provide evidence to stakeholders that a program is effective and in conformity with planned results, policy decisions and other requirements.

Input

Resources used to produce an output or service. These may include financial, physical, and technical.

Outcomes

Results of a program or a service or an activity expressed in terms of its objectives. All the impact or consequences of the program or service beyond its direct outputs, to be produced through sound management of inputs and activities. In some programs outcomes are essentially long term or have a long time lag to realise. When specific outcomes result from multiple factors, causal relationships between a program and outcomes are difficult to isolate.

Outputs

Deliverables for which a program is accountable or the concrete results produced through sound management of resources and activities.

Performance

The extent to which a program (or a project or a task) is implemented in an effective, efficient and timely manner to achieve outputs and purposes.

Performance information

Evidence about performance that is collected and used systematically. The evidence could be either quantitative or qualitative and allows judgments to be made about program performance.

Source; Australian National Audit Office (1996) Performance Information Principle Better Practice Guide; ANAO Canberra United Nations Population Fund (2000) The Program Managers Monitoring and Evaluation Toolkit (glossary of monitoring and evaluation terms UNFP, NY.

Review report on Government services

16. Heads of Governments in 1993 established SCRCSSP to annually review and report on the Commonwealth and state and territory service provisions. More importantly, the Committee was asked to develop an objective and consistent data to assess performance of the service delivery provision of government agencies. The Prime Minister, in 1997, requested SCRCSSP of the Productivity Commission to review and report on the performance of the mainstream services provided to Indigenous people.

17. The review report in 2001³, highlighted among other things, that the lack of consistency and uniformity in data collection across jurisdictions are major problems in assessing performance of many mainstream service delivery programs. This Committee is also to report performance data to measure service delivery provision to Indigenous people provided by the mainstream agencies. SCRCSSP in consultation with government agencies including the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) and Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW), has developed a general performance indicator framework to be used in assessing performances in the service provision of different sectors of the government. The general framework of SCRCSSP uses effectiveness and efficiency as the two dimensions against which performances of any service provision could be reported and assessed.

18. Under the dimension of effectiveness outcomes, access and equity, appropriateness and quality are measured. The efficiency dimension of the framework measures the inputs against outputs of the service provision thus allowing cost efficiencies to be assessed at the broadest level. The SCRCSSP reports published annually draws attention to the areas where gaps in the data exist in measuring performance and highlights any inconsistencies in the data and variations in concepts definitions which affect data comparability across Commonwealth, state and territory agencies.

Commonwealth response to COAG Commitment

19. In December 2000, the Prime Minister wrote to key portfolio Ministers requesting that they address the priorities identified in the COAG Communiqué on the Reconciliation framework. Ministers were asked to undertake a review of their mainstream and Indigenous specific programs to see if they could be made more responsive to the needs of Indigenous people.

³ Steering Committee for the Review of Commonwealth/State Service Provision (2001) *Report on Government Services, 2001*, Vol. I and II, AusInfo, Canberra.

20. In response to the Reconciliation framework of COAG, the Commonwealth officials have, from time-to-time, discussed and reviewed the processes involved in implementing the framework, and are participating in cross-agency working groups on priority areas identified by COAG.

Cross-agency working groups

21. The main purpose of the cross-agency working groups is to develop a coordinated approach to Indigenous policy development and program and to assist in progressing the specific priority action areas of COAG. These working groups aim to draw together relevant agencies in identifying gaps and any areas, which require improvements to legislation, policy and program development, or cross-agency collaboration in programs and service delivery to improve outcomes for indigenous people. The working groups established are as follows:

- Data management and monitoring;
- Environmental health;
- Community capacity building; and
- Digital divide.

Data management and monitoring

22. The cross-agency working group on data, established as a part of the Commonwealth's response to COAG, met three times during 2001/2. The Working Group identified that the key data issue hindering Indigenous data development is the absence of a standardised Indigenous identifier across administrative data sets.

23. The Working Group also recognised the need for better regional and small area data, including longitudinal data, to improve policy development and to enable funding agencies and communities to assess program effectiveness and the efficiency of programs and interventions.

24. In late 2001, the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C) entered into discussions with ATSIC and OATSIA to explore the possibility of producing a report similar to that produced for the Maori population in New Zealand⁴ highlighting the relative socio-economic disadvantage of Indigenous people using a set of lead indicators. Where appropriate, this work would also utilise the benchmarks and performance indicators developed by Ministerial Councils, including MCATSIA.

25. As part of this project, the Data Working Group (now known as the Working Group on the COAG Framework to Advance Reconciliation) is engaged in identifying a set of lead indicators, including the underlying data sources for measuring socio-economic disadvantage of Indigenous Australians.

Environmental health

26. The cross-agency Working Group on Indigenous Environmental Health (CWGIEH) was set up to develop a national approach to Indigenous environmental health issues. The focus of the Working Group will include a number of areas, such as health, environment, housing, water, sanitation, transport and energy, thus there is no single agency responsible for environmental health. This Working Group continues with the function of the COAG working group on environmental health⁵. In consultation with relevant agencies, the Commission will develop a paper on inter-sectoral environmental health issues that will propose an integrated Commonwealth approach to improve service delivery. This paper is expected in mid 2002.

Community capacity building

27. A reference group with a taskforce has been established to ensure a coordinated approach to Indigenous community capacity building efforts

⁴ Ministry of Maori Affairs (2000) *Progress Towards Closing Social and Economic Gaps Between Maori and Non-Maori: A Report to the Minister of Maori Affairs*, Wellington. The second report in the series was issued in 2001.

⁵ In the 2001/02 budgets relevant Ministers (Health and Ageing, Reconciliation and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, Family and Community Services, and Transport and Regional Services) were asked to develop a national approach to address environmental health issues at the Commonwealth level. This

across the Commonwealth. ATSIC is the lead agency for this reference group. The Community Capacity Building Working Group commenced operation in May 2001 and was chaired by ATSIC.

28. The original function of this Working Group included developing a common understanding and terminology around 'capacity building', 'capacity development', and 'community development, a practical and co-ordinated approach to community service delivery; and consolidating Commonwealth efforts in all activities and programs relating to 'capacity building'.

29. This Working Group, (now known as the Commonwealth Reference Group) also has the role of overseeing and developing Community Participation Agreements and Capacity Building Initiatives, in particular supporting the development of the Mutitjulu Community Participation and Partnership Agreement. A National Task Force was established to assist the work of the Commonwealth Reference Group in progressing the implementation of The Mutitjulu Report.

Digital divide

30. At the first meeting of the Digital Divide Working Group in June 2001, agencies agreed that a core group would pursue the issue through the government's response to the recommendations of the Besley Telecommunications Services Inquiry (TSI) and to the COAG Reconciliation framework. To meet these objectives the Department of Communication Information Technology and the Arts, (DCITA) has commissioned two separate studies to obtain information required for the development of strategies to improve Indigenous community access to the Information economy and telephone services. The study on Improving Telecommunications in Rural and Remote Indigenous Communities will examine the telecommunications service levels in Indigenous communities and develop strategies and action plans for their improvement in the long term.

31. The other study (the Online Council Action Plan) will examine ways and means of extending and promoting Internet access for Indigenous people who are

activity overlaps that of the COAG Reconciliation Framework, which identifies environmental health as a key issue affecting Indigenous people in remote and rural communities.

less able to use Internet services due to inadequate facilities, low-income levels and poor literacy levels. Results of both of these studies are due by mid 2002.

CGC Funding Inquiry

32. In late 2001, the report of the *Indigenous Funding Inquiry* of the Commonwealth Grants Commission (CGC) was released⁶. This report paid special attention to the unsatisfactory status of Indigenous data that can be used for performance assessment and measuring needs at the regional level for resource allocation. The following are the key data issues discussed in the report:

- most data at the regional council level are limited to the five-yearly censuses whose data quality is far from satisfactory;
- other ABS surveys which provide Indigenous data, suffer from data quality problems;
- the data availability is somewhat complete only for a few areas such as housing, infrastructure and employment;
- service-level data from Commonwealth, state and territory, and local governments are difficult to obtain, and where such data exist their quality and coverage are less than satisfactory and lack comparability across collections/jurisdictions; and
- the availability of financial data is notoriously poor.

33. As part of the funding inquiry CGC also attempted to develop appropriate indexes of the relative needs of functional areas of work or services for each ATSI region. The aim was to use these indexes to be used for allocation of funds across functional areas within states and territories and regions.

34. In developing such indexes CGC fraught with problems of data availability and quality and consequently the CGC report concluded that it is difficult to develop index of relative needs at the regions because of the 'absence of comprehensive, comparable and up-to-date' data⁷.

⁶ Commonwealth Grants Commission (2001) *Report on Indigenous Funding 2001*, AusInfo (CanPrint Communications Pty Ltd), Canberra.

⁷ Commonwealth Grants Commission (2001) *Report on Indigenous Funding 2001*, AusInfo (CanPrint Communications Pty Ltd), Canberra.P39.

Key Indigenous population data derived from the National Statistical System: Censuses and Surveys.

Introduction

35. This chapter describes the population data gathered from the National Statistical System – Australia Bureau of Statistics. There are three main sources of data: population censuses, sample surveys and administrative records. Population censuses have been conducted by ABS at five yearly intervals since 1966. Sample surveys include those carried out at regular intervals as well as those conducted on an *ad hoc* basis.

36. The data derived from administrative records maintained by different agencies for administrative purposes provide useful information on the socio-economic and other characteristics of the population. Administrative systems data are particularly valuable for outcome measurements. The latter source, except for the births and deaths registration statistics, which are important to assess the components of population growth, is not discussed in this chapter but will be dealt in later chapters when specific program elements are discussed.

37. Of the population surveys carried out by ABS, this chapter discusses only on multi-focus (multi-subject) surveys, while national surveys on specific subjects will be addressed in relevant chapters in the report. Before discussing the data sources a brief account of the ABS's involvement in Indigenous data collection efforts is made in this report as the lateness of involvement by ABS has had an important impact on the availability and the quality of the Indigenous statistics.

Towards a system of national Indigenous statistics

38. In the past ABS was not expected to collect detailed data on Indigenous peoples for inclusion in official statistics because the provision in the Constitution prevented enumerating Indigenous peoples for inclusion in population counts⁸. The referendum in 1967, paved the way for removal of this restriction.

39. The relevant amendments to the constitution were passed by the Parliament. Consequently the ABS, state and territory Governments, and other agencies were free to collect, compile, include and publish statistics on the Indigenous peoples of Australia as part of the Australian population. ABS around this time was in the process of releasing the 1966 Census results and took advantage of the legislative change to quickly process and release data relating to Indigenous peoples collected in the Census.

40. Although responsible for the national statistical collections, ABS showed an initial hesitance in taking the responsibility for Indigenous statistics derived from state and territory data collections. ABS view was that the Department of Aboriginal Affairs (DAA) was better placed to undertake this task, than the ABS. However, the DAA, was of the opinion that ABS should take the responsibility for persuading the Commonwealth and state and territory agencies to identify and record Indigenous status of clients in their service delivery programs.

41. This difference in opinion on the functional responsibility existed for more than a decade until the middle of the 1980's. The hiatus created from this conflict appears to have adversely affected establishment of a sound system of Indigenous data derived from administrative collections. In 1980, the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs

⁸ Section 127 of the Constitution stated, "In reckoning the number of the people of the Commonwealth, or other part of the Commonwealth, aboriginal natives shall not be counted". Section 51 of the Constitution prevented passing laws for the Aboriginal people. Following the 1967 referendum, both these sections of the Constitution were altered, permitting the ABS to count and include statistics on Aboriginal people in official statistics and for the Parliament to make laws for the people of any race for whom it is deemed necessary to make special laws.

(HRSCAA) made a specific recommendation in their report that the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act of 1975* be amended so that the ABS could include 'in its social statistics and indicators a component identifying Aboriginals'⁹.

42. Since the HRSCAA report¹⁰ the role and responsibility for establishing and developing a system of Indigenous statistics became clearer and the s.7 (h) of the *ATSIC Act, 1989* made the following provision relating to the collection of statistical information by the Commission¹¹:

At the request or with the concurrence of the Australian Bureau of Statistics but not otherwise, and without infringing the privacy of any individual, to collect and publish statistical information relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.

43. Since then ABS has participated in inter-agency working groups relating to the development of Indigenous statistics, and set up a small unit within the Bureau to facilitate identification of Indigenous people in administrative data collections. ABS assisted the RCIADIC and acknowledged the significant data gaps existing on the Indigenous people. In 1992, ABS expanded the functions of the statistics unit and renamed it as the National Centre for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics (NCATSIS) with the responsibility to 'provide a national leadership role in promoting and facilitating the collection and reporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander statistics.

Regional Information System of ABS

44. ABS set up Regional Statistics Units in each state and territory to meet the growing data needs at the sub-state level. Recently, ABS established a Rural and Regional Statistics National Centre (RRSNC) in Adelaide to produce and disseminate statistical data pertaining to rural and remote areas of Australia. Rural and regional data are derived from various sources including social

⁹ House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs (1980) *Aboriginal Legal Aid, Parliamentary Paper No.149*, AGPS Canberra

¹⁰ House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs (1980) *op. cit.* P21.

¹¹ *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission Act 1989*

and economic collections of ABS, registration of births and deaths collection, and from other administrative collections maintained by various Commonwealth and state and territory agencies. The availability of sub state level data (i.e. Statistical Local Area, SLA) is dependent on the type of collection.

45. When RRSNC was planned ABS had consulted numerous data users to determine their data requirements at the regional level¹². RRSNC plans to release on a continuing basis a number of statistical reports containing regional data on key regional issues; Develop minimum data sets and regional indicators that will allow comparisons between regional areas; and identify data collected by Commonwealth agencies appropriate for the development of the regional database. The priorities and the general direction of the Centre are guided by a steering committee appointed by the Australian Statistician. This Committee consists of members from different government agencies and academia, who are either engaged in some way or have benefited from the regional information systems. The Commission should secure a membership in this steering committee.

The main ABS data sources on the Indigenous population

Population Censuses

46. Population censuses are the major source of comprehensive data on the demographic, socio-economic, and geographic characteristics of the population and its subgroups. It is the only source of data for small geographic areas and for the Indigenous population. Indigenous population data are available from censuses conducted since 1971¹³.

¹² ATSIC was not consulted at these discussions. Apparently, regional data requirements relating to Indigenous peoples were expressed by other agencies that were represented at those meetings.

¹³ In the past, the Indigenous status of an individual was collected at each census to identify Aboriginal natives for exclusion from census counts. The 1966 Census data on Indigenous people were released by ABS because at the time of release of results, the referendum was passed and s.127 of the Constitution has been altered.

47. Australia has conducted six five-yearly censuses since the 1967 referendum, but no two censuses conducted to date produced Indigenous population counts that were consistent with each other. Main reasons for the inconsistency arise from:

- continuously improving coverage of Indigenous people in successive censuses; and
- rising propensity for identification (in successive censuses progressively more people are identifying as persons of Indigenous origin).

Coverage Errors

48. Available evidence suggests that the coverage of the Indigenous population at each census is less satisfactory than the total population. For example, a higher net under-enumeration of 7% was observed in the 1996 Census for Indigenous people, compared with 2% for the total population. The relatively poor coverage of Indigenous people is due to a number of factors including the areas the Indigenous people generally living are more likely to be missed by the census, poor literacy levels, high mobility and general reluctance on the part of the Indigenous people not to participate in censuses.

Non-response

49. Non-response to the Indigenous status question is large. At the 1996 Census some 525,000 people did not respond to the question, which is apparently far greater than the total number of persons identified by the Census as being of Indigenous origin. Some of these people were reported in Collection Districts (CD's) that were predominantly Indigenous. Even among the persons identified as of Indigenous origin in 1996 there was substantial non-response to many other census question items as well. The final Census results from the 1976 Census do not contain the category of 'not stated' for both data items, age and marital status of persons 15 years and over. This is not because the information provided on the census form is complete for

these data items, but ABS randomly assigns a value for 'age' and 'marital status' when such information is not reported on the schedules.

Non-response rates to key census questions: Indigenous persons, 1996			
Characteristic	Aboriginal	Torres Strait Islander	Mixed Indigenous
Children ever born to women (aged 15-49 years)	8.5	9.1	8.2
Labour force status	4.8	3.6	3.6
Occupation of the employed	3.5	3.8	4.1
Industry of employment	4.1	4.5	5.1
Employment sector	4.5	5.0	4.9
Hours worked	4.8	5.2	5.0
School attendance (persons aged 15-24 years)	8.6	7.7	4.4
Individual income	9.2	9.0	7.8

Source: Gaminiratne Wijesekere (2000) Comparative Socio-economic Profile of Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islanders and Persons of Mixed Indigenous Origin of Australia., A Census Based Analysis. Paper presented at the 10th National Conference of the Australian Population Association, 29 November-2 December (Melbourne).

Enumeration procedure

50. Census data are presented according to the place of enumeration and not according to the place of usual residence of the persons. Short-term mobility of Indigenous people is known to be high and some of these movements may cross regional boundaries. Therefore, the population in different ATSI regions reported by the census on the place of enumeration basis may not give an accurate picture of the distribution of the Indigenous population across regions. Due to this reason some basic cross-tabulations are also prepared according to the usual residence of the person. Although the censuses specifically ask each person to report his or her place of usual residence, this information is frequently not reported.

Registration statistics on births and deaths

51. Registration of births and deaths in the states and territories is compulsory and governed according to the legislation of respective jurisdictions. The responsibility for maintaining birth and death registration is vested with the Registrars of Births, Deaths and Marriages of States and

Territories. The key information derived from birth and death registration is forwarded by state and territory Registrars to ABS for coding, compilation of detailed statistics and publication of results. Annual reports published by ABS contain data according to the year of registration.

52. Items of information reported on birth notification forms vary across jurisdictions. However, there are a number of common items relating to birth, the mother and father collected for each birth (see A5.1 in appendix). Indigenous status of a birth is determined if the mother or father is reported on birth notification forms as of Indigenous origin. Death certificates used in different jurisdictions contain common items as illustrated in (A5.2 in appendix).

53. Indigenous status of the deceased is determined from the information provided on death notification forms. In the absence of a significant impact of the international movement of Indigenous people on the total Indigenous population in Australia, information on births and deaths are the two important determinants of the growth of the Indigenous population¹⁴.

54. To estimate the total increase of population due to natural increase (births>deaths), births and deaths of Indigenous people occurring in all jurisdictions should be identified accurately. Although most jurisdictions began identifying Indigenous births and deaths in their registration systems, ABS considers that data for only three jurisdictions — SA, WA and NT — are of a publishable quality¹⁵.

Dissemination of census data

55. ABS has over the years made significant efforts to disseminate as widely as possible the census data on Indigenous peoples. Since ATSIC planning is now centred on Regional Councils, there is an increasing demand for data at

¹⁴ The increases in the population counts of the Indigenous population was due to coverage improvements and changing attitude towards self-identification, as has already been discussed.

¹⁵ Australian Bureau of Statistics (1999) *Causes of Death, 1998 Australia*, ABS Cat. no. 3303.0. Canberra.

the Regional Council level. ABS also prepares a 1% sample data tape containing all census information for public use.

56. This is a unit record data file, prepared by ABS to be used for detailed analysis of population and housing data. The data file is drawn by geographic stratification (ie. state territories and sections of state), and not by Aboriginality (Indigenous background). As a representative sample of Australian households Indigenous population is represented in the sample according to their proportion in the population — 2.2% of the total population. While, this file may be suitable for general analysis of population and housing characteristics for Australia as a whole and its main sub-groups including Indigenous population, it is doubtful whether one per cent sample census file is a reliable source for detailed analysis of population and housing characteristics for Indigenous peoples at sub-national levels.

57. The actual demand for data is for the Regional Council areas and their sub-regions. ATSIC Regional Councils do not have the capacity and resources to undertake fresh data collections to meet their needs. The ATSIC Act states that ATSIC should collect data only 'at the request or with the concurrence of the Australian Bureau of Statistics, but not otherwise, and without infringing the privacy of any individual, to collect and publish statistical information relating to Aboriginal persons or Torres Strait Islanders'¹⁶.

58. To meet the growing demand for regional data ABS has prepared basic statistical tables for geographic areas known as the Australian Indigenous Geographical Classification (AIGC). While the 1% sample is not adequate for detailed analysis of population and housing data for Indigenous peoples, this sample does not meet the data needs at the regional level. In response to the regional data needs

¹⁶ *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Act 1989* s.7 (g).

Box

Indigenous status: ABS classification

An Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander is a person of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent who identifies as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and is accepted as such by the community in which he or she lives. That is, there are three components to the definition: descent, self-identification and community acceptance. In practice, it is not feasible to collect information on the community acceptance part of this definition and therefore questions on Indigenous Status relate to descent and self-identification only. Ideally, descent could be determined by asking if a person has either an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander ancestor. Self-identification could be determined by asking if a person identifies culturally as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. In practice, people are asked if they are of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin. This question is considered to measure descent and for some, but not all, cultural identity.

Standard Question

The standard question for Indigenous Status is as follows:

[Are you] [Is the person] [Is (name)] of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin?

(For persons of both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin, mark both 'Yes;' boxes.)

<i>Aboriginal</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>No</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Torres Strait Islander</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>No</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>

This question is recommended for self-enumerated or interview-based collections. It can also be used in circumstances where a close relative, friend, or another member of the household is answering on behalf of the subject. When someone is not present, the person answering for them should be in a position to do so, ie this person must know the person about whom the question is being asked well and feel confident to provide accurate information about them. However, it is strongly recommended that this question be asked directly wherever possible. In circumstances where it is impossible to ask the person directly, such as in the case of death, the question should be asked of a close relative or friend, and only if a relative or friend is not available should the undertaker or other such person answer. This question should always be asked even if the person does not 'look' Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

Source: ABS (1999) Standards for Statistics on Culture, Cultural and Language Diversities, Cat.No.1289.0 ABS Canberra

59. ABS is considering releasing detailed statistical tables from the 2001 Census at the SLA level. However, it is unreasonable to expect ABS to release all the data needs of ATSIC at the Regional Council and Sub-Regional areas as part of the Community Service Obligation. Under the circumstances, it may be worthwhile for ATSIC to explore the possibility of obtaining a depersonalised special sample census data file from the 2001 Census of Population and Housing. This file could be stratified by ATSIC Regional

Councils (where Regional Council population is too small to be used as a strata could use ATSI zones) to be used by ATSI to meet the growing data needs at the regional and sub-regional level.

60. The following observations of a Parliamentary Committee¹⁷ on the provision of statistics to Indigenous program planning, assessment and monitoring are relevant to the current context:

While the Committee appreciates the need for the ABS to charge for the provision of certain information, it does not believe that information about health and welfare of Indigenous people should fall into this category.

Experimental population estimates

61. ABS prepares on a quarterly and annual basis mid-year population estimates (Estimated Resident Population (ERP)) by age and sex for state and territories using population figures adjusted for under-enumeration, natural increase (based on registered births and deaths) and net migration (derived from the passenger arrivals and departures data collected at Australian ports). For states and territories the net migration flows across geographic areas are estimated on the basis of changes in the residence reported to the Health Insurance Commission by Medicare beneficiaries.

62. For Indigenous people, reliable information on any of these components of population change – births, deaths, and net-migration – is not available and the census figures of the population by age and sex are less reliable. Therefore, Indigenous population projections by age and sex for Australia as a whole are made on assumed coverage levels of the population counts, and the levels of fertility and mortality.

63. Net migration of Indigenous persons between states and territories is assumed as insignificant. Because of the highly volatile nature of the estimates these are termed as the experimental projections. Experimental projections prepared using 1991 Census data were available. The accuracy of

¹⁷ House of Representatives Standing Committee on Family and Community Services (2000) *Health is Life. Report on the Inquiry into Indigenous Health*, Canberra: p124.

the experimental projections based on the 1996 Census can be checked when the 2001 Census results are available. The state and territory Indigenous population estimates are only for the both sexes combined.

64. Projection results, both national, and state and territory, are presented as two series, high and low. In the absence of reliable information on the population base, uncertain data on Indigenous births and deaths and virtually non-existing data on inter-state and territory migration, it is difficult to judge the validity of such projections.

65. It is equally difficult to assume which of the two projection scenarios is better suited for a given activity. The difference in the estimated total Indigenous population between the two scenarios is large (about 58,000 or 13% for the year 2000), given the size of the Indigenous population—in 1996, the Indigenous population formed little less than 2% of the total population of Australia.

66. The Department of Health and Ageing recommends that the low projection scenario is suitable for assessing Indigenous health related programs. The experimental estimates of the mid-year population of the ABS are used by many for policy planning, monitoring and evaluation, and serve as the basis of constructing many indicators.

67. The projected Indigenous population for the year 2001 was 427,094 and 502,339 for the low series and high series, respectively. The mid-year population based on the 2001 census count, adjusted for the estimated undercount, was recorded as 460,140¹⁸—difference of about 8% from the total experimental estimates for 2001. Thus, the basic uncertainty of the size and the distribution of the Indigenous population still remain as a drawback.

¹⁸ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2002) *Population Distribution. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians*, Cat. No. 4705.0 ABS, Canberra

Sample Surveys

68. ABS launched a regular series of household surveys to obtain detailed data to fill the gaps in data required to measure socio-economic and demographic conditions of the Australian population and to monitor areas of grave policy concern ie employment and unemployment.

69. ABS has a Labour Force Survey (LFS) program (introduced in 1964 as a quarterly survey and has become a monthly survey series since 1978). The LFS surveys all areas including remote and sparsely populated regions. The LFS program generally covers a total of about 63,000 respondents (0.05% of the population) in some 30,000 households and a range of topics relevant to the labour force issues. \

70. In March 1994, this survey for the first time identified respondents of Indigenous origin and in subsequent years this information has been collected in February each year. Using the data collected from 1994 to 2000 ABS published a special report on the labour force characteristics of Indigenous people¹⁹. The results were considered as experimental because the number of Indigenous respondents was about 1,100, very small to prepare reliable estimates even at the national level.

71. ABS also conducts a series of monthly Supplementary Sample Surveys (SSS) as a supplement to the LFS. However, the monthly supplementary survey sample does not cover remote and sparsely populated areas, mainly due to the high cost of conducting a survey in those areas. ABS considers that this exclusion has no adverse impact on aggregate estimates at the national or state and territory level.

72. The exception being Northern Territory, where the population in remote and sparsely populated areas forms a fifth of the population of that territory. This exclusion from its routine sample survey program has an adverse

¹⁹ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2000) 'Labour force Characteristics of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians. Experimental Estimates from the Labour Force Survey', *ABS Occasional Paper*, Cat.no.6287.0 Canberra.

impact on the Indigenous data. As the population in remote and sparsely settled areas are excluded the number of Indigenous people covered in the sample will not be sufficient to warrant production of reliable estimates on the Indigenous people.

73. Some ABS surveys, such as the National Health Survey, uses an enhanced sample by adding extra Collection Districts which have a high Indigenous concentration in remote and sparsely population areas to increase the Indigenous representation in the sample. ABS is currently exploring the possibility of developing a master sampling frame based on such sources as the community frame prepared for the Community Housing Infrastructure and Needs Survey (CHINS).

National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey (NATSIS), 1994

74. One of the major initiatives of ABS to provide detailed data on different aspects of Indigenous socio-economic and cultural life was the conduct of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey (NATSIS) in 1994. This survey was carried out in response to the recommendations of the RCIADIC.

75. The Commission considered the lack of data to measure the socio-economic status of the Indigenous population, and recommended that a survey should be conducted to fill existing data gaps. In 1994, ABS conducted NATSIS which covered a wide range of topics including family, culture, health, housing, education and training, law and justice, income and access to services. This survey was conducted through personal interviews by trained interviewers, although in some cases survey forms were completed by a 'responsible adult'. It produced some data on Indigenous socio-economic and cultural life which were not available previously. However, it also had numerous data problems²⁰. For example:

- the survey used the 1991 Census data as the basis of selection of collection districts for the sample and sample weights were calculated based on the population distributions recorded at the 1991 Census, assuming that in

²⁰ Carson, D (1999) *NATSIS Data Quality*, Australian Bureau of Statistics (mimeo).

1994 the ratio of ATTIC'S regional populations remained the same as in 1991. The 1991 Census had a significant undercount; the 1996 census revealed the continuation of increasing tendency for self-identification.

- an analysis of the data by ABS revealed variations in the quality of responses depending on who completed the questionnaire (whether a trained interviewer or self).
- the survey undercounted persons of some ages, mainly 15–19 and young adults. NATSIS reported considerably fewer males between the ages of 24 and 44 than that observed in the 1996 census, carried out two years later. The survey was confined to private dwellings and therefore excluded institutions including prisons and other detention centres.
- there was a substantial non-response to virtually every survey question item causing significant problems and bias in the data analysis.
- the lack of English literacy of respondents may have caused some confusion in understanding the questions and accurately responding to survey questions.
- ABS has also observed that at times interviewers had changed the question wordings to assist the respondents to understand the question. This clearly would have introduced some bias in the data²¹.
- although the ATSI region is identified as a geographic entity for stratification, NATSIS included very small samples from most ATSI regions. This makes it difficult to derive reliable estimates for ATSI regions.
- ABS, does not intend to repeat this survey in that form. Instead, ABS considers conducting the Indigenous Social Survey (ISS) in 2002, which will include a number of topics covered in the 1994 NATSIS.

76. ABS over-sampled NATSIS in Queensland to increase the representation of the Torres Strait Islanders in the sample to produce estimates for that population. However, the survey failed to cover the number of Torres Strait Islanders targeted from a number of states and territories on mainland (see

²¹ For example, the survey question relating to law and order was worded as follows: "In the last 5 years have you been arrested by Police?" It was found that sometimes interviewers changed the wording of this question to 'Has the policeman got you?' See Commonwealth Grants Commission (2001) *Report on*

table below). Consequently any estimates for Torres Strait Islanders derived from the survey is reliable at the national level and only for Queensland²².

Torres Strait Islander participation in the NATSIS

State/Territory	Expected sample	Number identified	No. Interviewed
NSW	86	49	12
Vic	103	30	10
Qld	908	965	1,047
SA	55	13	6
WA	45	23	36
Tas	201	85	64
NT	32	21	27
Australia	1,430	1,186	1,204

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (1999) *1994 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey. Torres Strait Islander Queensland*, ABS Cat. No. 4179.3 Canberra Table T2 Page 30

Indigenous Social Survey

77. The Indigenous Social Survey (ISS) will be based on the General Social Survey that the ABS contemplates conducting in 2002 and is scheduled to be repeated at six-year intervals. This survey will also collect a broad range of information including health, housing, work, education, income and law and justice. The survey will also be designed to measure different aspects of socio-economic disadvantages of the Indigenous population.

Measures to improve data quality and availability.

78. Although it took some years for the ABS to take the responsibility for Indigenous data derived from administrative collections, the ABS introduced numerous measures to enhance the availability and the quality of the data of its own collections. At the 1981 Census ABS implemented a series of special enumeration measures in the Northern Territory and remote regions of central Australia to improve the coverage of Indigenous people by obtaining

Indigenous Funding, 2001 Consultant's Reports, Vol 111 CGC, AusInfo (Can Print Communications Pty. Ltd.)Canberra.

²² See Australian Bureau of Statistics (1997) *1994 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey. Torres Strait Islande, Queensland*, ABS Cat. No. 4179.3 Canberra.

cooperation from the remote area Indigenous communities²³. These measures were gradually expanded in successive censuses and have become an essential part of census operations in remote areas.

Censuses and ABS Surveys: conducted and planned: 1999-2006			
Year	Collection	Indigenous sample	Geographic level
1999	Housing survey	850-900 Households	National
1999	CHINS	1,300 Communities	Community level
2001	Health Survey	2,800 persons	National
2001	Population and Housing Census	All persons	Indigenous regions
2002	Indigenous Social Survey	11,000 persons	States and NT
2004/5	Health Survey	11,000 persons	State and NT
2006	Population and Housing Census	All persons	Indigenous regions

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (2000) *Directions in Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics*, March, ABS Canberra.

79. ABS has been seeking a methodology for increasing Indigenous representation in its regular household survey program to produce reliable data on Indigenous peoples. For example, in 1985, the National Health Survey included a supplementary sample of Indigenous people. Internal evaluation of data quality of the supplementary sample was also made. ABS recently published a report on the labour force based on the data collected through monthly supplementary surveys from 1994-2000.

²³ See for example, Loveday, P and Wade-Marshall, D (1985) 'Taking the 1981 Census: Aborigines in the NT', in Loveday, P and Wade-Marshall, D (eds) *Economy and People in the North*, Darwin: North Australia Research Unit.

80. Given the issues involved in selecting a representative sample of Indigenous people in sparsely populated regions, ABS for estimating the Indigenous resident population are being reviewed, and planning is underway to prepare such estimates at the sub-state level. These measures, together with new household surveys such as ISS will eventually produce better quality data on socio-economic and welfare aspects of Indigenous Australians.

Outcome data initiatives and the reporting system of the Commission

Background

81. The Executive Committee of the Commission, observed that the existing Program Performance Reporting System of the Commission was inadequate to meet the growing needs for accountability for programs and assess efficiency and effectiveness of programs delivered by the Commission²⁴. Accordingly in 1993, the Executive Committee recommended that the performance reporting mechanism of the Commission be enhanced to obtain better information on program outcomes. Since its inception OEA recognised that outcome measurements and performance measuring are part and parcel of the best practice of managers and encouraged program managers, to develop appropriate measures and collect underlying statistics on a regular basis.

82. In 1994, PM&C directed that all government departments and agencies, report in their annual reports program performances to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of service delivery programs. Furthermore, all agencies were asked to table annual reports to the Parliament before the end of 31 October each year. In 1994, key managers of the Commission met in Canberra to discuss issues relating to performance measurements and outcome reporting. At this meeting key managers agreed to develop a

²⁴ Dillon, M (1992) 'Program Evaluation and Monitoring in Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander Affairs: a Strategic Overview' in Ryan, B and O'Faircheallaih, C. (eds) *Program Evaluation and Performance Monitoring. Australian Experience*: 91-103.

framework for each program, appropriate indicators for performance measurement and reporting outcomes²⁵.

83. Regional Councils (RCs) were asked to ensure that when negotiating with organisations for funding, that they (RCs) would agree upon a set of realistic performance indicators and introduce a mechanism for the funded organisations to regularly report performance on their programs. A software program known as the Program Performance Monitoring and Reporting System (PPMRS) was also redeveloped for performance reporting and to assist program managers and the Commission to assess program outputs and performances on a regular basis. The PPMRS was, in fact, a screen based version of the paper-based performance reporting system used in the past.

84. Although it was based on sound concepts and clear guidelines, an external evaluation found²⁶ that the PPMRS did not perform its functions as expected for a number of reasons: it was poorly understood by staff at lower levels; the funded organisations lacked the capacity to collect data required for the PPMRS; the data were often unreliable or imperfect; and at times even the performance indicators were poorly developed. More importantly, there was no proper coordination between National Program Managers and Program Officers and Project Officers.

85. Due to the problems encountered in its implementation the PPMRS was withdrawn from use in 1999. Since then program managers have almost wholly relied on the financial information systems of the Commission for program data. These systems place heavy emphasis on expenditure and outputs of programs, and have little information to measure program outcomes. As will be discussed in later chapters in the report, a few programs had special reporting systems developed, but with varying levels of success.

²⁵ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (1994) *Program Performance Monitoring and Reporting System, Raising Our Profile*, ATSIC (July).

²⁶ Ernst & Young (1995) *Report to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission Evaluation of the Program Performance Monitoring and Reporting System*, August.

Outcomes/Outputs Reporting of the Commission

86. Commencing 1999-2000, the Commission developed its budget under the Government's new Accrual-based Outcomes and Outputs Framework. Commission's Portfolio Budget Statements (PBSs) provide estimated annual budget allocations for the price of Commission's five Output Groups. A chart setting the relationship between the outcome and the contributing outputs for Commission is set out below.

87. The development of price outputs involves allocating the Commission's grant/loan costs (program budget) across output groups together with a distribution of administration (operational) costs using the Commission's Output Costing Systems (OCS). Various cost drivers are used under an activity based costing model to distribute operational costs to output groups. The budgeting and monitoring of finance activity (expenditures) for the outputs is maintained with ATSIC's Integrated Financial Information System (AIFIS).

88. The actual 'Price-of-Outputs' presented in the Commission's Annual Report is developed using the same methodology as the 'Price-of-Outputs' for the PBS, except that end of year actual costs from the Commission's finance system AIFIS are used instead of estimated costs.

Grant Management System

89. In reporting on output performance in the Annual Report, output managers draw upon information in the Commission's Grant Management System (GMS). GMS is the tool for managing the Commission's grants and provides the information to assess, at the broadest level, the output achievements. Performance in the GMS is recorded as a set of quantitative or qualitative measures considered appropriate for the nature of the grant activity. Targets are negotiated with the grantees before the Letter of Offer is issued, and actual achievements reported by the grantee are entered into GMS in accordance with the terms and conditions of the grant after the completion of the project.

90. The Commission has 22 outputs defined for reporting performance information to Government. However, for performance management at the grant level, each of these outputs has been broken into a number of sub-outputs with more than 100 sub-outputs in total.

91. Performance measures against these outputs take two different forms, depending on the nature of the sub-output: (a) mandatory performance measures for the output; or (b) selected optional measures. The optional measures are used by managers to obtain underlying information to compute performance indicators, which are monitored at the regional level. The vast majority of performance measures used in the Commission programs are inputs or basis workload information only. As grants and performance information required to report to the Commission vary across grants and regions, it is difficult to derive national performance indicators on a uniform basis.

Loan system

92. The Commission's loan program is administered and monitored by the loan system, which operates on two application programs—Quote and Application Tracking System (QATS) and the Loan Administration System—both of which are linked to AIFIS. When a loan application is received details of the loan and applicants are recorded. All subsequent actions taken on the loan through to its settlement are recorded in QATS on an on-going basis. When a loan is fully released, this information is automatically transferred into the Loan Administration System (LAS), which is the managing tool of the Commission's Loan System. LAS records all loan payments made by the borrowers and monitor the loan performance from the time of settlement until the loan is paid out. Since data on loans are expected to be updated on an on-going basis, from time-to-time managers are able to assess the status of loan portfolio from progress reports from the QATS application and the settlement status of loans from LAS.

Aggregation of performance data

93. Although reports can be customised according to the needs of the program managers, the type of information available from these reports is limited and can hardly be used as a source for outcome data. The circumstances prevailing in communities are often different, and hence, “one-size-fits all” concept does not apply as it is not possible or practicable to aggregate some types of data. The effect of this being that the nature of outputs vary from region to region, or activity to activity making it difficult to define relevant performance measures that fit to all situations. The Commission places considerable emphasis on output measures at the activity level that are meaningful to both the grantee and the Commission. This process is still developing.

Information Development Strategy

94. The current Information Strategy of the Commission attempts to capture, store and disseminate information on both Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations. The information to be compiled comes from numerous sources: within the Commission, ABS and non-ABS sources. The Commission employs two distinct methods in reporting outputs: mandatory output measures; and selection of at least one measure from a list of indicators provided to the output group (or sub-group).

95. The mandatory measures are used for program outputs, which are relatively homogeneous, such as the community housing output group, where output relates to the total number of new houses constructed or the number of bedrooms per house. One indicator from a list is relevant to more heterogeneous output groups, like cultural activities. However, the variations at the grant level are such that this arrangement does not effectively cope with these variations.

96. Output/outcome measures could be numeric, or provided as textual statements when these measures are used to describe heterogeneous outputs. Using these measures at any given time, program managers could determine

their achievements of programs against set targets. However, as an aggregate measure, the value of such information is questionable. Since 2000-01, a number of significant changes put in place to the output management process to make the process more relevant to individual grant activities.

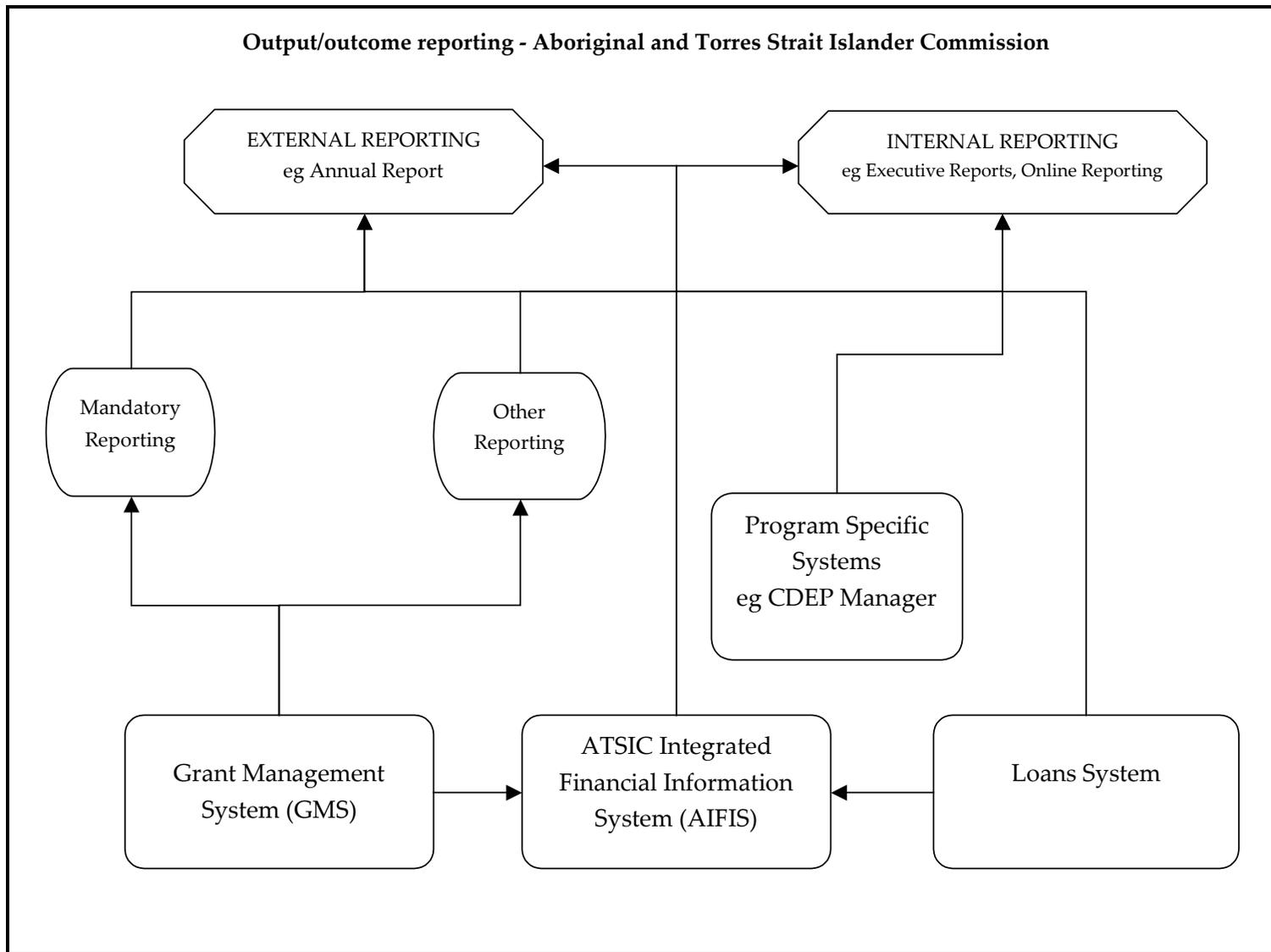
97. This may require special data collection procedures for different output groups. For each output group, the data requirements for outputs should be prepared in relation to the group objectives. What data are to be collected are determined on what service delivery agencies are able to provide according to the provisions in the Letter of Agreement. In designing data collection methods advice should be sought from the Information Services Office.

ATSIC Statistical Unit: National Office

98. Advice on statistical issues and supply of statistical requirements of the Commission is now the responsibility of the ABS out-posted officer under a joint agreement negotiated between the Commission and the ABS. The primary roles of officers of ABS out-posted to other agencies is to advise the agencies on all statistical matters, supply better quality data and maintain a link between the agency, and the ABS.

99. The agreement negotiated with the ABS specified the duties and responsibilities of the ABS officer were to:

- improve access to data by ATSIC officers;
- provide expert advice to ATSIC on data availability, and data needs;
- maintain an on-going liaison between the Commission and the ABS;
- supply census data (i.e. the 1996 Census) for regional planning;
- production of statistical reports; and
- provide expert advice on development of a needs-based funding formula for the Commission.



100. From discussions during the evaluation, it appears that the current focus of activities for the out-posted officer is attending meetings, including representation of the Commission at ABS meetings, provision of statistical information to various branches of the Commission on demand, and maintaining a statistical database with basic information on population. In order for the out-posted officer to meet the urgent task of developing and maintaining a regional statistics database this officer would need the services of additional staff.

101. Considering the importance of such statistical data needs of the Commission, it may be opportune for the ABS out-posted officer's time to be used fully for statistical development activities rather than providing expert advice on a needs-based funding formula for the Commission. This work could be easily dealt within other areas of the Commission.

Information needs at the regional level

102. Section 94 (1a) of the ATSI Act²⁷ specifies that Regional Councils should 'formulate, and revise from time to time, a regional plan for improving the economic, social and cultural status of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents of the region'. To prepare and revise regional plans, Regional Councils require analysis of demographic trends and many socio-economic indicators relevant to the region.

103. For regional planning Regional Councils require not only data for the Regional Council, but also at the sub-regional level. The regional and sub-regional data requirements range from population counts, age-sex distribution, labour force characteristics, educational attainment, level of schooling, income levels, births and deaths, and information on housing (number, ownership, and rental and physical characteristics of housing stock). Most of such information can be drawn from the population and

²⁷ *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission Act 1989.*

housing censuses. The population census information will be available with a time lag of five years.

104. Furthermore, the level of disaggregation of the data requirements at the sub-regional level – even at the Regional Council level – depends on the size of the regional council population²⁸. In the 1996 Census, the total Indigenous population in Regional Councils ranged from 1,979 in Ceduna (SA) to 38,086 Sydney in 2001. Therefore, getting the population and housing data of required details for geographic areas below the Regional Council level could pose problems for some Regional Councils. Regional Councils, on the other hand, do not have the capacity and resources to collect such data²⁹.

105. The Commission is not authorised by the Act to engage in data collection activities without the concurrence of ABS. The Commission should, therefore, focus on developing a sound regional statistics system drawing data from different sources. They may include population censuses, other relevant administrative collections, and its own service delivery programs to meet the data needs of Regional Councils.

Aboriginal Regional Information System (ARIS)

106. The Planning Section of the NSW network office developed and currently maintains the ARIS database. Commencing as a regional database for NSW, it has gradually expanded its role in providing data for other Regional Council areas. The development of the ARIS is carried out independently of the Information System Development of the Commission and the Indigenous data development initiatives of ABS.

107. The ARIS was established in 1999 in the NSW State Office. In the first instance, it contained data for NSW from the 1996 Population and Housing Census, and then expanded to include non-census data from ABS and other Commonwealth and state and territory agencies. These include, Health,

²⁸ To prevent personal information to be divulged ABS does not release actual population figures, if the population in an area (or a particular cell in a table) is less than 3 persons.

Births & Deaths, Education, Housing, Law & Justice, Welfare recipients (i.e. Centrelink) and community and Aged Care data from departments in all states and territories, for the years for which such data were available. A comment on data and source details is provided for each data set.

108. The system has been built using online analytical processing (Cognos Power Play business intelligence tools for multi-dimensional analysis of data). Data users can interrogate data using limited options formats such as numbers, percentages, graphical subdivisions, drill down and drill across, slicing and dicing. This system will be equipped with a data mapping facility in the near future. A common criticism of the ARIS concerns a lack of consultation with program managers in the development of the database.³⁰ The lack of understanding of the data retrieval process by program managers often acts as a barrier for full use of this database. Furthermore, it is doubtful (as will be discussed in Chapter 4 at some length) that some data items currently included in the database are worth using in the current form given the questionable data quality.

109. Accurate and relevant information is essential for informed decision making. ARIS is designed to provide accurate and relevant information at the Regional Council level to be used for decision-making. The quality of the ARIS information varies according to the source and the data type. This is because the type of data collected, definitions used and procedural details applied to the data compilation, are different across jurisdictions as highlighted by the Steering Committee for the Review of Commonwealth/State Service Provision³¹. Regional data, to be meaningful, need to be collected, compiled and processed according to set standards.

²⁹ Coopers and Lybrand Consultants (1991) *Processes and Guidelines for the Development of Regional Plans by Regional Councils*, Final Report (mimeo), Canberra.

³⁰ Office of Evaluation and Audit (2001) *Review of the ATSIC Regional Information System*, Audit carried out in December 2000 (report issued on 1/08/2001).

³¹ SBRCSSP (Steering Committee for the Review of Commonwealth/State Service Provision) (2001) *Report on Government Services, 2001*.

110. ABS, as the agency responsible for official statistics, has the mandate to develop statistical standards and persuade government agencies to employ standard concepts and definitions in data. To gain the benefit of improved data quality through the application of best practice standards, it is necessary for the Commission to obtain the assistance and advice from ABS in the development of the ARIS as well as quality improvements in the data.

Coordination of statistical work

111. The overall responsibility of the Commission's Information Systems vests on the Information Services Office, which is headed by the Chief Information Officer. This Office has four major units, and each is headed by a Manager; Information Management, Systems Development, Contract Management and Policy Planning Consultancies. The ABS out-posted officer is attached to the National Policy Office (NPO) to advise on statistical matters and supplying data for planning and monitoring of programs. The ABS out-posted officer is required to play a major role in providing statistical needs of the Commission, particularly at the regional level.

112. Accordingly, the out-posted officer has prepared socio-economic profiles of Indigenous peoples for a number of Indigenous regions. The Commission's database on regional information is maintained by the NSW Planning Office. At present there is no coordination of statistical work or demarcation of responsibilities between these two units. For policy planning and monitoring, different programs in the Commission and Regional Councils require data from numerous sources, mainly censuses, surveys and other administrative collections. Detailed unpublished data are normally purchased from ABS and other sources.

113. The evaluation is aware that different program areas have purchased population data from ABS, in varying levels of detail, relevant to monitor their programs and projects. It was not possible for the evaluation to estimate the total cost of purchasing such data by different projects, but it is assumed to be relatively high. Since the program areas purchase statistical data direct

from ABS, and in the absence of a unit in the Commission responsible for coordinating such data requests/purchases from outside agencies, there is scope for duplication of the purchase of identical statistical outputs.

114. It is necessary to avoid such wastage of resources. With the release of the 2001 Census data, demand for data will increase rapidly towards the early part of the next financial year. It is therefore necessary that the Information Services Office (ISO) of the Commission ascertains major data needs of the Commission and coordinates the purchase of the data to avoid multiple requests for the identical datasets.

115. Furthermore, ISO could also prepare an inventory of data holdings of the Commission, and make these lists along with necessary documentation available to program managers for their information and use. This evaluation is pleased to note that ISO is currently assessing data requirements of the Commission from the 2001 Census of Population and Housing. Such coordination effort should not be restricted to census data, nor should be a one-off measure. Ideally, all data requests of the Commission from external agencies should be made through the ISO.

116. There are numerous licensed software packages for statistical data analysis currently purchased by different units and remaining in the hands of different units of the Commission. It is likely that most of these software packages are licensed under the names of respective units, rather than of the Commission. Therefore, the ISO could also make an inventory of existing software, and encourage program managers, where possible, to obtain licenses for the Commission in acquiring or renewing annual licenses. A similar arrangement could be made to other areas of possible wastage of resources such as the annual subscription payment to ABS for product information.

Setting up a data and research unit

117. In November 2001, OEA circulated (appendix 1.1) among the members of the Consultative Committee a working document entitled Project proposal for enhancing availability, quality and use by the Commission's program managers of data on outcomes for Indigenous peoples whereby the need for a permanent Data and Research Unit within the Commission was recommended. The lack of coordination in statistical work and consequent duplication work, and resources outlined above, strengthens the case for a need of such a unit.

118. The evaluation is pleased to note the positive development currently being contemplated by the Commission to set up a unit similar to what was proposed by OEA. It is not yet clear the shape, roles and functions of the proposed Data and Research Unit. Hopefully this unit will focus on the overall statistical development of the Commission including the regional information systems, and will assist the program managers to design data collection forms, develop outcome indicators, and undertake needed policy oriented research.

Law and Justice

Introduction

119. The Law and Justice covers a number of fields ranging from statutes, regulations and common law, through to the administration of those laws, but the present evaluation focuses on Law and Justice according to its main sequential phases. The starting event in the Criminal Justice System (CJS) is the incidence of crime. The next phase of this sequence is the police who investigate crimes and breaches known to them; the police may lay charges through the prosecutor against breaches.

120. The court system is the next in the sequence, which deals with the charges. The Court acquits alleged offenders or imposes punishments on offenders. Some offenders are sentenced to corrective services institutions, which is the next phase in the sequence. There are others involved in the process such as the legal services that represent clients, and the agencies, which are charged with administering court orders. The total process of these inter-connected activities is included in this chapter as Law and Justice. This chapter focuses on the type of data generated during each of these phases of the legal system.

Incidence and prevalence of crime

121. The level of crime can be measured using different data sources: crimes reported to law enforcement agencies (police), victimization surveys and self-reported crimes. Many crimes go unreported and the police statistics therefore, only show crimes that were notified or known to the police. Surveys, on the other hand, are capable of gathering information on crimes, but what is reported by respondents are about what they perceived as

crimes, hence their report may not necessarily agree with the crimes defined by law. Survey data on certain aspects of crime, particularly domestic violence can be affected by the level of probing used in surveys, while for some others such as illicit drug use, respondents could underreport as they normally avoid admitting using substances that are illegal to possess or use. On the other hand, survey data could discover crimes, which are not normally reported to police, for example, violence at home involving close members of the family.

Police statistics on offenders

122. The police departments in each state and territory record, for each crime reported to them or becoming known to them, personal information such as age and sex of offenders or suspects together with some information on socio-economic background of offenders or suspects and victims of crimes. The type and details of the information recorded are not uniform across jurisdictions. Even the software used³² by police to maintain its database on crimes is not uniform and varies according to the state and territory. For example, the NSW Police using a software package called Computerised Operational Policing System record, for each alleged offender, a number of data items including age, sex, marital status, Indigenous status, the most serious offence, and the number of offences committed. The capacity and the level of details that could be entered for each offender or victim depends largely on the software program used.

123. Currently there are no data on Indigenous offenders or victims that are maintained by police departments at the national level. ARIS contains some basic data on offenders – age group, sex, main offence and Indigenous status – obtained from all state and territory police departments, except for Queensland and Tasmania. This information is presented for ATSI Regions, for states and territories for which police statistics are presently available.

³² Software packages used in jurisdictions are as follows: Vic (LEAP), Qld (CRISP), SA (PIMS/IIS), TAS (OLSM), WA, (Frontline Incident Management System (FIMS)), NT (PROMISE/IJIS); and ACT (PROMISE).

124. The quality of the data, however, raises a number of concerns. *Firstly*, different jurisdictions use different methods to identify and record Indigenous status of offenders: a few, such as NSW, ask the Indigenous status of the offender (or victim or witnesses) while in others Indigenous status is recorded by various means, for example, observation of the investigating police officer.

Current status of Indigenous identification in police collections

State/territory	Whether racial appearance is recorded when creating a crime report and whether or not police use the ABS standard question to determine the Indigenous status.
NSW	Yes, recorded in the first incident and available for subsequent offences. Indigenous status is asked of persons arrested and held in custody.
VIC	Yes, but not mandatory. ABS standard question not asked
QLD	Yes, only if the information is provided by the victim. Non-mandatory. ABS standard question is not asked.
SA	Determined by police. ABS standard question is not asked.
WA	Yes. If there is an identified offender and uses the brief case system to record Indigenous status.
TAS	Yes.
NT	Yes, but not mandatory. ABS standard question is not asked.
ACT	Yes, ABS standard question (or one close to it) is asked.

Source: Alida Hellenen, (personal communication) National Centre for Crime and Justice Statistics, ABS, Melbourne. ACT information is obtained from Australian Federal Police (ACT).

125. *Secondly*, the police data are compiled and maintained according to police areas, which are not comparable with geographic areas of ATSI regions. Since police departments do not release offender data by post codes, it is not clear what process ARIS is following to classify offender statistics according to Regional Councils.

126. *Thirdly*, the type of information collected on offenders by police is not uniform across jurisdictions.

127. *Fourthly*, it is not clear which approach the police in different jurisdictions use in recording crimes. Are they recording every crime reported to police (so-called 'prima-facie' reporting approach), or whether

are they recording only those crimes the investigating police officers believe to be true according to evidence ('evidential' reporting)?

128. *Finally*, it is equally uncertain which criteria police departments use to classify the main offence, when more than one class of offences are involved in crimes.

129. The National Crime Statistics Unit (NCSU) of ABS is currently negotiating with state and territory police departments to introduce a system of uniform reporting, covering statistics on offenders/suspects and their victims. The NCSU has already developed a conceptual framework for criminal statistics together with a data dictionary with uniform standards and definitions. If the state and territory police departments adopt this framework, and maintain offenders and victims statistics according to agreed terminology, the reliability of police statistics could be improved and hence can be used to determine the extent of reported crimes occurring in the society.

130. These data could be augmented by the sample surveys currently being undertaken by ABS with an enhanced sample of Indigenous people. Until the police statistics are collected and compiled on a uniform basis, the value of the offender statistics derived from police records will have only limited use as indicators of reported crimes.

Police custody surveys

131. RCIADIC in its investigations found that there was no information available on persons held in custody in police cells. Therefore, the RCIADIC asked the Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC) to undertake, in collaboration with police departments, a special survey of all persons in police custody. The aim of this survey was to provide the Royal Commission with basic information on the numbers and characteristics of persons including Indigenous status in police custody.

132. AIC conducted this survey in August 1988 and used a reference period of one month. The survey, however, covered only persons held in police custody and was not able to collect information on those offenders who were not held in custody but charged by the police.

133. This was the first ever such survey conducted in Australia³³. RCIADIC recommended that AIC repeat this survey at regular intervals until state and territory police departments are capable of producing such statistics on an annual basis. Accordingly, AIC repeated this survey in 1992 and 1995 (see A4.1 in appendix for details). It is likely that this (or similar) survey will be carried out in 2002/03. The police custody surveys provide episode-based data i.e. all entry and exit of persons to and from police custody during the one-month reference period. The data collected through the survey are useful to produce detailed statistical information on persons held in police custody, offences and repeat episodes during the reference period.

134. However, the survey program covers persons held in police custody only during the reference period, and does not include those not held in custody, but are charged. At any given time, the latter group is expected to be much higher than the number held in police cells³⁴. Apart from this limitation, most of the survey data items had significant non responses (missing values). For example, when processing the 1995 survey, AIC had to exclude nearly 6% of custody cases for which data were collected due to the non-availability of key information on persons, such as the Indigenous status, age or gender.

Victimization surveys

Victims of recorded crimes (ABS)

135. This is an annual data collection, which began in 1993 and contains statistics on victims of crimes derived from records maintained by state and

³³ Johnston, E (1992) 'Aborigines and the Law', in Johnston, Hinton, M., and Rigney, D. (Eds) *Indigenous Australians and the Law*, Cavendish Publishing Australia Pty Ltd: PP 101-109.

³⁴ Cunneen, C. and McDonald, D (1997) *Keeping Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People Out of Custody: An Evaluation of the Implementation of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody*, ATSIC Canberra.

territory police departments (see 4.2 in appendix). The data available from this collection provide information required to assess the extent of some classes of recorded crimes, and changes in the incidence of those crimes over time.

136. The data collected refer to some aspects of police investigations during the 30 days after the crime was reported to the police. In all jurisdictions, except in NSW, the information on the Indigenous status of victim(s) is not routinely recorded by police.

National Crime and Safety Survey (ABS)

137. The National Crime and Safety Survey of ABS began in 1975, is a good data source to gain information on the overall picture on crimes and personal safety in the community. This survey series could be used to measure trends between surveys (see 4.3 in appendix for details). This survey series provides information on major crime types such as household break-ins, thefts (including motor vehicle thefts), assault and sexual assault, robbery, and details of victims of crime. Although the survey data are valuable to assess the prevalence, incidence and details of victims of crimes, ABS data do not show Indigenous status of households or the victim(s) because this information is not uniformly collected across all jurisdictions.

Women's Safety Survey (ABS)

138. This survey (see 4.4 appendix for details) was conducted in April 1996 to provide detailed information on women's safety, both at home and in the community, and to gain insights into the extent of violence (physical and sexual) experienced by women. Indigenous status of the respondent is recorded, but the size of the sample used is too small to produce reliable estimates for Indigenous women.

National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey (NATSIS), 1994

139. The NATSIS Survey (see general comments in Chapter 2) collected data on arrests (arrests in the five years before the survey and, for those who were

arrested, the reason for the last arrest) and some data useful to assess the prevalence of crimes (physical and verbal threats) in the community. The data collected are narrow in focus and therefore have limited value. The survey failed to probe more into the reasons, circumstances and location of arrest, information that would have been more useful than merely reporting the number of persons arrested.

140. Details of the persons already serving sentences in prisons or in remand, are not adequately represented in the survey. The survey also included data items on cultural aspects of respondents, but not in adequate details. The survey has been criticised as an “omni-bus” survey in that it collected limited data on many topics, but none with adequate details³⁵. The results of the survey on the utilisation of legal services were found to be highly underreported. For example, the number of Indigenous people who used any legal service during the five-year period before the survey estimated from the survey was substantially lower than the Indigenous clients assisted by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services in a single year.

Court Statistics

141. In the Australian justice system courts provide a range of services such as staff and case management, execution of court orders and handles all case matters that appear before the court. Higher courts (Supreme and Intermediate) hear criminal matters and disputes of a serious nature, and act as courts of appeal as well. Despite interstate and territory variations in roles, functions and responsibilities, magistrate courts generally handle summary criminal matters, traffic infringements and committal hearings.

142. District courts (or county courts) attend to matters in relation to indictable criminal matters and appeals from magistrate courts. The court system maintains, for administrative purposes, information relevant to the

workload and revenue/costs, which are used to assess different aspects of court performances³⁶.

143. The courts for criminal cases use the information sheet prepared by police, which may or may not include the Indigenous status of the defendant/offender. The court staff does not generally meet the defendant(s) face-to-face, except on occasions where the defendant comes to pay a fine or sign a bail application. Therefore, the court staff does not have opportunity to record the Indigenous status of defendants, if that information is not available in police reports. Besides, for cases relating to traffic offences (i.e. traffic infringements or driving offences) no record is available on the person's Indigenous status.

Higher courts statistics, ABS

144. This collection of ABS contains workload information on cases handled by higher courts (i.e. Supreme courts and Intermediate courts). The data on the *volume* and the *flow* of defendants are recorded as they pass through the court system. This collection provides workload information only on a fraction of criminal cases handled by the courts, as the magistrate courts that handle a large number of criminal cases are not presently covered by the collection.

145. ABS has examined the completeness of the information on Indigenous status reported on court records and found that the information is not of publishable quality. Even in cases where this information is provided to ABS there is no guarantee that the information has been reported by asking the defendant directly whether the person considers him (or her) self as a person of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin.

³⁵ Carcach, CA and Mukherjee, SK (1996) 'Law, Justice, Indigenous Australians and the NATSIS: Policy Relevance and Statistical Needs' *CAEPR, Discussion Paper* No. 11, Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research (CAEPR), Australian National University, Canberra.

³⁶ See for example, SCRCSSP (Steering Committee for the Review of Commonwealth/State Service Provision) (2001) *Report on Government Services* Vol 2, , AusInfo, Canberra.

Family court statistics

146. Family courts in state and territories are administered by the Commonwealth. Only WA has its own family court. Detailed court statistics together with performance indicators are compiled, and key indicators are published in annual reports. Currently the Indigenous status of clients, both for plaintiff and respondent, is not collected. The Family court has already taken action to collect information on Indigenous status of its clients and the information on Indigenous clients will be available from the Family Courts in the near future.

Legal Aid Services

147. Currently there are two major legal aid programs serving the Australian community: Legal Aid Commissions (LACs), administered by the Attorney-General's Department, provides legal services to all persons, including Indigenous people. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services (ATSILS), funded by ATSIC, provides legal aid for Indigenous people through a network of service centres located across Australia. In any given year, ATSILS serviced more than 90 per cent of Indigenous people seeking legal advice/representation³⁷.

Information System: LACs

148. Although not mandatory, LACs ask and record the Indigenous status of clients seeking legal assistance. Most legal assistance to clients is provided through a large number of private lawyers. Private lawyers normally are not expected to report the details of the case-outcomes to Legal Aid, once the case is concluded. Therefore, the information maintained by LACs on the client and case outcomes is limited to produce meaningful outcome measures. The only information presently feasible to gather from the Attorney-General's Department is the number of legal service clients serviced by LACs according to Indigenous status and law type.

³⁷ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (2001/2) *Annual Report*, ATSIC, Canberra.

Information system: ATSILS

149. For each client who receives assistance from ATSILS, including clients who were referred to other legal services, personal details such as age, sex, residential status, details relating to the legal matter and charges are recorded. The data entry program used in ATSILS has the provision of day-to-day recording of details of the legal matter until the case is concluded

Performance measures developed for ATSILS

Performance measures (planned outcomes and actuals)

- Number of criminal matters
- Number of matters and advice/information (for non-court services for women).
- Number of non-criminal matters (i.e. Violence protection, Civil, Family, Deaths in custody etc.,)
- Percent increase in number of matters and advice /information (for non-court services to women)
- Percent of appeals upheld
- Percent increases in numbers of matters and advice/information (non-court-appearance) services for victims in violence protection

Text descriptors

- Test cases conducted
- Effectiveness improvements due to quality improvement initiatives and development support initiatives
- Initiatives implemented following recommendations of an effectiveness reviews/quality assurance checks/self-assessment against standards

Workload indicators

- Number of finalised appeals
- Number of finalised criminal matters by type, plea, final outcome and gender
- Number of matters externally handled by method type, law type and gender
- Number of matters by law type, age and gender
- Number of services by service type, law and gender
- Number of violence protection advice/information services by client type
- Number of matters by matter type and application status
- Number of matters where ATSILS client receives legal aid grant by law type and gender

Source: ATSIC (2000) *ALSIC 2.0 Aboriginal Legal Service Information System: How to Use Guide*.

150. . As part of grant conditions each ATSILS is required to forward to ATSIC (Legal and Preventative Service Centre) quarterly reports on the agreed workload information. These reporting requirements are included in the Letter of Offer of grants. Currently three types of indicators are used to measure progress of work and to monitor the legal aid service program of ATSIC. They are: performance indicators, text descriptors (or descriptive indicators) and workload indicators. Performance measures are assessed using targets and actual outputs. Percentage of actual output to targets is used by the Legal and Preventative Services Centres as indicators of program performance.

151. While such comparisons of achievements and planned outputs may have some merits in assessing performance of a program, they do not provide information required by the program managers to assess program outcomes and monitoring. These performance indicators, therefore, have limited use as measures of program outcomes and performances. Apart from this limited comparison between planned and actual outputs, the items of information described, as Performance measures are workload indicators rather than performance indicators *per se*.

152. Although the Legal and Preventative Services Centre has established a system of quarterly reporting of workload statistics on legal services, there is no regular data reporting systems developed for other sub-outputs, such as the diversionary, family violence, preventative and educational programs. For these programs, indicators available are drawn from the financial reporting system.

Custodial statistics

Prisoner census, ABS

153. This data series has been available from ABS since 1995 when it took over the responsibility for the collection from AIC. This survey provides data on the number and characteristics of prisoners on an annual basis. The data collected refer to the *stock* of the prison population — population as at 30th

June each year. This collection provides useful data to measure levels and trends in adult incarceration, and permits comparison of characteristics between the Indigenous and non-Indigenous adults.

Quarterly statistics on prison population, ABS

154. This collection is also based on the administrative data maintained at corrective services in respect of prisoners. This collection is important as it is the only data source currently available on the *flow* of prison population for different points of time: prisoner counts are reported for each day of the month; prisoner counts each month and on the first day of the month. The data provided in the quarterly report supplement the *stock* data on prison populations collected and published as at 30th June.

155. Indigenous data are restricted to a few tables only. The identification of Indigenous status of the *flow* of prisoners is somewhat more complex than reporting Indigenous status on the prison population at a single point of time. ABS is currently negotiating with state and territory corrective services to implement a uniform system of reporting Indigenous status in the collection and feasibility of adding extra data items to the collection.

Juveniles in corrective service institutions, AIC

156. The data on persons in juvenile corrective service institutions in Australia are collected by the AIC on an annual basis with assistance from the state and territory juvenile justice authorities in states and territories. The data are collected, processed and published quarterly by AIC, the reference date for the juvenile population count being midnight of the last day of each quarter. Considering the inter-jurisdictional variations in the upper age limit of a juvenile, statistics are published by AIC for persons 10-17 years of age.

157. Despite only very basic data being available from this collection, it is the only national data source available on juveniles in corrective service institutions. One limitation of the data collection is that it does not include juveniles in police watch-houses and those resident in adult corrective

service institutions. Indigenous status of juveniles is available from the collection and basic statistical tables are compiled separately for juveniles identified as of Indigenous origin.

Juvenile Justice National Minimum Dataset

158. On behalf of the Australian Juvenile Justice Administration (AJJA), the National Community Services Information Management Group (NCSIMG) commissioned Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) to develop a national minimum dataset for juvenile justice (JJNMDS). AIHW completed its first version of the minimum dataset with a detailed dictionary with data definitions and standards relevant to the minimum dataset³⁸.

159. The AIHW report recommended, among other things, that once the dataset is fully implemented the scope of the JJNMDS be broadened by including juveniles in watch-houses and in adult prisons to enable to gain a complete picture of juveniles in custody. Currently version 1.0 of JJNMDS is being pilot tested. Once the JJNMDS is accepted for implementation it is hoped that the uniform data on juveniles in custody will be available across all jurisdictions.

The need for a national integrated reporting system

160. The sequence of events of the CJS discussed above involves several cross-portfolio agencies of different jurisdictions. These agencies, except for some such as family courts, reporting of sequence of events has not been properly integrated. The absence of such integration at the jurisdictional level acts as a barrier for an implementation and development of a National Integrated System of Criminal (and civil as well) Information Reporting System. Without such an integrated approach, it is extremely difficult to track persons, especially recidivists, when they pass through different phases of the justice system.

³⁸ Broadbent, A (2001) *Report on the Development of a Juvenile Justice National Minimum Data Set* AIHW Cat No. CWS 14) Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Canberra.

Health

Introduction

161. Assessment of health status and health outcomes of a population is difficult due to the lack of data that are capable of capturing the meaning of health as currently being defined. WHO defines health as ‘a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity’³⁹. The National Aboriginal Health Working Party⁴⁰ added ‘emotional cultural well-being’ to this definition and described Aboriginal health as a ‘whole-of-life view’ including the ‘cyclical concept of life-death-life’. With these additions measurement of health and outcomes becomes even more difficult than attempting to capture the breadth of the WHO definition of health.

162. ABS and its sister organisation for health and welfare statistics and policy, the AIHW, both view health in broad terms as a multi-dimensional concept. Although housing, food supply, social security, law enforcement, and road safety etc, all have impacts on health outcomes, they do not come under the purview of health departments or health policy. Therefore, the focus of this chapter is confined to areas which are directly relevant to health service delivery: mortality, morbidity – disease processes including the prevalence and type of sickness and disability – health system information, and services or programs that are established for the purpose of influencing the health of the population.

³⁹ Preamble to the Constitution of the WHO as adopted by the International Health Conference, New York, 19-22, June 1946, signed on 22 July by representatives of 61 states (*Official Records of the WHO*, no.2 P.100) and entered into force April 1948. This definition has not been amended since then.

⁴⁰ National Aboriginal Health Strategy Working Party (1989) *A National Aboriginal Health Strategy*, March, Canberra.

Health service delivery structure

163. The provision of health care services in Australia involves a number of agencies at different levels of government, and non-Government Organisations (NGOs). The portfolio focus of the Commonwealth is mainly on primary care provided through the Medicare Benefits Scheme which makes payments to service providers.

164. The Commonwealth also maintains the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, nursing home services, and provides specific-purpose grants. The Commonwealth has the major role in broad health policies, research, and training and national information systems⁴¹. The state and territories mainly focus on acute care as well as the provision of primary care provided through outpatient departments and community health programs. The services provided by local governments vary across jurisdictions, but their focus is mainly in environmental control and a range of community-based home care services⁴². Health service delivery is provided by a range of agencies, government, private, and non-government, including community organisations.

Mortality statistics

Cause of death statistics

165. According to the law, for any death occurring in Australia the cause of death should be certified by a physician (or by a coroner in deaths from non-natural causes, or deaths occurring in suspicious circumstances). The Medical Certificate of Cause of Death (MCCOD) form used in Australia is based on that recommended for international use by WHO. This form has space for recording for each death, the disease or condition directly leading to death, morbidity conditions giving rise to the condition(s) leading to death, and the diseases or conditions which initiated the sequence of events leading to death.

⁴¹ Department of Health and Aged Care (1999) *Health and Aged Care in Australia*, AusInfo, Canberra.

166. It also requires the physician to record any other complication or condition contributing to death, but not directly related to the diseases or condition causing it⁴³. From the information provided on MCCOD, and the information provided in death notification form (see A5.1 in appendix), ABS compiles death rates, cause of death (underlying cause) and special tabulations on multiple causes of death and nature of injury⁴⁴. Depending on the accuracy of the information provided on the MCCOD, those details reported on death notification forms, and the extent of completeness of the identification of Indigenous deaths, the death statistics reflect the conditions and causes that contribute to the fatal outcomes and enable identification of the relative importance of various diseases, injuries and acts of violence as cause of death.

Deaths from injury and poisonings

167. Details of deaths attributed to injury and poisoning (accidents, violent deaths and poisoning) collected by the state and territory Registrars of Marriages, Births and Deaths are included in a comprehensive database maintained and managed by the Monash University National Centre for Coronial Information (MUNCCI) (see A5.2 in appendix). As the database contains textual information gathered at inquests together with laboratory and other evidence available to the Coroner relating to the death, this database could provide useful information for monitoring deaths due to injury, and poisonings and developing preventative policy programs.

Perinatal deaths statistics

168. Perinatal death statistics are collected by the state and territory Registrars of Births, Deaths and Marriages. These data are coded, processed

⁴² Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (1998) *Australia's Health, 1998*, AIHW Cat. no. AUS 10, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Canberra.

⁴³ World Health Organization (1948) *International Classification of Diseases, 8th Revision*, WHO Geneva.

⁴⁴ Until 1997 ABS tabulated cause of death information according to the underlying cause of death, although medical certificate of causes of death may include a number of other conditions reported for each death. Since the data for 1997 ABS began to code all causes and conditions reported on MCCOD in addition to the underlying cause of death (see for details Gaminiratne Wijesekere (2000) 'New Developments in

and published by ABS along with the annual publication of cause of death. Information on perinatal deaths reported by AIHW's National Centre for Perinatal Statistics (NPSU) is also taken from the ABS. Perinatal deaths (see A5.3 appendix for definition) can be taken to reflect, among other things, the level of access to and use of antenatal care and care during delivery, and associated causes.

169. Therefore, perinatal deaths are an important source of outcome data, which are available on an annual basis. ABS identifies Indigenous perinatal deaths, if either the mother or the father of the newborn (or still birth) is reported as of Indigenous origin.

Infant mortality rate (IMR)

170. IMR is estimated by dividing the number of deaths during a year of live-born infants who have not reached their first birthday, by the number of live births in the same year, and usually expressed the rate as per 1,000. Although a reliable indicator of socio-economic and health conditions of a population, one crucial factor that needs to be taken into account when interpreting IMR in measuring outcomes for the Indigenous populations.

171. The denominator for the Indigenous infant mortality rate is the total live births to Indigenous mothers. In cases where the mother of the child is non-Indigenous, but the father of the child is Indigenous, then those children, for statistical purposes, are treated by ABS as of Indigenous origin. (see A5.4 in appendix). The numerator for the computation of IMR, however, consists of the Indigenous status of the newborn as reported on the death notification forms⁴⁵.

Causes of Death Statistics in Australia: Automation and Multiple Cause Coding' *Genus*, Vol.. LVII (1): 123-141.

⁴⁵ Indigenous status of parents are available in the perinatal form hence only for infants dying in the first 28 days of life. Number of deaths by age is computed from the general death file which does not have the Indigenous status of parents of the deceased.

172. The death notification form only collects the Indigenous status of the deceased and therefore the Indigenous status of parents are not available for infant deaths. This anomaly should be recognised in interpreting Indigenous infant mortality rates. For example, among the total births (10,895) identified by ABS as of Indigenous origin for the year 2000, 2,778 (or a quarter of all Indigenous births in that year) were to non-Indigenous women whose spouses were Indigenous⁴⁶. The inclusion of births to these women has the potential to depress the Indigenous IMR, whose magnitude is difficult to estimate accurately.

Morbidity statistics

173. Morbidity statistics are important for developing disease control programs, and to plan and monitor health policies and health care programs. Morbidity statistics come from a number of sources. Their utility and quality, however, varies according to the source: (a) Hospital morbidity statistics, (b) General practitioner statistics, (c) Disease control program records (notifiable diseases and disease registries), (d) Morbidity surveys, and (e) Administrative by-products (public assistance programs for people with a given condition).

Hospital morbidity statistics

174. Since the data refer to hospital inpatients this database covers only morbidity conditions of people with severe conditions, which warrant hospitalisation. The data on admitted patients are collected by the hospitals on separation from the hospital. Information such as the diagnosis, treatment provided, length of stay are recorded and the national database is maintained by AIHW (see A5.5 in appendix). In order to avoid the continuation of the various practices adopted in different hospitals in recording and reporting data, a minimum data set⁴⁷ with relevant standards has been developed. The

⁴⁶ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2001) *Births, 2000*, Cat. No. 3301.0, ABS Canberra.

⁴⁷ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2001) 'National Minimum Data Set–Admitted Patient Care', Version 2, *National Health Data Dictionary*, Version 10, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Cat. No. HWI 30, Canberra.

National Health Data Dictionary, while detailing data standards, also provides computational methods of indices at the patient and hospital level. Indigenous identification is a key data item in the hospital morbidity collection, although the coverage of identification remains incomplete⁴⁸.

Perinatal morbidity

175. National perinatal morbidity information is drawn from the midwife's collection maintained in each state and territory health department. Unlike the ABS statistics, Indigenous perinatal morbidity collection of the NPSU (see A5.6 in appendix) refers to babies of Indigenous mothers only. Paternal Indigenous status-non-Indigenous mothers with Indigenous husbands are not counted in this collection. Nevertheless, the information collected is valuable to assess the morbidity conditions affecting perinatal period.

General practitioner statistics

176. These statistics are based on the records maintained by practitioners on patients who sought consultations. Such data are also limited to those who chose to seek medical assistance for the sickness or disease, and hence do not represent all sicknesses of people who do not receive help from general practitioners.

177. Currently, there is no regular data reporting system for general practitioners, although the Medicare consultation form (discussed below) has some information about the date and cost of the consultation, no details are available on reason for consultation and the type of treatment or advice provided.

178. Recently, a new initiative to obtain detailed information on the patient as well as the practice (see A5.7 for details), known as the BEACH project, has been launched by the AIHW and is located in the University of NSW. The data are collected from GPs selected for the survey who are required to

⁴⁸. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health and Welfare Information (2001) *The Health and Welfare of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples*, Australian Bureau of Statistics and Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Canberra.

provide detailed information on the patient encounters. . This is potentially a good database to ascertain patient-based risk factors. Among the patient level information Indigenous status is collected, although the Aboriginal Medical Services (AMS) is not generally covered by the survey.

The National Aboriginal Community-controlled Health Organisation's (NACCHO) Collection

179. The Commonwealth, through the Office of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health (OATSIH) of the Department of Health and Ageing, funds the activities of the Aboriginal Community-controlled Health Service (ACCHS), which provides health and some welfare services to Indigenous people. ACCHS are governed by local Indigenous communities. The services provided by ACCHS include general and specialist health, eye, hearing, mental and sexual health together with services to foster emotional and social-wellbeing and transport.

180. As part of the funding agreement OATSIH collects from each ACCHS a Service Activity Report (SAR) covering the main activities of the service (i.e. Services provided by type, details of staff and catchment area, such as the estimated Indigenous population). Most ACCHS do not have the resources to use electronic data recording systems. These reports are processed and analysed by OATSIH and an analytical report published annually. Although there are concerns about the quality of the information reported, the information on the services provided are valuable as the ACCHSs are accessible to over 80% of the total Indigenous population.

Disease control program statistics

Notifiable diseases

181. Major sources of data under this category are the notifiable diseases and the diseases registries. Notifiable diseases are confined to communicable diseases and those of a serious nature such as HIV/AIDS (see A5.8 for details). In spite of the obvious limitations-for example, only cases known to health authorities are reported, and cases less likely to be notified in remote

regions, which do not have access to health services — are useful sources of data to ascertain the presence of communicable diseases for preventative action. Indigenous status of the person who contracted the disease is available, but the extent of the coverage is not known accurately.

Disease registries

182. Currently two types of disease are covered: cancer and diabetes (see A5.9 and A5.10 in appendix). Cancer is a disease more likely to receive hospitalisation or contact with health authorities. Its coverage in reporting is expected to be higher than diabetes, although the coverage of both these diseases appears to be low. In both relevant registries, coverage of identification of Indigenous people is extremely poor. In the case of diabetes the register records only Type 1 diabetes and the available evidence tends to suggest that among the Indigenous population Type 2 diabetes is more prevalent⁴⁹.

Household surveys

ABS survey program

183. To supplement the data on health normally derived from administrative collections, ABS has introduced a system of household surveys to collect data on a number of aspects of health, sickness and disease, risk factors, utilisation of health services, mental health, and general well being of the population. ABS surveys such as the National Health Survey (See A5.11), the National Nutrition Survey (see A5.12), the National Survey of Mental Health and Well-being (see A5.13) and the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey (1994), are important data sources, which could draw information on different aspects of health and disability of the population. A general comment on NATSIS data has been made in Chapter 2.

⁴⁹ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (1999) *Heart, Stroke and Vascular Diseases. Australian Fact'* AIHW Cat. No. CVD 7, Cardiovascular Series No.10, AIHW Canberra.

184. In all other ABS surveys, with the exception of the National Health Survey, samples used were too small to produce any reliable estimates of the prevalence of diseases, sickness or disability and the health and well being of the Indigenous population.

185. The small size of the Indigenous population and its pattern of spatial distribution, makes the conventional sampling methods in Indigenous communities less feasible. Therefore, in some surveys (i.e. National Health Survey 1995) ABS attempted to increase the representation of Indigenous respondents by adding additional census collection districts drawn from remote regions of high Indigenous concentration.

186. At the data validation and analysis stage ABS observed significant data quality problems in the supplementary sample, which compelled the ABS to discard all the data collected from the supplementary sample⁵⁰ drawn from remote areas⁵¹. This exclusion of these records resulted in halving the number of Indigenous respondents in the sample. Despite this exclusion, the number of Indigenous respondents retained in the survey was sufficient to warrant a separate report on Indigenous people.

187. The 2001 NHS also had an extended sample for remote areas. The quality of the data is now being assessed by ABS and a special report for Indigenous people will be available by the end of 2002. ABS plans to release national level data on the Indigenous population according to broad grouping of the Accessibility/Remoteness Index of Australia (ARIA) classification⁵². The 2004/5 survey will cover an even larger sample. Thus the NHS would be a suitable data set to analyse levels and trends in health and health related behaviours among Indigenous people.

⁵⁰ Australian Bureau of Statistics (1999) *National Health Survey: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Results 1995*, Cat. No. 3101.0, ABS, Canberra.

⁵¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics (1995) *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey, 1994 - Overview of Issues Affecting Data Quality*, Cat. No. 4194.0, ABS, Canberra.

⁵² Accessibility Remoteness Index of Australia. This index was developed by National Key Centre for Social Application of Geographical Information System (GIS) Australia, University of South Australia.

Non-ABS surveys

188. Apart from the regular survey program of ABS, The Research Centre for Gender and Health of the University of Newcastle manages a longitudinal study of women's health covering selected cohorts of women (see A5.14). Baseline data were collected in 1996 and follow-up studies are planned every three years from 1998. It is too early to comment on the usefulness of the data for measurement of Indigenous women's health outcomes. The Drug Strategy Household Survey of 2001 (see A5.15) collected detailed data for Indigenous people. Although due to the fewer number of Indigenous respondents covered in the survey only aggregate frequencies for selected population characteristics will be made available.

Disability statistics

189. Little is known about the prevalence of disability among Indigenous people, or the government assistance to persons with a disability (PWD). There are, however, numerous efforts being made to improve the availability and quality of disability data, and more importantly those data relating to Indigenous peoples. AIHW is the agency responsible for the national statistics on welfare services, which also include disability⁵³.

Disability survey series of ABS

190. The Disability survey was conducted in 1981 and 1998 (see A5.16 for details). Future surveys will be conducted every 6 years. Although the survey program provides useful data to assess levels and trends of disability and related information at the population level, it is difficult to rely on a survey of this nature to provide estimates for the Indigenous people.

⁵³ Madden, R., Maples, J. and Black, K. (1993) 'Building a National Picture of Disability Services. A Discussion Paper', *Welfare Division Working Paper No.2*, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Canberra.

191. Disabled people in Indigenous communities form only an extremely small minority of a minority of the total Australian population. Therefore, it has been proposed that any disability data for Indigenous population could be effectively collected through the five-yearly population census⁵⁴.

Centrelink program statistics

192. Administrative by-product data are available from the Department of Family and Community Services (FaCS) and Centrelink in relation to support services provided to PWD. These include Disability support pension, Carer allowance, Mobility allowance, Sickness allowance and carer payment. The Commonwealth also provided other services under the 1991 Commonwealth/State Disability Agreement (CSDA).

193. Although some useful information is collected by Centrelink, for administrative purposes, the Indigenous identification in the collection is still incomplete. This limits the usefulness of the information. For example, a survey carried out by the National Centre for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics, covering CSDA service outlets in South Australia and Victoria, revealed that most outlets did not have a standard practice in recording the Indigenous status of service recipients⁵⁵. Only a minority recorded this information by asking the question from the clients, while others recorded this information using some other method (such as surnames and physical appearance).

Annual census of disability services

194. The census of disability conducted by FaCS provides useful data for outcome measurement on employment-related assistance clients receive

⁵⁴ Madden, R (1988) 'Disability definitions and concepts: working towards national consistency' in *Indigenous Disability Data. Current Status and Future Prospects, Report on Workshop Proceedings*, April 1999 A joint project of the Australian Bureau of Statistics, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare and Department of Health and Family Services, AIHW Cat. no. DIS 10. Canberra: 58-63.

⁵⁵ Beneforty, M. and Pradies, Y (2000) 'Issues of Indigenous Identification in CSDA-Funded Disability Services – South Australia and Victoria', in *Indigenous Disability Data. Current Status and Future Prospects, Report on Workshop Proceedings*, April 1999 A joint project of the Australian Bureau of Statistics, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, and Department of Health and Family Services, AIHW Cat. no. DIS 10. Canberra:130-144.

from service outlets. Detailed information on the many topics, including type of disability, training and other assistance provided, employment and labour force status and employment activity are collected on an annual basis and provide a useful database for outcome measurement (see A5.17 for details). The number of Indigenous clients identified in the census is extremely low: in 1999 1.7% of the consumers on the books were identified as of Indigenous origin⁵⁶.

CSDA-minimum data set collection

195. Under the CSDA key government services provided to PWD are collected annually on agreed data items (Minimum Data Set, MDS) on an agreed day known as the 'snapshot' day (see A5.18). Indigenous status of the service recipients is also a key data item in the MDS, but this information is not provided for a substantial proportion⁵⁷ of recipients covered in the survey.

Health Insurance Commission's data collection

Medical Benefit Scheme (MBS) and Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS)

196. The Health Insurance Commission provides medical benefits through the Medicare scheme, introduced by the Commonwealth Government in 1984. This scheme covers all citizens and other eligible persons residing in Australia. The Commonwealth also administers the PBS, which provides residents with access to a wide range of subsidised medicines. The Medicare enrolment form includes some information about the beneficiary: name, sex, address of usual residence, postal address and residential status.

197. When applying for the first time the applicant is required to provide proof of their citizenship or residential status, and date of birth. Members of the family can appear on the same card. The Medicare claim form contains information on the date and type of medical services received and the details

⁵⁶ Commonwealth Department of Family and Community Services (2000) *Disability Services Census 1999*, AusInfo, Canberra: Table 19: page 31

of the provider. Both these systems do not identify Indigenous status of the beneficiary. A system is currently in place to link the PBS with MBS as the Medicare number of the persons seeking PBS is recorded.

198. This is likely to be a valuable database, which can be developed to obtain detailed information on patient consultations, seasonality and management of conditions. To fully utilise the Medicare and PBS data all Indigenous persons should have access to these services. It has, however, been reported that a substantial proportion of Indigenous people either do not possess Medicare registration cards at all, or do not renew their registrations⁵⁸.

National Childhood Immunisation Register

199. The HIC also maintains a register of immunisations of the children under the age of 7 years, through a network of service providers who are registered with the HIC (see A5.19 in appendix for details). Although the Indigenous status of children is collected the number of Indigenous children immunised in a given year forms only a small proportion of all immunisations suggesting that the identification of Indigenous children in the register is extremely poor.

Health workforce

200. There are two major data sources to assess the number and trends in persons of Indigenous origin engaged in different health occupations. These are, the five-yearly population censuses and work force surveys of AIHW. Population censuses collect for each person, 15 years and over, the labour force status and detailed characteristics such as the employment status and industry of employment (see A5.20). This information for Indigenous people, together with the data on the highest educational (or professional) qualification can be used to assess broad trends in the number and

⁵⁷ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (1997) *Australia's Welfare, 1997* The Third Biennial Report of the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, AGPS Canberra.

⁵⁸ Keys Young (1997) *Market Research into Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Access to Medicare and the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme*, A report prepared for the Health Insurance Commission, 3 November 1997.

characteristics of different categories of Indigenous health work force. The data are, however, subject to a number of limitations, the more obvious being the self-identification of Indigenous status discussed in Chapter 2.

201. Other limitations include substantial non-response or inadequate information provided on the census form relating to some questions such as qualification and employment status; employment details reported in the census refer to a reference period of one week. Furthermore the accuracy of the workforce information depends on to what extent the Australian Standard Classification of Occupations' (ASCO) is able to capture accurately the details of a person's occupational details.

202. The second major source of labour force information comes from the regular surveys conducted by AIHW with the assistance of registration boards and state and territory health authorities. The current AIHW collection covers a number of health professions, such as medical, nursing, pharmacy, podiatry and dental.

203. Among the workforce categories, nursing (both registered and enrolled), it is important as the bulk of the health labour force consist of nurses. The information collected through the survey is valuable for policy planning, but participation in the survey is voluntary resulting in a substantial level of non-response. Nurses usually retain registration in more than one jurisdiction, although most work in one or two jurisdictions, do not even practice nursing.

204. Since the survey forms are delivered to registrants through respective nursing boards, there is a possibility for multiple counting. Although AIHW tabulates data according to the 'sole or main jurisdiction' of practice, there is no sound mechanism in place to avoid multiple representations. Indigenous status is an agreed key data item in the collection, but this does guarantee that this data item is included uniformly in forms used in all jurisdictions. Reports published by AIHW contain some basic information on Indigenous

work force, however, detailed cross-tabulations with an analysis of trends are not routinely published as yet.

Outcome indicators

205. Numerous efforts were made in different times to develop appropriate indicators for outcome measurement in Indigenous health. National Health Information Management Group (NHIMG) for the Australian Health Ministers Advisory Council (AHMAC) developed a set of interim indicators for performance measurement with the aim of encouraging states and territories to measure and monitor health of Indigenous people and to allow states and territories to report on the measures that they implemented in improving the quality and accuracy of their data collections.

206. NHIMG categorised interim performance indicators for 1999 into nine broad headings:

- life expectancy and mortality;
- morbidity;
- access;
- health service impacts;
- workforce development;
- risk factors;
- intersectoral issues;
- community involvement; and
- quality of service provision.

207. Before commenting on specific indicators it is of interest to note the following comments by a Parliamentary Inquiry on performance indicators of the NHIMG, which are of relevance:

A set of about 60 national indicators has been developed by Australian Health Ministers, but many of these cannot yet be fully reported against by most jurisdictions. Development of these indicators is continuing and the Committee supports the use of such national indicators, but considers there should be a smaller set of targeted outcomes against which all jurisdictions must report⁵⁹.

A brief comment on some key performance indicators

Category 1: Life expectancy and mortality

208. Expectation of life at birth is used as a summary measure of the overall health status of the Indigenous population. The available life table values for the Indigenous population should be used with caution due to a number of reasons. Life tables for the general population is computed using for each age the Estimated Resident Population (ERP) and registered deaths.

209. Due to poor coverage of the identification of Indigenous deaths, life tables for the Indigenous population cannot be computed using conventional methods. For this reason, ABS compiled the Indigenous life tables for the 1991-96 using indirect methods. In the most recent life tables ABS used registered Indigenous deaths adjusted for the assumed under-identification, and using experimental estimates of the mid-year population, which is also estimated using unconventional methods. The estimated life expectancy figures were highly sensitive to the coverage adjustments made, as the difference in life expectancies based on the adjusted and unadjusted deaths was very large.

210. Furthermore, the life expectancy figures reveal the health status of the deceased; hence do not accurately represent the overall health of the population. As a summary measure of health, therefore, it is important to have a combined measure, which takes into account mortality, disability and non-fatal health outcomes. As has already been discussed, the data required

⁵⁹ House of Representatives Standing Committee on Family and Community Affairs (2000) *Health is Life. Report on the Inquiry into Indigenous Health*, CanPrint Communications Pty. Ltd.

to develop such a combined health measure are not currently available for the Indigenous population⁶⁰.

Category 2: Morbidity

211. There are three indicators (see 2.1 to 2.2) based on the Indigenous data derived from the Notification of diseases. As the NHIMG report acknowledges some jurisdictions are unable to report against these indicators due to the under-identification of Indigenous persons in their reporting systems.

212. Some jurisdictions (WA and the NT) are only able to report crude rates without standardising for age. The data for the Indicator 2.3 are not yet available nationally because of the system of screening children for hearing loss has not been established in many jurisdictions. Indicators 2.4, 2.5 and 2.6 are all affected by the degree of under-identification of Indigenous births (indicator 2.4) and persons in hospital collections.

Category 3: Access

213. There is no information at the national level to measure accessibility to and availability of different health services for Indigenous people, including hospitals, health centres, health professionals and chemists. However, the NATSIS collected information on the distances to different service centres (health centres/hospitals) and to the practice of health professionals, but the information collected referred to the situation in 1994.

214. The most recent data to determine the distance, thereby travel time, to health facilities and selected health professionals are available for discrete Indigenous communities from the CHINS. Per capita expenditure and resources allocated to health services for Indigenous people is difficult to estimate, due mainly to the complex health service delivery systems and diversity of funding methods, compounded by the under-identification of Indigenous people in collections, including population census counts. The

⁶⁰ A number of such measures have been developed. The more common measures include: Health Adjusted

available calculations⁶¹ on expenditure involve a fair amount of guesswork and extrapolation of evidence based on case studies or surveys such as BEACH discussed above.

Category 4: Health service impacts

215. Of the eight indicators proposed under this category most do not actually measure health impacts. All are good indicators of accessibility, while others are more workload indicators than impact indicators. Computation of indicators 4.3 and 4.5 needs the data from HIC's NCIR (see A5.19). However, NCIR database for Indigenous children is too incomplete to be used for this purpose.

Category 5: Workforce development

216. Seven indicators have been proposed. The main aim is to examine workforce issues that may impact on the delivery of health services to Indigenous people. Two indicators (5.1 and 5.2) concern enrolments and graduations of Indigenous persons in health-related fields of study. The major data sources are the higher education statistics collected by the Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) and the Vocational Education and Training (VET) data collection by the National Centre for Vocational Education Research.

217. The coverage of identification in these enrolments is not yet complete as will be discussed later in the chapter on Education. Underlying data for computation of the remaining 5 indicators are not available uniformly in all jurisdictions, except for Commonwealth agencies.

Life Expectancy (HALE), Disability Adjusted Life Years (DALY) and Quality adjusted Life Years (QALY).

⁶¹ Deeble, J, Mathers, C, Smith, L, Goss, J, Webb, R and Smith, V.(1998) *Expenditure on Health Services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People* AIHW Cat. No. HWE 6, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Canberra; Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2001) *Expenditures on Health Services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People, 1998-99*, AIHW Cat. No. 7, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Canberra.

Category 6: Risks factors

218. Indicators proposed either reflect some life-style factors relating to ill health or risk factors for a number of chronic conditions. The data to compute these indicators for the Indigenous population is only available from the NATSIS 1994, NHS program, National Nutrition Survey and Drug Strategy Household survey. Any estimates on the risk factors from these surveys are possible at the national level only.

Category 7: Intersectoral Issues

219. Of the two indicators included in this category the first is concerned with household income. It uses the number of households below certain income as the indicator of poverty (head-count poverty). The main data source to compute this indicator is the five-yearly population census, which is subject to numerous data quality issues.

220. Recently, ABS commenced releasing labour force details from the household survey program. The income data, if released from the household survey program, may also be of use, provided that the number of Indigenous households covered in the survey is adequate for income estimates for Indigenous people. The other indicator proposed to assess availability is the accessibility of the dwelling to reliable electricity, gas, water and sanitary services. The data collected refer to the reference period of 4 weeks.

221. The Population and Housing census provides some of these data but lacks sufficient details to determine 'reliability'. CHINS, on the other hand, collects similar data, but the unit of enumeration of the survey was not households, but housing organisations and discrete communities. Also, the reference period used for CHINS is the 12-month period, which is vastly different from the reference period proposed for the indicator⁶².

⁶² The National Health Management Group ((NHIMG) (2001) *National Summary of the 199 Jurisdictional Reports Against the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Performance Indicators*, AIHW Cat. No. IHW 8. Canberra Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

Category 8: Community involvement

222. Two indicators have been proposed to ascertain the inclusion of representatives from Indigenous communities in health planning at the state and regional level.

Category 9: Quality of service provision

223. Only one indicator has been proposed under this category, which examines the number of critical incidence reporting and complaints made against health services. The general belief is that Indigenous people are less likely to know the mechanisms in place for, and to use, such mechanisms to complain (or report) against any person or against the quality of the services they receive.

Performance Indicators recommended to assess Indigenous health outcomes.

Life expectancy and mortality

- Indicator 1.1: Life expectancy at birth by sex
- Indicator 1.2a: Age-standardised all-causes mortality rates by sex
- Indicator 1.2b: Age-specific all-causes mortality rate ratio by sex
- Indicator 1.3a: Age-standardised all-causes mortality rate ratio by sex
- Indicator 1.4: The chance of dying between 20 and 54 years by sex
- Indicator 1.5: Number of stillbirths to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mothers
- per 1,000 total births to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mothers
- Indicator 1.6: Death rate of Indigenous Australians from birth to 1 year of age
- Indicator 1.7a-d: Age-standardised mortality rates for (a) ischaemic heart disease and rheumatic heart disease; (b) injury and poisoning; (c) pneumonia; and (d) diabetes, by sex for Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders and non-Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders
- Indicator 1.7e: Age-standardised mortality rates for cancer of the cervix among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women

Morbidity

- Indicator 2.1a: Morbidity rates for selected vaccine preventable diseases: pertussis, measles, hepatitis B
- Indicators 2.1b: Notification rate for meningococcal infection
- Indicator 2.2: Crude notification rates for gonorrhoea and syphilis by sex
- Indicators 2.3: Percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children at school entry having greater than 25dB hearing loss averaged over three frequencies

- Indicator 2.4: Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander newborns with birth weight less than 2,500 grams
- Indicator 2.5: Age-standardised all-causes hospital separation rate ratios by sex
- Indicator 2.6: Age-standardised hospital separation rate ratios for (6a) acute myocardial infarction, (6b) injury and poisoning, (6c) respiratory diseases, (6d) diabetes, and (6e) tympanoplasty, by sex

Access

- Indicator 3.1: Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people whose ordinary residence is <30 minutes routine travel time for a full-time permanent primary care service by usual means of transport
- Indicator 3.2: Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples whose ordinary residence is <one hour travel time from a hospital that provides acute inpatient care with the continuous availability of medical supervision
- Indicator 3.3 Overall per capita annual expenditure by governments on primary, secondary and tertiary health care services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people compared with expenditure for the total population
- Indicators 3.4: Case fatality ratio of hospital separations to deaths for sentinel conditions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people compared with non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- Indicator 3.5: Proportion of primary care services, and the resources allocated to these services
- Indicator 3.7: Representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people on health/hospital boards, and whether membership is mandated by terms of reference.
- Indicator 3.8: Proportion of communities with usual populations of less than 100 people within one-hour usual travel time to primary health care services.
- Indicator 3.9: Per capita recurrent expenditure by governments on health care services to communities with populations of less than 100 people, as compares with expenditure for the general population.

Health service impacts

- Indicator 4.1: The expenditure on, and description of, health promotion programs specifically targeting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- Indicator 4.2: Number of Pap smears among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females ages 18-70 years as a proportion of the female Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population in that age group
- Indicator 4.3: Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged 2 years and 6 years old that are fully immunised as recorded in the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register (ACIR)
- Indicator 4.4: Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged older than 50 years who have received pneumococcal vaccine in the last 6 years
- Indicator 4.5: Proportion of children aged between 2 and 6 years who are fully immunised against hepatitis B, as recorded in the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register (ACIR)

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- Indicator 4.6: Extent of support for the development and implementation of protocols and effective detection and management systems for conditions such as asthma, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, chronic renal disease, chronic respiratory conditions and hypertension
 - Indicator 4.7: Age-standardised Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander accident and emergency activity rates for lacerations, fractures, trauma, respiratory infections, skin infections and nutritional disorders
 - Indicator 4.8: Proportion of total consultations by condition and by care provider.

Workforce development

- Indicator 5.1: Number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who have (a) graduated in the previous year; and (b) are in training in key health-related fields
- Indicator 5.2: Number and proportion of Aboriginal Health Workers who graduated in the previous year or are participating in accredited training programs
- Indicator 5.3: The proportion of vacant funded full-time equivalent (FTE) positions for doctors, nurses and Aboriginal Health Workers in (a) Aboriginal health services, and (b) other organisations providing primary care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people on a given date
- Indicator 5.4: Number of vacant funded FTE positions for doctors, nurses and Aboriginal Health Workers in hospitals where greater than 25% of separations are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people on a given date
- Indicators 5.5: Number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identified positions in the health sector
- Indicator 5.6: Proportion of doctors and nurses who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
- Indicator 5.7: Proportion of accredited hospitals for which the accreditation process required Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cross-cultural awareness programs for staff to be in place,

Risk Factors

- Indicator 6.1: Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged greater than 13 years who currently smoke, by age and sex
- Indicator 6.2: Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with a body mass index (BMI) greater than 25, by sex and age
- Indicator 6.3: Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who reported usually consuming more than four drinks on the occasions when they drank alcohol in the last two weeks, relative to the total numbers who reported on consumption.

Intersectoral issues

- Indicator 7.2: Proportion of dwellings where one or more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults is the usual resident, and over the last 4 weeks had reliable electricity or gas supplies, reliable water supplies and reliable sewerage or adequate alternatives

Community involvement

- Indicators 8.1: Establishment of a forum representing the Aboriginal health sector, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) and the State jurisdiction in each state and territory.
- Indicator 8.2: Cooperative community planning with the implementation of the regional planning processes.

Quality of service provision

- Indicator 9.1: Critical incident reporting and complaints mechanisms at all levels of health services.

Source: National Health Information Management Group (NHIMG) (2001) National Summary of the 1999 Jurisdictional Reports Against the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Performance Indicators, AIHW Cat. No. IHW 8. Canberra Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

Education and training

Introduction

224. Traditionally, the Australian education and training system has been divided into four major sectors: preschool, school, Vocational Education and Training (VET), and higher education. Government and non-government sectors co-exist within each of these education sectors, although the former is the dominant. The administration and funding arrangements, as well as the information reporting systems, differ between these education sectors. Preschools are the responsibility of states and territories, but the Commonwealth's involvement in this sector is confined only to supplementary or program specific (i.e. Indigenous Education Strategic Initiatives Programme, IESIP) funding for both government and non-government preschools and the administration of the childcare service provision. School education is the sole responsibility of states and territories.

225. The Commonwealth funds specific policy initiatives agreed between the Commonwealth and states and territories, including the IESIP. Non-Government schools receive funding from both state and territory and the Commonwealth. The VET is administered by the states and territories in partnership with the Commonwealth and the non-Government sector. The Commonwealth is the main source of funding for higher education. The Commonwealth is the principal provider of funding to higher education and makes overall policy and strategic decisions on education and training policies.

226. Although the responsibility for education is vested with the respective states and territories, the Commonwealth has expanded its role in education and training over the last two or three decades. It plays a central policy role in implementing national approaches to common issues relating to education and training, and undertakes coordinating roles through forums such as the Ministerial Council for Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) and the Australian National Training Authority Agreements.

227. Data on education and training can be derived from two main sources: general data collections and education specific collections. The former includes population and housing censuses and other socio-economic surveys, which collect detailed information on the education of persons, although the main purpose of these collections is not to provide educational and training statistics. The education specific collections include mainly the institutional data and specific surveys conducted to obtain data on specific topics. After discussing the population census, other data sources are discussed under the following key educational sectors: preschool, school, VET and higher education.

Population and housing

228. The five-yearly censuses of population and housing collect information on socio-economic and housing characteristics of the population, including the information on educational attainment of persons of specific age. For each person, the census collects information on school attendance (full or part-time), type of school (preschool, secondary school, tertiary institution and other, and providing for each a breakdown of government, non-government and Catholic education) and detailed information on the highest level of schooling and grades completed, field of study, year and the institution from which the highest qualification was received etc.

229. This information can be cross-classified with many other socio-economic, family and housing characteristics and can be disaggregated for small geographic areas. The information obtained from the census is useful to assess intercensal comparisons of educational characteristics of the population according to background characteristics.

230. The major limitation is, however, that the assessment of trends of Indigenous educational characteristics is significantly affected by increases in population levels due to changing attitudes to identification discussed earlier (Chapter 2). This tendency is expected to be greater for the school-age children of the Indigenous spouses of non-Indigenous partners. Apart from this issue, population censuses are a good source of data to assess persons in preschools, schools, and tertiary educational institutions and to study the educational and skill levels of the population.

Preschool statistics

231. Preschools could be administered either by government or non-government agencies. State and territory governments collect information from preschools, which they fund and administer. These collections are designed for administrative purposes, mainly to assess performance for funding decisions. These statistics are reported in annual reports published by education departments of the respective states and territories, but the items for which the information is collected are not comparable across jurisdictions.

232. The data from non-government preschools are collected through the Census of Indigenous Preschool Children conducted by Data Analysis Australia of WA on behalf of Commonwealth Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) (for details see A6.1 in appendix).

233. DEST receives from the respective state and territory education departments relevant data on government preschools to be included in the national database. While the Indigenous preschool census is the main

national data collection, information on preschool children and their background characteristics can be obtained from 1995 from the annual Childcare Survey of the Department of Family and Community Services (see A6.2 for details). The focus of this survey is, however, restricted to the government funded childcare service outlets.

Schools statistics

234. Schools in states and territories cover primary, secondary and post secondary grades and can be administered by government or non-government sectors. The data collection in schools is monitored by MCEETYA, which consists of education ministers of the Commonwealth and state and territory governments⁶³. To maintain the comparability of the data collected from all schools across states and territories, and in both government and non-government schools MCEETYA appointed a Task Force of School Statistics to oversee and advise on the development of uniform concepts, definitions and classifications to be used for the national collection of school statistics. The major source of school statistics is the annual National School Statistics collection (NSSC) of ABS (See A6.3).

235. ABS obtains data on government schools from the state and territory education departments and non-government sector data from the Census of Non-Government Schools conducted by DEST (see A6.4). This collection provides information on students, grades, and staff. The data collected from this source are relatively more consistent since the introduction of NSSC standards, and these standards were introduced across both government and non-government collections in 1984.

⁶³ In 1936, the Australian Education Council was set up consisting of educational ministers in the Commonwealth and states and territories. This Council was responsible for the policy development and educational programs in schools across states and territories. The Ministerial Council for Vocational Education, Employment and Training was responsible for the VET sector, while the Youth Ministers Council was responsible for the education and employment policies relating to youth. In 1994, on the advice of the Council of Australian Governments, these three Ministerial Councils were replaced by a single ministerial council which is charged with all levels of education and training. This council is known as the Ministerial Council for Vocational Education, Employment and Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA), covering ministerial functions of the then Commonwealth Department of Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs.

236. Yet, inter-jurisdictional and interschool variations exist resulting from the policy and procedural differences in school systems. One of the major problems in the collection refers to staffing statistics between government and non-government schools because staffing categories are different between the two sectors. DEST collects data on school enrolments by grade on an annual basis. This information is collected to monitor the progress of IESIP and the general improvements in school enrolments. The information collected is not routinely published. The school statistics give aggregated data on school participation of students according to a few basic characteristics such as sex, and Indigenous status for state and territory level.

237. The utility of the current NSSC is limited for monitoring post-compulsory school participation or student transitions to further education because the collection is not based on unit-level student enrolment records. This was highlighted by a recent report published by the National Centre for Vocational Education and Research (NCVER)⁶⁴. The report also drew attention to the following limitations in the collection:

- mature-age students are not identified separately and are lumped into an age 20 plus category;
- students repeating year 12 or undertaking work experience are not shown separately;
- students enrolled in evening classes are reported under the full-time equivalent of the part-time student category; and
- difficulties in the use of the data to monitor students' movements beyond the school sector or the completion of the year 12 certificate.

Senior secondary schools data

238. A useful data source on senior secondary students is the survey of subject choice of year 11 and 12 students, conducted by the Australian Council for Education Research (ACER) (see A6.5). Although the number of schools covered in the survey has been enhanced to increase the

⁶⁴ Teese, R and Watson, L (2001) *Mapping and Tracking. Data Collections for Monitoring Post-Compulsory Education and Training*, NCVER, National Centre for Education Research Ltd, South Australia.

representation of Indigenous students the results of the survey can only be used to derive reliable estimates at the national level. DEST also collects information on year 11 and 12 students annually from the curriculum assessment and certification section of states and territories. This information is collected by DEST as part of its monitoring role of the senior secondary enrolments.

Indigenous status identification

239. In all these collections the Indigenous status of students is recorded in enrolment forms. In most cases, parents or guardians complete enrolment forms before the enrolment date. Where this information is left unrecorded on the enrolment form those students will be considered as non-Indigenous, by default. However, the identification of Indigenous children in schools has improved as a result of the range of the benefits that Indigenous students receive, and the per capita funding and other resources (i.e. staff) schools are entitled to under Indigenous specific Commonwealth programs such as the Indigenous Education Strategic Initiatives Programme (IESIP).

Survey of education and training

240. This is a household based collection conducted by ABS (A6.6) with funding from the Commonwealth department responsible for education and training (currently DEST). The data are collected from persons of 15-64 years of age in households. Although Indigenous persons are identified the survey data cannot be used to derive reliable estimates only at the national level. Data items such as age, sex, address, employment details, and language spoken at home are collected. This survey can provide information on courses and training undertaken, including courses offered by the employer.

Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector data

241. The VET sector includes the Technical and Further Education Institutions (TAFE), Adult and Community Education (ACE) and Private Sector Training Providers. The VET sector statistics do not currently include VET courses provided in schools.

242. The main responsibility for VET sector statistics is vested with the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER), which receive funding from the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA). The VET sector statistics are maintained through the Australian Vocational Education and Training Management Information Statistical Standards (AVETMISS), although all jurisdictions do not collect statistics totally on these guidelines. NCVER's VET data collection includes a number of surveys, information on which is given in appendix A6.7 to A6.9.

TAFE Collection

243. Among the VET statistics collections the Technical and Further Education (TAFE) is the most important, as it is the only education sector which has a very high representation of Indigenous students compared to other students⁶⁵. The TAFE collection is a good source of data on the VET sector as it provides detailed information on students, courses and modules, staffing and expenditures.

244. Unlike the school student statistics, TAFE statistics have enhanced utility as the system is based on unit-records of students. Although the Indigenous status of the student is a key item of information collected for each student, the proportion of students not providing this information is extremely large, about 33% in 1993⁶⁶. Missing data are not confined to the Indigenous status data item. The survey form requires students to provide

⁶⁵ Robinson, C. and Hughes, P (1999) *Creating a Sense of Place. Indigenous Peoples in Vocational; Education and Training*, NCVER, National Centre for Vocational Education Research, South Australia.

⁶⁶ National Centre for Vocational Education Research (1994) *Selected Vocational Educational Training Statistics, 1993*. NCVER, South Australia.

information on a number of fields. While the respondent burden may be a reason for the large non-response to many questions, for program monitoring and outcome measurement, more information than is collected currently such as the educational background and institutions attended is needed.

Apprenticeships and traineeships survey

245. NCVET conducts this survey on an annual basis (see A6.10). The training contracts available with the state and territory training agencies are used as the frame for the survey. The data are often found to be of limited use, as the published data do not contain detailed information on apprenticeships and training provided to employees. Although the Indigenous status of the apprentice or the trainee is available from the collection, no evaluation has been done to examine the coverage of identification.

Adult community education (ACE) student statistics

246. The ACE programs are mainly run in community-based not-for-profit non-government institutions, although some ACE programs are conducted in tertiary sector institutions or as distance education programs. Although students in ACE programs participate for different reasons—upgrade skills for further study, for recreation or as a hobby—these courses cover a wide array of subjects, which have their focus in personal enrichment.

247. Given the fact that some or most participants in ACE are adults, and the population is ageing (although may be less of relevance to Indigenous people), statistics on ACE programs are useful to monitor life-long experience in training and skill development of the population. The only major collection of ACE programs is the Survey of Adult and Community Education Statistics of NCVET (see A6.11). The collection does not include data from private service providers and therefore, gives only a partial picture of ACE activity.

248. A Senate References Committee reported in 1994 that while AVETMISS provides guidelines for data collection on a uniform basis, these standards are, however, designed to capture statistics on participation in ACE programs that provide accredited training. The Committee recognised the fact that while it will cause some difficulties for the smaller and less resourced agencies to report, the ACE statistics should also cover all training programs both accredited and non-accredited⁶⁷.

Higher education statistics

249. As the main funding agency the responsibility for collecting the data on higher education is vested with DEST. The main data source for higher education students is the Higher Education Students Collection (see A6.12). The collection is based on the enrolment forms of individual students. The collection includes government funded higher education and therefore, does not include private universities and higher educational institutions, with some exceptions⁶⁸.

250. The higher education student statistics include very useful information for policy planning and the data can be disaggregated, subject to confidentiality restrictions, at the regional level. The limitation with the current collection is that the information collected on past achievements in education or tertiary qualifications is very broad and does not contain details of the institution, such as the type and location.

Other related data sources

251. There are several data collections, which provide different aspects of education and training conducted by different agencies on a regular basis. These are briefly referred to in this section. Most data sets available in education and training are conducted on a regular basis, refer to a particular point in time and provide a good source of information on the stock of the

⁶⁷ Senate Employment, Education and Training References Committee (1997) *Beyond Cinderella. Towards a Learning Society*, Canberra.

⁶⁸ Avondale College and Broom campus of the University of Notre Dame Australia.

student population. ACER conducts a longitudinal study of cohorts of young people (see 6A.13) and collects detailed information on education and work experience. This is an important data source but the Indigenous children usually covered in the survey are not adequate to do a meaningful analysis separately for that group.

Third international comparisons of mathematics and science achievement

252. This is an international survey designed to measure mathematics and science achievements of students, previously known as the Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS).

253. The TIMSS is conducted by the Australian Council of Education Research (ACER) for the International Association for the Evaluation of Education Achievement. Since it is a component of an international study, the focus is on Australia as a whole, and does not have an adequate number of Indigenous students for detailed data analysis. However, this survey, if expanded to cover Indigenous students, could be a useful data source to assess achievements of Indigenous children in mathematics and science. The TIMSS was conducted in Australia during 1994-95 and 1988-99, and the next survey is planned for the year 2002-03.

National School English Literacy Survey (NSELS)

254. ACER conducted a national survey of some 7,400 year 3 and year 5 students where the English literacy of students was assessed by their teachers and external persons. The sample was stratified by state and territory. The assessment was carried out over a period of six weeks. The Survey collected for each student a number of data items including age, sex, socio-economic background, including Indigenous status, and language spoken at home. Additional data collected included learning problems, disabilities, school attendance and enrolment and were obtained from teachers and principals. The survey was conducted in 1996. In 2001 only year 7 students were covered. The number of Indigenous students who participated in the survey program is too small to make reliable detailed statistics.

Program for international student assessment (PISA)

255. This is an OECD study focussing on achievements of 15-year old students at the end of compulsory schooling. The survey conducted in 2000 included two-hours of classroom tests and answering multiple-choice and open-ended questions. The sample was designed to obtain national estimates of Australian students for international comparison and may not be a good source for Indigenous students' data.

Teachers in Australian schools

256. The Australian College of Education conducted in 1963, 1979, 1989 and 1999, a study of Teachers in Australian Schools, with funding from the Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs (now DEST). The survey provided characteristics of teachers in government, Catholic and Independent schools in Australia. The survey focus and coverage expanded in successive surveys, and the 1999 the survey covered over 20,000 teachers.

257. The survey sample was selected to produce independent estimates for primary and secondary schools of states and territories. Details of teachers and their qualifications and experience were collected under the following categories: personal profile (including Indigenous status), profile in teaching profession, current employment details, professional qualifications, career intentions, further professional development and memberships of organisations. About 5% of teachers were identified as Indigenous in the 1999 Survey. The survey report includes some basic data on Indigenous teachers⁶⁹

Expenditure on education

258. Expenditure on Education and Training is a report published by ABS annually (see A6.14) using data from a number of sources: private expenditure on education and training is obtained from its own household

⁶⁹ Dempstor, N., Sim, C., Beere, D. and Logan, L. (2000) *Teachers in Australian Schools. A Report From the 1999 National Survey. Executive Summary*. Australian College of Education.

surveys. Expenditure Surveys; the values of an educator's earning are derived from ABS Employee Earnings and Hours Survey; government expenditure on education is obtained from Government Financial Statistics. Although the Indigenous component is not separately shown, details on some specific components can be derived separately for the Indigenous population.

Comparability of expenditure data items, 1999-2000

Cost item	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	TAS	ACT	NT
Superannuation	√a	√a	√a	√a	√a	√a	√a	Na
Payroll tax (WA and ACT are exempt from this tax)	√	√	√a	√a	x	√	X	Na
Termination of long service leave	√a	X	√	√a	√a	√	√	Na
Sick leave	X	X	X	√a	X	√	√	Na
Depreciation	√	X	√	√	√	√	√	Na
Rent	√a	√a	√a	√a	√a	√a	√a	Na
Utilities	√a	√	√a	√a	√	√	√	Na
Umbrella department costs	√f	√f	√f	√ps	√f	√ps*	√f	Na

√=included in estimating costs; X=not included; na=Information not available; a=accrual; ps=per student. *=Full time equivalent.

Source: SCRCSSP (2001) *Report on Government Services, 2000*. Vol 1: Chapter 3 Table 3.8 Page 84.

259. In its 2002 report on government services, SCRCSSP draws attention to the difficulty of obtaining uniform data on expenditure in relation to the government funded schools⁷⁰. The report commented on the different practices adopted by states and territories in estimating expenditure on schools. The following table extracted from the report provides the status of reporting on expenditure by different jurisdictions:

Other surveys

260. Graduate Destination Survey (see A6.15), and Survey of Education and Work (see A6.16), both of which have a smaller number of Indigenous persons. Because of this the value of the survey results for Indigenous persons becomes less important.

⁷⁰ SCRCSSP (Steering Committee for the Review of Commonwealth/State Service Provision) 2002, *Report on Government Services, 2002*, Vol. 1(Chapter 3), AusInfo, Canberra.

Indigenous Education Strategic Initiatives Programme (IESIP): performance indicators

261. Under the IESIP, targeted assistance is provided to improve accessibility and equity of education and training in preschool, schools and the VET sector for Indigenous people under the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy (AEP). IESIP also provides financial and other resources to preschools, schools and tertiary educational institutions for Indigenous education. The provision of funds under IESIP is now made under the *Indigenous Education (Supplementary Assistance) Amendment Act 1996* and its amendment in 2000, which authorised the Commonwealth to make Supplementary Recurrent Assistance (RSA) to educational institutions under IESIP.

262. As part of RSA, DEST developed in consultation with state and territory education departments accountability arrangements, and a reporting framework for monitoring program impact. As part of the funding under RSA for the 2001-2004 quadrennium, a set of performance indicators for each of the main educational sectors — preschool and schools and VET sector — was developed (see A6.17 appendix).

263. Each state and territory education department under the RSA agreement is required to report performance against the agreed set of indicators for their respective institutions. In essence, at the end of the year the service provider is required to assess to what extent the strategies were successful in the preceding year in respect of the agreed program outcomes, and if there was any shortfall, determine the reasons for any shortfall and implement remedial measures in consultation with DEST.

264. The first year of the reporting has now passed and each agency should report performance information against these indicators three months after the end of the calendar year (31 March). The Indigenous education section of DEST will collate this information and prepare a report to the MCEETYA to be presented to the parliament later in the year.

265. DEST appears to have focussed on the performance indicators rather than further developing existing data collections – preschool, school and VET sector collections. While such ‘quick-fix’ measures may bring short-term benefits they can have detrimental effects on the development of reporting systems in the long run. What is important is to improve the existing data collection to obtain underlying data to compute performance indicators.

266. The set of indicators developed for preschools, schools and the VET sector is given in appendix 6.12. A review report of the Australian National Audit Office, found that performance indicators that are developed for reporting RSA agreements under IESIP are appropriate in terms of performance reviews, and made a number of recommendations to streamline and further improve the process of reporting⁷¹.

IESIP performance indicators: a comment

267. While the performance indicators developed may be consistent with the key objectives of the Indigenous education strategies framework, there are concerns over some indicators and the ability of some service providers to give the required information in a meaningful way. For example, for the preschool sector three indicators have been agreed to report against the improvements in Indigenous literacy, and further indicators to report against improvements in numeracy. Both the literacy and numeracy information is drawn from the annual tests conducted in preschools. In some jurisdictions, for instance in the ACT, the PIPS test (Performance Information in Primary Schools) is conducted only among kindergarten students, and preschool children enrolled in years before kindergarten are not currently given this test.

268. Besides, in the ACT it is not compulsory to attend preschools and children can go to kindergarten if the parent or guardians wish them to do so. Without conducting special PIPS test in preschools it is not possible for

⁷¹ Australian National Audit Office (2002) Indigenous Education Strategies. Department of Education, Science and Training, *Audit Report No.43 2001-2002*, AusInfo Canberra Act.

the ACT to report against these indicators. Furthermore, most indicators compiled for school students have little meaning when the indicators refer to a smaller number of students. For example in the whole of the ACT the number of Indigenous children attending a specific grade may be fewer than fifty.

269. With such a low base the annual indicators derived could fluctuate rapidly even with a minor change in the numerator. In such circumstances, assessment of trends becomes meaningless. For the assessment of literacy and numeracy, relevant standards or benchmarks have not yet been fully developed. Discussions during this Evaluation with some educational departments revealed that these guidelines are currently available only for 'reading' and 'spelling'. For 'writing' these guidelines are yet to be developed. Similarly, guidelines for testing literacy and numeracy among years 3, 5, 7 and 9, students' guidelines are available only for years 3 and 5.

270. Thus, a national reporting of statistics against those indicators will cause problems. In some areas where educational performances are significantly affected by locational disadvantage, such as in the remote regions in central Australia, the implementation of national standards may cause special problems. Furthermore, in VET institutions persons can enrol for a course leading to an award or a certificate or can enrol for some course units/modules to obtain a specific skill.

271. The current VET statistics do not distinguish between students doing a few course units from those intending to complete a certificate. Under the circumstances, it is therefore difficult to assume that all those who did not complete an award course as representative of a poor outcome⁷². Current indicators developed fail to capture transitions between educational sectors and from education to work.

⁷² Foyster, J., Fai, H.K. and Shah, C (2000) *Student Flows Through Australian TAFE Courses*, NCVER, South Australia.

272. An important issue confronting educational policy in Australia is to identify pathways or transitions of students between different educational sectors and work. Current indicators have been developed within the traditional education sectors without giving due consideration to developing data reporting systems to capture such transitions. Consequently, the demand for educational services cannot be properly measured.

Performance Indicators: Preschool, School and VET sectors.

Preschool sector

Improve Indigenous Literacy

- Percentage (with numbers) of Indigenous and non-Indigenous students who demonstrate literacy awareness and understanding of a level appropriate for entry into primary school. (For students who will be old enough to go to primary school the following year.)
- Percentage (with numbers) of Indigenous and non-Indigenous students who demonstrate literacy awareness and understanding appropriate for their age. (For students who will not be old enough to go to primary school the following year.)
- Percentage (with numbers) of students who demonstrate literacy awareness and understanding in their main language of instruction of a level appropriate for their age. (For students who will be old enough to go to primary school the following year.)

Improve Indigenous Numeracy

- Percentage (with numbers) of Indigenous and non-Indigenous students who demonstrate numeracy awareness and understanding of a level appropriate for entry into primary school. (For students who will be old enough to go to primary school the following year.)
- Percentage (with numbers) of Indigenous and non-Indigenous students who demonstrate numeracy awareness and understanding appropriate for their age. (For students who will not be old enough to go to primary school the following year.)
- Percentage (with numbers) of students who demonstrate numeracy awareness and understanding in their main language of instruction of a level appropriate for their age. (For students who will be old enough to go to primary school the following year.)

Improve Educational Outcomes for Indigenous Students

- Average attendance rates: (a) Indigenous Students; (b) Non-Indigenous Students.

Increase Indigenous Enrolments

- Number and full-time equivalent of students enrolled: (a) Indigenous Students; and (b) Non-Indigenous Students

Increase the Employment of Indigenous Australians in Education and Training

- Total number and full-time equivalent (FTE) of: (a) Indigenous Students; and (b) Non-Indigenous Students
- Total number and full-time equivalent (FTE) of Indigenous staff in the following categories: (a) Teachers (degree qualified) and (b) Teachers (non-degree qualified); and (c) Aboriginal and Islander Education Workers (AIEWs) and equivalents and (d) Other.

Increase Professional Development for Staff Involved in Indigenous Education

- Percentage (with numbers) of classroom staff who have undertaken Indigenous cross-cultural awareness training.
- Average hours of professional development undertaken by: (a) Indigenous full-time equivalent staff; and (b) Non-Indigenous full-time equivalent staff
- Percentage (with numbers) of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Workers (and equivalents) who have completed or part-completed study towards the following level of qualification: (a) Degree; (b) Diploma/Associate Diploma/Advanced Diploma and (c) Certificate.
- Information on other professional development activities undertaken by both Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff, including: (a) type of professional development and (b) number of Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants.

Increasing the Involvement of Indigenous Parents/Community Members in Educational Decision Making

- Percentage (with numbers) of the total number of people involved in advisory/reference/management committees that deal specifically with Indigenous issues, who are Indigenous at the: (a) State Level; (b) Regional/District/Diocesan level.
- Percentage (with numbers) of the total number of people involved in advisory/reference/management Committees that deal with issues relating to all students, who are Indigenous at the: (a) State Level; (b) Regional/District/Diocesan level.
- Percentage (with numbers) of total people involved in bodies/committees that make decisions about the preschool(s) who are Indigenous: (a) Committees specifically dealing with Indigenous issues; and (b) General Committees.

Expanding Culturally Inclusive Curricula

- Percentage (with numbers) of preschools that offer: (a) an ongoing, structured Indigenous studies programme; and (b) an ongoing structured Indigenous language programme.

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- Does your preschool/system promote an Indigenous culturally inclusive curriculum by offering: (a) an Indigenous studies programme; and (b) an Indigenous language programme.
 - Activities undertaken within your culturally inclusive education programme, including an indication of how often these activities are undertaken. For example: (a) languages; (b) excursions/special days; (c) activities based on Indigenous culture/ using Indigenous resources; and (d) other
 - Details of how the local Indigenous community has got involved in these activities.

School sector

Improve Indigenous Literacy

- Percentage (with numbers) of Indigenous students who have sufficient literacy skills in the language of instruction in the early years of primary school (Indigenous language/Kriol) to move successfully into learning Standard Australian English.
- Distribution of Indigenous students across an ESL scale or literacy profile appropriate for these students (this should be used later in primary school after Standard Australian English (SAE) has been introduced).
- Percentage (and numbers) of Indigenous and non-Indigenous Year 3 students who achieved the Benchmark in the assessed strand of Reading [also reporting percentage (and number) who were exempted from testing and percentage (and number) absent/withdrawn from the testing].
- Percentage (and numbers) of Indigenous and non-Indigenous Year 3 students who achieved the Benchmark in the assessed strand of Writing [also reporting percentage (and number) who were exempted from testing and percentage (and number) absent/withdrawn from the testing].
- Percentage (and numbers) of Indigenous and non-Indigenous Year 3 students who achieved the Benchmark in the assessed strand of Spelling [also reporting percentage (and number) who were exempted from testing and percentage (and number) absent/withdrawn from the testing].
- Percentages (with numbers) of Indigenous students and non-Indigenous students in Year 3 achieving at each level of the State-wide literacy assessment instrument (reading).
- Percentage (and numbers) of Indigenous and non-Indigenous Year 5 students who achieved the Benchmark in the assessed strand of Reading [also reporting percentage (and number) who were exempted from testing and percentage (and number) absent/withdrawn from the testing].
- Percentage (and numbers) of Indigenous and non-Indigenous Year 5 students who achieved the Benchmark in the assessed strand of Writing [also reporting percentage (and number) who were exempted from testing and percentage (and number) absent/withdrawn from the testing].

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- Percentage (and numbers) of Indigenous and non-Indigenous Year 5 students who achieved the Benchmark in the assessed strand of Spelling [also reporting percentage (and number) who were exempted from testing and percentage (and number) absent/withdrawn from the testing].
 - Percentages (with numbers) of Indigenous students and non-Indigenous students in Year 5 achieving at each level of the State-wide literacy assessment instrument (reading).
 - Percentage (and numbers) of Indigenous and non-Indigenous Year 7 students who achieved the Benchmark in the assessed strand of Reading [also reporting percentage (and number) who were exempted from testing and percentage (and number) absent/withdrawn from the testing].
 - Percentage (and numbers) of Indigenous and non-Indigenous Year 7 students who achieved the Benchmark in the assessed strand of Writing [also reporting percentage (and number) who were exempted from testing and percentage (and number) absent/withdrawn from the testing].
 - Percentage (and numbers) of Indigenous and non-Indigenous Year 7 students who achieved the Benchmark in the assessed strand of Spelling [also reporting percentage (and number) who were exempted from testing and percentage (and number) absent/withdrawn from the testing].
 - Percentages (with numbers) of Indigenous students and non-Indigenous students in Year 7 achieving at each level of the State-wide literacy assessment instrument (Reading).
 - Percentages (with numbers) of Indigenous students and non-Indigenous students in Year 9 achieving at each level of the State-wide literacy assessment instrument (Reading).

Improve Indigenous Numeracy

- Percentage with numbers of Indigenous students who have sufficient numeracy skills as demonstrated in the language of instruction in early primary school (Indigenous language/Kriol) to move successfully into numeracy learning in Standard Australian English (SAE).
- Distribution of Indigenous students across a numeracy profile appropriate for these students (this should be used later in primary school after Standard Australian English has been introduced).
- Percentage (and numbers) of Indigenous and non-Indigenous Year 3 students who achieved the Numeracy Benchmark [also reporting percentage (and number) who were exempted from testing and percentage (and number) absent/withdrawn from the testing].
- Percentages (with numbers) of Indigenous students and non-Indigenous students in Year 3 achieving at each level of the state-wide numeracy assessment instrument.
- Percentage (and numbers) of Indigenous and non-Indigenous Year 5 students who achieved the Numeracy Benchmark [also reporting percentage (and number)

who were exempted from testing and percentage (and number) absent/withdrawn from the testing].

- Percentage (with numbers) of Indigenous students and non-Indigenous students in Year 5 achieving at each level of the State-wide numeracy assessment instrument.
- Percentage (and numbers) of Indigenous and non-Indigenous Year 7 students who achieved the Numeracy Benchmark [also reporting percentage (and number) who were exempted from testing and percentage (and number) absent/withdrawn from the testing].
- Percentages (with numbers) of Indigenous students and non-Indigenous students in Year 7 achieving at each level of the State-wide numeracy assessment instrument.
- Percentages (with numbers) of Indigenous students and non-Indigenous students in Year 9 achieving at each level of the State-wide numeracy assessment instrument.

Improve Educational Outcomes for Indigenous Students

- Average attendance rate of Indigenous students compared with non-Indigenous Students: (a) Primary Students; and (b) Secondary Students to Year 10 Only.
- Absence distribution of Indigenous and non-Indigenous students: (a) Primary Students; and (b) Secondary Students to Year 10 Only.
- For Providers in NSW, Victoria, Tasmania and ACT.
- Apparent retention of Indigenous and non-Indigenous students from Year 7 to Year 10 or for Providers in Queensland, Northern Territory, Western Australia and South Australia: (a) Apparent retention of Indigenous and non-Indigenous students from Year 8 to Year 10; and (b) apparent retention of Indigenous and non-Indigenous students from Year 10 to Year 12.
- (a) Number of Indigenous and non-Indigenous 16 year old students in education and training (school, VET or higher education) as a percentage of the number of Indigenous and non-Indigenous 15 year old students in education and training (school, VET or higher education) in the previous year; (b) Number of Indigenous and non-Indigenous 17 year old students in education and training (school, VET or higher education) as a percentage of the number of Indigenous and non-Indigenous 16 year old students in education and training (school, VET or higher education) in the previous year; (c) equivalent measures for 17 to 18 years, and (d) equivalent measures for 18 to 19 years.
- Grade progression ratios of Indigenous and non-Indigenous students: (a) Year 7 to Year 8 (NSW, Victoria, Tasmania and ACT only); (b) Year 8 to Year 9; (c) Year 9 to Year 10; (d) Year 10 to Year 11; and (e) Year 11 to Year 12.
- Percentages (with numbers) of Indigenous and non-Indigenous Year 10 students who attain a Year 10 certificate.
- The number of Indigenous and non-Indigenous Year 12 students who meet the requirements for a Year 12 certificate as a percentage of the number of students who commenced Year 11 in the previous year.

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- Percentage (with numbers) of Indigenous and non-Indigenous students who met the requirements for a Year 12 certificate who attained:
 - (a) a UAI (or equivalent) at or above a specified level; (b) a UAI (or equivalent) below the level determined at (c) a VET (AQF) Certificate; (d) a VET Statement of Attainment; (e) none of the above.
 - Report annually on the destination of Indigenous students in Year 10 as a proportion of Year 9 enrolments in the previous year with respect to the following outcomes: (a) Still at the school; (b) Moved to another school; (c) Moved to another form of education/training (state if known); (d) Moved to employment (state if known); (e) Other (please state if known) eg. unemployed ; and (f) Unknown.
 - Report annually on the destination of Indigenous students in Year 11 as a proportion of Year 10 enrolments in the previous year with respect to the following outcomes: (a) Still at the school; (b) Moved to another school; (c) Moved to another form of education/training (state if known); (d) Moved to employment (state if known); (e)Other (state if known) eg unemployed; and (f) Unknown.
 - Report annually on the destination of Indigenous students in Year 12 as a proportion of Year 11 enrolments in the previous year with respect to the following outcomes: (a) Still at the school; (b) Moved to another school; (c) Moved to another form of education/training (state if known); (d) Moved to employment (state if known); (e)Other (state if known) eg unemployed; and (f) Unknown.

Increase Indigenous Enrolments

- Number of Indigenous enrolments: (a) primary (b) Junior Secondary (up to and including Year 10); and (c) Senior Secondary (Years 11 and 12)
- Percentage (with numbers) of compulsory school-aged children resident in the community who are enrolled and attending school.
-

Increase the Employment of Indigenous Australians in Education and Training

- The number and full time equivalent Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff and employed in the categories of Staff Generally Active in Schools: (a) Teaching Staff; (b) Specialist Support Staff; (c) Administrative and Clerical Staff (including teacher aides and assistants); Executive Staff and Staff not Generally Active in Schools: (a) Executive Staff; (b) Specialist Support Staff; (c) Administrative and Clerical Staff.
- The number and full time equivalent Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff employed in the categories of: (a)Teaching Staff; (b) Specialist Support Staff; (c) Administrative and Clerical Staff (including teacher aides and assistants).
- Number and Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs) of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Workers (and equivalent Indigenous staff) employed.
- Percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Workers (and equivalent Indigenous staff) employed on a permanent or continuing basis compared with equivalent non-Indigenous employees: (a) Rate based on numbers of staff; and (b) Rate based on FTE staff.

Increase Professional Development for Staff Involved in Indigenous Education

- Average hours of professional development undertaken by (a) Indigenous full-time equivalent staff; and (b) Non-Indigenous full-time equivalent staff.
- The percentage (with numbers) of all permanent and continuing teaching staff who received professional development or training totalling at least one day in duration in the past three years which specifically related to their role as educators of Indigenous students or as teachers of Indigenous studies or issues.
- Percentage (with numbers) of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Workers (and equivalents) who have completed or part-completed study towards the following level of qualification: (a) Degree; (b) Diploma/Associate Diploma/Advanced Diploma; and (c) Certificate
- Information on other professional development activities undertaken by both Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff, including: (a) type of professional development; and (b) number of Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants.

Increase the Involvement of Indigenous Parents/Community Members in Educational Decision Making

- Of the total people involved in advisory/reference/management committees that deal specifically with Indigenous issues, specify the percentage (with numbers) who are Indigenous; (a) State Level; and (b) Regional/District level.
- Of the total people involved in Advisory/Reference/Management Committees that deal with issues relating to all students, specify the percentage (with numbers) who are Indigenous: (a) State Level and (b) Regional/District level.
- Percentage (with numbers) of total people involved in bodies/committees that make decisions about the school(s) who are Indigenous: (a) Committees dealing specifically with Indigenous issues; and (b) General Committees.

Expand Culturally Inclusive Curricula

- (a) What is your school/system doing to address goals 3.4 and 3.5 of the Adelaide Declaration on the National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty First Century in the following areas: (i) Indigenous perspectives across the curriculum; (ii) Indigenous Studies Programmes. How do you plan to expand the use of culturally inclusive curriculum through increasing: (i) The number of schools implementing the curriculum; and (ii) The number of Indigenous and non-Indigenous students (separately identified) who are undertaking such culturally inclusive curricula.
- Please describe the activities you undertake to promote and preserve Indigenous languages.

Vet Sector

Improve Indigenous literacy

- Outcomes in basic literacy modules/competencies achieved by Indigenous and non-Indigenous students as measured by the: (a) pass rate; (b) fail rate; (c) withdrawal rate and (d) completion rate

Improve Indigenous Numeracy

- Outcomes in basic numeracy modules/competencies achieved by Indigenous and non-Indigenous students as measured by the: (a) pass rate; (b) fail rate; (c) withdrawal rate and (d) completion rate

Improve Educational Outcomes for Indigenous Students

- Percentage (with numbers) of total course completions achieved by Indigenous and non-Indigenous students, by level of course: (a) non award; (b) non AQF Certificate or award; (c) AQF Certificates I and II; (d) AQF Certificates III and IV; (e) Diploma or Advanced Diploma.
- Educational Outcomes achieved by Indigenous and non-Indigenous students as measured by the overall module/competency: (a) pass rate; (b) fail rate; (c) withdrawal rate and (d) completion rate.
- Percentage (with numbers) of Indigenous course completions of New Apprenticeships, by level of qualification: (a) AQF Certificate I (or equivalent); (b) AQF Certificate II; (c) AQF Certificate III and (d) AQF Certificate IV.
- Percentage (with numbers) of non-Indigenous course completions of New Apprenticeships, by level of qualification: (a) AQF Certificate I (or equivalent); (b) AQF Certificate II; (c) AQF Certificate III and (d) AQF Certificate IV.
- Number of course completions of New Apprenticeships by Indigenous students.

Increase Indigenous Enrolments

- Percentage (with numbers) of total students who are Indigenous.
- Percentage (with numbers) of total student curriculum hours undertaken by Indigenous students.
- Percentage (with numbers) of total Indigenous enrolments, by level of training programme: (a) non award; (b) non-AQF Certificate or award; (c) AQF Senior Secondary; (d) AQF Certificates I and II (e) AQF Certificates III and IV; (f) Diploma or Advanced Diploma.
- Percentage (with numbers) of total non-Indigenous enrolments, by level of programme: (a) non award; (b) non-AQF Certificate or award; (c) AQF Senior Secondary; (d) AQF Certificates I and II (e) AQF Certificates III and IV; (f) Diploma or Advanced Diploma non-award.
- Percentage (with numbers) of total Indigenous curriculum hours, by level of training programme: (a) non award; (b) non-AQF Certificate or award; (c) AQF Senior Secondary; (d) AQF Certificates I and II; (e) AQF Certificates III and IV; (f) Diploma or Advanced Diploma.
- Percentage (with numbers) of total non-Indigenous curriculum hours, by level of training programme: (a) non award; (b) non-AQF Certificate or award; (c) AQF Senior Secondary; (d) AQF Certificates I and II (e) AQF Certificates III and IV (f) Diploma or Advanced Diploma

- Percentage (with numbers) of total students undertaking New Apprenticeships who are Indigenous.
- Percentage (with numbers) of total Indigenous enrolments in New Apprenticeships in each level of training programme: (a) AQF Certificates I and III; (b) AQF Certificate III and (c) AQF Certificate IV
- Percentage (with numbers) of total non-Indigenous enrolments in New Apprenticeships in each level of training programme: (a) AQF Certificates I and III; (b) AQF Certificate III and (c) AQF Certificate IV

Increase the Employment of Indigenous Australians in Education and Training

- Percentage (with numbers) of total full-time equivalent staff who are Indigenous by employment category: (a) teaching and other professional staff; and (b) other staff.
- Total numbers of Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff, by employment category: (a) teaching and other professional staff; and (b) other staff.

Increase Professional Development for Staff Involved in Indigenous Education

- Percentage (with numbers) of teaching and other professional staff who have undertaken Indigenous cross-cultural awareness training.
- Average hours of professional development undertaken by: (a) Indigenous full-time equivalent staff; and (b) Non-Indigenous full-time equivalent staff

Increase the Involvement of Indigenous Parents/Community Members in Educational Decision-Making

- Percentage (with numbers) of the total membership of Boards of Management who are Indigenous at the following levels: (a) State/Territory Boards of Management and (b) Institute Boards of Management.
- Percentage (with numbers) of the total membership of Indigenous Advisory Committees who are Indigenous.
- Percentage of Institutes with Indigenous Advisory Committees.
- Expand Culturally Inclusive Curricula Annual Student Contact Hours delivered against modules/competencies designed specifically for Indigenous people or communities.
- Percentage (with numbers) of Institutes offering Indigenous Studies: (a) modules/competencies and (b) courses.

Appendix

- Formulae for calculating module/competency outcomes.

Source: Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs (2000?) Indigenous Education Strategic Initiatives Programme (IESIP) Performance Indicator Handbook. Supplementary Recurrent Assistance (SRA), 2001-2004, Three Volumes: Preschool, School and VET).

Housing and Infrastructure

Introduction

273. Having a satisfactory shelter for the family and individuals is a fundamental right of all people. Although there is no universally acceptable definition of 'satisfactory housing', this is frequently looked at from the standpoint of the characteristics of the dwelling such as the physical structure, roofing, and the number of rooms compared to the persons usually living in the dwelling. Also, considered are, bathrooms, verandas, access, availability of water for drinking and washing, power and toilet facilities. Similarly, the term 'infrastructure' could refer to a number of factors, but for the purpose of this evaluation, it is taken to include the availability of and accessibility to water, power, roads, communication services, health and education.

Housing data sources and key initiatives

274. National data on housing and infrastructure are available from a number of sources which include the Census of population and housing, ABS household surveys, state and territory collections under the Commonwealth State Housing Agreements (CSHA), other housing related assistance provided through Commonwealth agencies such as Centrelink, and housing programs administered by ATSIC. Although some programs, in particular, mainstream service delivery programs, have a national focus, the reporting of data for performance measurement is still at the development stage. Some jurisdictions do not have data reporting systems based on uniform definitions and concepts.

275. The National Housing Data Agreement (NHDA) devised under the CSHA, and the Agreement on National Indigenous Housing Information (ANIHI) both acknowledge the poor quality and inadequacies in the data on housing assistance available currently and the need to maintain comparability across jurisdictions. The report on Government Services of the SCRCSSP draws attention to the inconsistency and non-comparability of data across jurisdictions in measuring program performances in the housing field⁷³.

276. To improve the housing data availability and quality for outcomes, an Indigenous Housing Standing Committee of the Housing Ministers Advisory Council was set-up to address a number of issues, such as Indigenous housing needs, viability of housing organisations, sustainable and healthy housing and delivery of improved housing outcomes⁷⁴. As part of this initiative a number of data development activities are currently underway. These are also referred to in this chapter when discussing the relevant data sources.

Census of population and housing

277. Five-yearly population censuses are the major source of information on the characteristics of persons living in private and non-private dwellings. While censuses collect limited information on housing stock and characteristics, they have the advantage of providing data on all types of housing arrangements in small geographic areas, which are normally not available from sample surveys.

278. Censuses traditionally provide information such as nature of occupancy, landlord, weekly rent/monthly mortgage paid, dwelling structure and number of rooms for each private dwelling. The census data on housing can be cross-classified by household, family and population characteristics.

⁷³ SCRCSSP (Steering Committee for the Review of Commonwealth/State Service Provision) (2001) *Report on Government Services 2001*, Vol.1 AusInfo, Canberra.

From time-to-time, data are collected on new topics of policy relevance. For example, commencing from the 1996 census, information on homeless persons has been collected.

279. An evaluation of the homeless enumeration strategy carried out by ABS revealed that while the strategy worked well, it acknowledges the inherent difficulties in covering absolutely homeless people in census programs⁷⁵. This group is difficult to count accurately because most homeless persons live on streets, under bridges or in other places, which are normally missed by the census. Census enumeration strategy is concentrated on people living in dwellings. The 2001 Census for the first time collected information on the availability and use of personal computers and internet use, which can be used as an indicator of access to services related to telecommunication.

280. The census data collected through recent population and housing censuses have been analysed for Indigenous policy reviews and monitoring of trends⁷⁶. However, census data on households and families are affected by the changes made to the classification in different censuses. ABS defines an Indigenous household as⁷⁷

a family household where any family in the household is defined an Indigenous family or a lone person household where the lone person is of Aboriginal and /or Torres Strait Islander origin. Group households are not included.

281. ABS defines an Indigenous family as :

one where either the reference person and/or spouse/partner is of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin⁷⁸.

⁷⁴ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2002) *National Data on Indigenous Access to Government Managed Housing Sources*. Draft preliminary report prepared for the National Housing Information Implementation Committee (mimeo).

⁷⁵ ABS (1997) *1996 Census Homeless Enumeration Strategy (Evaluation of Field Objective)*, Census working Paper 97/1, ABS Canberra.

⁷⁶ Jones, R. (1994) *The Housing Needs of Indigenous Australians, 1991*, CAEPR Research Monograph No.8, Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research, Australian National University, Canberra; Jones, R (1999) *Indigenous Housing 1996 Census Analysis. Indigenous Housing and Living Environments*, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission AusInfo Canberra.

⁷⁷ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2001) *2001 Census Dictionary. Census Concepts and Definitions* Cat. No. 2901.0, ABS, Canberra: Page 213.

⁷⁸ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2001) *op.cit.*

282. Over the years ABS has introduced changes to these concepts and definitions as discussed in a DFACS report⁷⁹. Although some of these changes are minor, their impact on the classification of families and households is greater, particularly in classifying Indigenous households. As Indigenous dwellings are identified using the same definition as the Indigenous household, data users should be aware of the possible impact of the changes of census definition and concepts on classifications on the statistics on Indigenous dwellings.

National Housing Survey (NHS)

283. NHS program of ABS (see A7.1) is intended to provide detailed data on supply and demand of housing as well as a range of information required to measure housing outcomes for Australia as a whole and within its subgroups including Indigenous Australians. Although NHS was not conducted in remote and sparsely populated areas, it included Indigenous households in other areas sufficient to produce reliable data for Indigenous people.

284. However, the exclusion of remote and sparsely settled areas affects the number and characteristics of community housing as Indigenous housing is predominant in those areas. The survey data can be used to derive a series of outcome measures, including ratio of persons to rooms, housing affordability and tenure. Given the small size of the sample, this survey data can only be used to assess Indigenous housing information and outcomes at the national level.

Household Expenditure Survey (HES)

285. HES is designed to collect detailed information on household income, expenditure and housing costs for states and territories. The detailed information collected includes home ownership, rent or mortgage payments, rates, home insurance, repairs and maintenance, and energy use (see A7.2).

⁷⁹ Mudd, W, Tesfaghiorghis, H., and Bray, R.J (2001) 'Some Issues in Home Ownership', *Policy Research Paper* No.17, Department of Family and Community Services, Canberra.

Although the data collected through this survey is extensive and very useful for policy planning, Indigenous households are not identified in the survey.

Survey of Income and Housing Costs (ABS)

286. This survey commenced in 1994 as a supplement to the monthly labour force survey program, which in turn superseded the income distribution surveys, conducted in the past (1968 and 1990). The annual series has now become a triennial collection. Data collected are valuable for monitoring policies relating to income support and housing costs (see for details A7.3). Being part of the monthly supplementary survey program the number of households covered in the survey are not adequate for a detailed analysis of data. However, the survey data can be used to derive estimates of income and housing costs at the national level.

Community Housing and Infrastructure Needs Survey (CHINS)

287. The CHINS is a survey program, which was launched to obtain detailed information on housing, and infrastructure services in Indigenous communities (see appendix A7.4 for details). The data are collected from individuals who have knowledge of the housing and related infrastructure in the discrete communities and from Indigenous Housing Organisations (IHOs) about the number, characteristics and conditions of the housing stock, rent charged, maintenance and repair costs. To date, this survey has been conducted three times: 1992, 1999 and 2001.

288. In terms of methodology used and data items collected, the latter two surveys used a methodology, which is different from the 1992 survey. The information collected from CHINS is valuable for measuring the level and trends in access by Indigenous communities to housing and infrastructure including health, education, water, electricity and many other municipal services.

289. The number of discrete communities covered by the survey varies between the three surveys owing to whether or not Indigenous people were living in the dwellings in the areas identified as discrete communities for each survey. The CHINS generally covers about 20% of the total Indigenous people, those living in discrete communities and dwellings managed by IHOs. While the information collected are useful for policy purposes the data should not be used to extrapolate to the total Indigenous population.

290. CHINS collect data on dwellings and availability of infrastructure from the people who are supposed to be familiar with the Indigenous communities. Therefore the accuracy and the reliability of the information provided vary with the level of knowledge of the persons providing the information. There is also the possibility of reporting State Housing Dwellings as part of Community housing.

291. As the information was collected at the community level (or organisational level) there is no information available on the dwelling or the household. It may be worthwhile to explore the possibility of supplementing CHINS data with dwelling level (or household level in occupied dwellings) by collecting information from a sample of dwellings.

National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey (NATSIS)

292. Despite the limitations of NATSIS 1994 discussed earlier (Chapter 2), the NATSIS is a good source of information on access to amenities and a range of infrastructure services available at the community level. From the 1994 NATSIS data the number of dwellings with and without running water connected to them, sanitary toilets, shower/bath facilities and power (electricity) connected to dwelling can be estimated.

293. Similarly, the survey asked respondents to report nearest service delivery outlets for a range of services, including health services health personnel, schools, markets, legal services, etc. The ABS's proposed Indigenous Social Survey would also collect similar information.

Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement

294. Under the provision of the *Housing Assistance Act* 1996, the Commonwealth has the powers to provide grants and enter into agreements with state and territory Governments on housing matters. The 1996 Commonwealth State Housing Agreement (CSHA), which provided greater flexibility in funding, accountability and outcome focus was developed under this legislation. The current CSHA, covers a period of 4 years from 1999/00 to 2002/03.

295. Under this agreement the Commonwealth provides funds to state and territory governments to assist people whose housing needs are not met through the private housing market. States and territories also pool funds to meet CSHA objectives. The 1999 CSHA consists of a multilateral agreement supported by bilateral agreements between the Commonwealth and each state and territory. The multilateral agreement insists that an outcome measurement framework be used in reporting information against a core set of nationally consistent outcome indicators by the states and territories under the bilateral agreements. CSHA provides assistance through the following initiatives/programs:

- Public housing
- Aboriginal Rental Housing Program (ARHP);
- Crisis Accommodation Program (CAP);
- Community Housing Program (CHP);
- Private Rent Assistance (PRA); and
- Home Purchase Assistance (HPA).

296. During the 1996 CSHA (1996-99 period), attempts were made to produce nationally consistent outcome measures for each of the above programs. However, data that were collected raised serious concerns over the quality and comparability across jurisdictions. Those concerns led to the development of a National Housing Data Agreement (NHDA) with the aim of addressing data quality issues, consistency and comparability concerns.

AIHW is the agency responsible for the collection of data and evaluation and dissemination of results. It is also entrusted with the development of a National Housing Assistance Framework for outcome measurement, minimum data sets for each of the assistance programs and a National Housing Assistance Data Dictionary (Data Dictionary), which includes CSHA national standards.

297. Version 1 of the Data Dictionary was prepared in early 2001 to be used for the 2000-01 data collection⁸⁰. Version 2 of the Data Dictionary is being completed by AIHW. The Data Dictionary includes the Indigenous status as a key data item that should be covered in all collections. Since 2001, Centrelink has included an Indigenous identifier as recommended in the NHADD in all of its administrative collections.

298. During the 1999-00 Public Rental Housing Data Collection it was revealed that some jurisdictions experienced difficulties in reporting Indigenous data accurately due to a number of logistical problems. These included the methods used to identify Indigenous people in the collection (e.g. at the time of application or at the time of housing allocation) and restrictions imposed by the database programs used in different jurisdictions.

Public Housing(PH)

299. The public housing is funded under the CSHA and is owned (or leased) and managed by the state and territory housing authorities. The PH initiative aims to meet the demand for housing by low income persons, persons at risk of homelessness or in crisis, and/or those unable to find affordable and appropriate housing in private rental market. Under the CSHA, state and territory housing authorities are required to report statistical information against performance indicators to monitor outcomes for public housing assistance. This work began with the 1996 CSHA and expanded for the 1999 CSHA.

⁸⁰ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2001) *National Housing Assistance Data Dictionary Version 1*, AIHW, Canberra.

300. Performance indicators developed for public housing are computed separately for rural and remote areas using the Rural Remote Metropolitan Area (RRMA) Classification. Of the performance indicators developed, data for the computation of P1 and P7 are drawn from the National Social Housing Survey (NSHS) conducted annually since 1996⁸¹. Financial indicators of P8 and P11 are collected through the financial database of respective jurisdictions.

301. All other data are collected through the Public Rental Housing Data collection. Although counting rules have been specified and data definitions are to be reported according to the Data Dictionary (Version 1), the data items reported by states and territories are not exactly comparable. Jurisdictions are expected to report any instances where reported data deviates from counting rules and definitions specified for the collection.

Aboriginal Rental Housing Program (ARHP)

302. The main aim of the ARHP is to provide safer, healthier and more sustainable housing for Indigenous people.⁸² Funds provided under ARHP are used for housing maintenance as well as the construction of new houses. The vast majority of funds are directed to rural and remote areas of Australia.

303. Performance indicators developed for ARHP are the same as for the public housing but with a few exceptions. The data required to compute 'Amenity/location' and 'Customer satisfaction' are drawn from a national Social Housing Survey (SHS)⁸³. Currently SHSs are conducted in public and community housing sectors. Some states are considering this survey extending to cover AHRP.

⁸¹ Donovan Research Pty. Ltd (2000) *National Social Housing Survey with Public Housing*, Report to Commonwealth Department of Family and Community Services (FaCS).

⁸² Department of Family and Community Services (2001) *Housing Assistance Act 1996. Annual Report 1998-99*, Canberra.

⁸³ Donovan Research Pty. Ltd. (2000) *National Social Housing Survey with Public Housing*, Report to Commonwealth Department of Community and Family Services, (FaCS).

Performance information and indicator

P1. Amenity and location

- Tenant's satisfaction with the amenities and the location of dwelling (NSHS)

P2. Affordability (as at 30 June)

- The rent charged as a proportion of the market rent (adjusted for CRA) for each dwelling

P3. Match of dwellings to household size (as at 30 June)

- The proportion of households where dwellings size is not appropriate due to overcrowding

P4. Low income (both as at 30 June and financial year)

- The number of new low-income households as a proportion of all new households
- The number of low-income households and new special needs households as a proportion of all new households
- The number of all rebated households and special needs households paying market rent as a proportion of all households.

P5. Special needs (financial year activity)

- The proportion of new tenancies that are allocated to households with special needs

P6. Priority access to those in greatest need (financial year activity)

- Proportion of new allocations to those in greatest need in the following time to allocation groups (under 3 months)
- Proportion of new allocations to those in greatest need in the following time to allocation groups (3months to 6 months)
- Proportion of new allocations to those in greatest need in the following time to allocation groups (6 months to 1 year)
- Proportion of new allocations to those in greatest need in the following time to allocation groups (1 year to 2 years)
- Proportion of new allocations to those in greatest need in the following time to allocation groups (2 years or more)

Customer satisfaction

- Tenant's satisfaction levels with services

P8. Direct cost per unit (as at 30 June)

- Average cost of providing assistance per dwelling (excludes capital cost)

P9. Occupancy rates (as at 30 June)

- The occupancy rate of rental housing stock

P10. Turnaround time (financial year activity)

The average time taken for occupancy of vacant stock.

P11. Rent arrears (financial year activity)

- The rent actually collected as a percentage of rent charged.

Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare AIHW (2001) *Public Rental Housing Data Manual 2000-01*, AIHW, Canberra

304. Although the SHS identifies Indigenous tenants, no information has been published separately for Indigenous tenants mainly due to insufficient numbers. Due to the unavailability of the SHS data for Indigenous clients it is difficult for states and territories to report against the above two indicators. Some states are, however, exploring the possibility of releasing SHS data for Indigenous clients. The special needs definition used in public housing is modified in the ARHP collection to reflect the relatively lower life expectancy of Indigenous people⁸⁴.

Community Housing Program (CHP)

305. CHP provides capital funding for rental accommodation for people on low to moderate incomes. Funding is offered to non-governmental agencies and in some jurisdictions local governments also receive funding for this purpose. The program offers a choice of accommodation as well as the opportunity to participate in the management of the house. With only a few exceptions, performance indicators developed for CHP are the same as for public housing. However, the underlying data to compute these performance indicators are not yet available nationally (NT does not provide information at all and WA provides a limited information only).

Home Purchase Assistance (HPA) Collection

306. HPA is not a national program but one that is supported by CSHA funds. Under this program, some jurisdictions offer financial help to households with low to moderate incomes for home purchase or to ease the

burden of mortgage repayments. Some jurisdictions provide subsidies to meet the deposit or home loan interest rate. The type of assistance provided varies according to the local conditions within jurisdictions. The performance indicators developed for the 1996 CSHA are being revised. The availability of data and the quality vary according to the jurisdictions.

Private Rent Assistance (PRA)

307. Under the CSHA, jurisdictions provide a range of housing assistance programs to assist low-income households to secure and maintain private rental accommodation. Under this program, eligible clients are able to receive rental subsidies or assistance (loans or grants) with bonds and some other one-off services. Performance indicators used are for HPA are being revised.

Crisis Accommodation Program (CAP)

308. Under CAP, funds are provided to community organisations, which provide accommodation for people who are homeless and in crisis. CAP programs in the states and territories are administered by housing authorities. Since 1997, data for key indicators has been reported annually, although the number of Indigenous persons assisted by CAP is too small to produce detailed performance indicators.

309. Of the CSHA collections described above, the data for outcome measurements are somewhat more complete for public housing collection and ARHP than to other collections. A major problem affecting jurisdictional comparison of the Indigenous data collected through CSHA is the state and territory variations in funding and administrative procedures used for housing assistance programs. Another issue is to determine to what extent the performance indicators developed for mainstream public housing are applicable to ARHP.

⁸⁴ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2002) *National Data on Indigenous Access to Government Managed Housing Sources. Draft Preliminary Report Prepared for the National Housing Information Implementation Committee* (mimeo).

310. Indigenous data collection in CSHA collections has been improving. In the Public Housing Sector, the identification of the Indigenous persons of new tenants is satisfactory, although the problems of Indigenous identification of existing tenants still exist. The Indigenous identification is poor in the Community Housing Sector, partly due to the strict application of the provision of privacy laws by some jurisdictions. The reporting of the data for Indigenous persons in the Community Housing Sector is affected by the size and the resources available to community housing outlets. In all jurisdictions, except for the Northern Territory, and the ACT, which does not have ARHP, the collection of the data on Indigenous status appears to be improving.

311. Since all other CSHA programs usually cater for only a lesser number of Indigenous persons than other programs such as the ARHP, their collections are confined merely to collect descriptive statistics, instead of collecting detailed data to compute performance indicators.

Community Managed Indigenous Housing (CMIH) Collection

312. The CMIH collection is based on five states plus the Northern Territory. Jurisdictions excluded are the ACT, where there is no Indigenous community-housing program, and Victoria, where all of the Indigenous community-housing sector is funded directly by ATSIC. Even though six jurisdictions are participating in the collection there is no uniformity in the type of data collected and the coverage of the collection.

313. The number of items for which each participating jurisdiction could provide information is summarised in the following table. Although the community housing can include those managed by a number of agencies, such as community managed, disability services and aged-care, the CMIH collection is confined to those community housing funded by the CSHA. While the collection is an important source of data for Indigenous outcome measurements in the housing sector, inadequacies in the data are still present.

Performance indicators: CMIH collection

Data item	Ability to report by jurisdiction
Number of Indigenous Community Housing (ICH) organisations	All except Qld
Number of discrete communities	All
Number of people housed by ICH organisations	All except Qld
Number of occupied dwellings	All
Number of vacant dwellings	All
Dwellings require little or no repairs	All except Qld
Number needed minor repairs	All
Number of dwellings needing replacement	All
Number of vacant dwellings under repairs, or awaiting disposal or vacant due to client turnover	Only NSW and NT

Source: AIHW (2002) *National Data on Indigenous Access to Government managed Housing Sources*. Draft Preliminary Report prepared for the National Housing Information Implementation Committee (mimeo).

Identification of Indigenous households

314. A problem that is common to all collections under CSHA is the identification and updating of information on Indigenous dwellers. According to the Data Dictionary an Indigenous household is “a household that contains one or more Indigenous persons⁸⁵”. The Indigenous status in most jurisdictions is, in practice, determined by the Indigenous status of the head person or the applicant(s). Furthermore, the time of the collection of the Indigenous households varies by jurisdiction, some jurisdictions collect the relevant information at the time of application.

315. Other jurisdictions record the Indigenous status at the time of allocation of the dwelling. The following table provides indications of the quality of the Indigenous identification in Public housing collection in terms of both the proportion of tenant whose Indigenous is not determined and the level at which the Indigenous status is recorded in different jurisdictions. The same is true for other collections.

316. When the Indigenous status of a dwelling is defined as above there is, a necessity to update this information from time-to-time, as the Indigenous status of a household and the dwelling could change either by an Indigenous

⁸⁵ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2001) *National Housing Assistance Data Dictionary Version 1*. AIHW, Canberra.

person moving into or out of a household. The regular updating of the information is rarely carried out, and is beyond the means of most agencies.

CSHA Public Housing: level at which Indigenous household status collected, and the process of updating Indigenous information by jurisdiction

	NSW	Vic	Qld	SA	WA	Tas	NT
Level of collection	P	P	HH	P	HH	P	P
Updating process	DCV	RR	None	None	None	None	LR

Source: AIHW (2000) Identifying Indigenous Households in public housing: the extent of 'missing data' identified in the data repository' AIHW, November (mimeo). P=Person level; HH=Household head level and DK= Not known; DCV=during clients visits; RR= during rent reviews; LR=During lease renewals.

SAAP Collection (AIHW/FaCS)

317. The Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) is provided to homeless people by a network of over 1,200 agencies contracted by state and territory governments. These agencies are required as part of the funding requirements to report on various aspects including client's circumstances and the type of services provided to them. Information collected through agencies and states and territories forms the basis of client information in the national data collection maintained by the AIHW. Data items collected from SAAP service outlets and comments on the data are provided elsewhere in the report (see A7.5 in Appendix). In order to capture data electronically, a software program called SMART (SAAP Management and Reporting Tool) has been developed and is being used by many service outlets. The application of software should reduce the workload of reporting agencies.

318. The SAAP collection assigns a unique code for each client (known as the alphacode) so that client details can be matched to identify homeless clients receiving assistance through SAAP at different points in time. The SAAP collection identifies Indigenous clients and produces data separately for Indigenous people. Although SAAP data do not represent all persons who are homeless, it nevertheless is a useful data source for homelessness policy research.

319. The SAAP Data and the relevant advisory group⁸⁶ have been assigned the task of developing a set of agreed performance indicators to measure and evaluate program outcomes⁸⁷. Of the 46 indicators identified initially, computation of 24 indicators was found to be feasible from the SAAP national collection while others were earmarked to be obtained from other sources including special surveys.

320. The 2002 Report on the Government Services of the SCRCSSP provides statistical information against the following performance indicators. Although performance indicators have been developed and states and territories report data against these indicators, there are state and territory variations in the reported data. The SCRCSSP reports that the comparability of the information across jurisdictions is somewhat better for the following performance information: achievements of independent living, return to crisis accommodation within six months, development of agreed case plan, and match of needs of clients.

321. clients give consent to be included in the database. The other issue is the identification of Indigenous clients. The proportion of SAAP clients whose Indigenous status is not known is as high as 25%⁸⁸. In high volume SAAP outlets — most Indigenous service outlets fall into this category— the collection and reporting of client information and getting the clients consent to be included in the database is not expected to be carried out properly. While the quality and coverage of Indigenous data are improving, it is difficult to comment further on the quality of the data capture for Indigenous SAAP clients, as data are not routinely reported against performance indicators.

⁸⁶ Initially this function was handled by Data and Research Advisory Committee (DRAC) and later it was replaced by a Data Sub-Committee. This Committee is now known as the Information Sub-Committee.

⁸⁷ SAAP Data and Research Advisory Committee (2000) *Homelessness Information in Australia*. Data Research Activities in SAAP 111 1994 to 2000. AusInfo, Canberra.

⁸⁸ Department of Family and Community Services (2001) *SAAP Monograph. Indigenous SAAP Clients*, Monograph Number 1

Performance indicators

- Change in client's income source after SAAP support (%).
- Accommodation type on exit from SAAP support (independent housing and non-Independent housing).
- Change in the labour force status of client's after SAAP support.
- Clients who returned to SAAP services in a given year who had exited the program less than 12 months earlier.
- Indicative estimates of clients exiting SAAP to Independent housing and not returning (to SAAP) within six months.
- Support periods, by existence of a support plan.
- Proportion of valid requests for SAAP services that were provided with the requested support (during a given period).
- Indigenous people among SAAP clients and the proportion of valid requests for SAAP service from Indigenous groups not provided with the assistance requested.
- People from non-speaking backgrounds among SAAP clients and the proportion of valid requests for SAAP service from non-English speaking background groups not provided with the assistance requested.
- SAAP clients by, met and unmet support needs.
- Indigenous clients, by met and unmet support needs.
- Clients from non-English speaking backgrounds, by met and unmet support needs.
- Real current cost per day of support for homeless clients.
- Real current cost per completed support for homeless clients.
- Real current cost per client accessing services.
- Average accommodation load and caseload per day.

Source: SCRCSSP (2002) *Report on Government Services 2002*, Vol.2: PP 829-841.

Commission's home ownership program

322. The Home Ownership Program (HOP) administered by the Commission is a self-funding initiative, which does not receive any annual appropriation from either from the Commission or any other Commonwealth Government agency. The HOP offers eligible Indigenous Australians the opportunity of acquiring their own homes through loans, which offer minimal deposit amounts, affordable low interest rates and flexible loan terms.

323. The majority of loans are made to applicants whose family incomes, i.e. main breadwinner's gross wage plus 50% of the spouse/partner's gross income, are below the national average weekly earnings of males. Many of these applicants are unable to secure loans from the commercial financial sector due to lack of funds available for collateral and their inability to pay market interest rates.

324. The Commission's loan system (LAS, discussed in chapter 3) records all loan payments made by the borrowers and monitors the loan performance from the time of settlement until the loan is paid out. Changes to the loan during its term, e.g. interest rate variations, etc., are recorded in LAS. The LAS system provides the HOP program manager with the necessary information required for the on going monitoring of the loan portfolio.

325. A wealth of information is collected in the two-stage application process, which is valuable for policy analysis. The information available includes, applicant's age, sex, marital status, employment status, spouse/partner's occupation, ownership of home and land, purpose of the loan, funds available for deposit and fees, details of income and expenditure, and assets and liabilities.

326. Useful information currently not collected relates to the characteristics of the house, for which the loan has been given such as the number of rooms, amenities available and source of power and water supply. Borrowers could be asked to provide this data or HOP may devise a system to obtain such data from mortgage details at the time of releasing the final loan instalment. Such information, along with personal characteristics of the borrower and the household, could be a major source of data to measure housing outcomes.

Aboriginal Hostels Collection

327. Aboriginal Hostels Ltd provides hostel accommodation for Indigenous people who are in need of temporary accommodation (for students, older people, transients and people requiring medical attention). In addition, to the services provided by the hostels, AHL funds a number of similar hostels run by community organizations. Indigenous people serviced by these community run hostels receive a subsidy from AHL to meet the shortfall between the amount charged from Indigenous residents and the normal tariff.

328. These community-run hostels provide details of the number of Indigenous persons and the number of bed days to the AHL to claim subsidy. While AHL collects detailed data from its hostels about the clients serviced, it receives only limited information from community-run hostels (see A7.6 in appendix). Aggregate data covering both AHL and community-run hostels are provided in the annual reports of AHL. The present data collection could be improved if similar information is collected from both AHL and community-run hostels.

Evaluation program of the Commission

Introduction

329. Thus far this evaluation report has discussed key data sources from the central statistical system, data reporting systems of the Commission, the details of the data available and known data gaps which may have an impact on using particular sources for Indigenous outcome measurements. The focus of the report was confined to four key sectors or program areas: legal services, health, education and housing and infrastructure. Arising from discussions with some key managers, both within and outside the Commission, the evaluation considered that it would be beneficial to include a brief comment on some emerging evaluation issues of the Commission before concluding this evaluation report.

330. This chapter is divided into four sections. The first section describes in brief evaluation in the Australian Public Service (APS). The next section discusses the evaluation program of the Commission, conducted by OEA under the legislative provisions of the ATSI Act. The third section draws attention to the emerging view within the Commission that responsible program managers should undertake their own reviews and evaluations. The final section discusses some issues relating to the coordination of evaluation programs within the Commission, and the need to maintain standards and quality.

Evaluation program of the Commonwealth

331. In the Commonwealth, the Parliament exercises the role of an evaluator, by producing, amending and criticising bills and by the committee system. The latter is particularly important as some committees such the Senate

Legislative and General Purpose Standing (Estimates) Committee, and Joint Statutory Committee of Public Accounts and Audit are specifically designed to enhance the accountability for public funds and are in fact evaluators of specific areas.

332. While the responsibility for evaluation in the Commonwealth is carried out by a number of agencies, including the Auditor-General, the Department of the Treasury, the Department of Finance and Administration (DoFA), the Department of the Prime Minister and the Cabinet, and the Australian Public Service Commission all have 'roles in centralised control and evaluation in the Commonwealth Public Service'⁸⁹. However, evaluation in the Commonwealth agencies is the responsibility of the individual agencies.

333. Since the 1980s the evaluation program of Australian Public Service (APS) has undergone substantial improvements with agencies in the APS showing evaluation findings becoming more and more important in providing better information to inform Cabinet and agency deliberations. The aim of the evaluation strategy of the APS shifted from merely providing information to the Parliament, the Treasury and the DoFA to the broader performance management framework of the APS. As stated by ANAO 'along with performance indicators and other measures, evaluation assists in providing credible accountability information to assure the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) on internal control, and management of the organisation, planning and review of its operation and progress, and ensures consultation and constructive feedback on its program activities'⁹⁰.

334. The APS reforms implemented in the mid-1980s included giving managers increased power and autonomy to improve their performance without undue interference and central agency control. In other words "managers" were asked to "manage" their programs to achieve high

⁸⁹ Senate Standing Committee on Social Welfare (1979) *Through Glass, Darkly. Evaluation in Health and Welfare Services Vol.1*, Parliamentary Paper No.71/1979, Page 39.

⁹⁰ Australian National Audit Office (1997) *Program Evaluation in the Australian Public Service*, Australian National Audit Office, Canberra.

performance. The lack of progress in program achievements heightened the move towards performance indicators. The movement for better outcomes continued and in 1987, the Cabinet directed that all new policy proposals of government agencies should include a 'statement of objectives and performance measures, as well as proposed arrangements for future evaluation'⁹¹.

335. Line managers of departments and agencies were asked to develop systematic monitoring and evaluation plans called *Program Evaluation Plans* (PEP) for their programs and these reviews were to be forwarded to the then Department of Finance (now DoFA). The monitoring of program performance and achievements by the government, therefore, became a routine responsibility of individual departments.

336. One problem that most departments encountered in meeting the demand for outcomes data was the inability of Commonwealth agencies to obtain relevant information on a uniform basis from the service delivery agencies of the states and territories. To overcome this problem, most agencies sought the guidance and authority of relevant ministerial councils. During the decade after the mid-1980s, most agencies developed minimum datasets, together with data dictionaries and uniform definitions to collect data from state and territory agencies. Those developments are particularly significant in the housing, education, health, environment and energy sectors. These statistical development efforts have been facilitated either by the ABS or the AIHW.

Evaluation program of the Commission

337. In response to reforms many mainstream agencies have taken steps to develop and maintain a reliable and timely information system for performance measurements. Although the Commission was established after APS reforms were underway such developments are not visible in the majority of Commission programs. There are a number of reasons for this.

⁹¹ Mackay, k (1998) *op. cit.* p24.

Firstly, all Commission programs are usually delivered through a network of community organisations, whose capacity to maintain records and quantitative information varied according to the organisation.

338. *Secondly*, most managers were satisfied with the limited information flowing from the financial management system, which provides basic information needs of the annual reports and PBS.

339. *Thirdly*, there was, and still is, a general lack of statistical and research support needed for the program managers in the Commission to implement a sound data collection system for program monitoring and performance assessment.

340. *Finally*, the compulsion or pressure applied on program managers did not exist in the past to the same level to maintain information collections.

341. The COAG 1992 commitment and the initiatives that followed (discussed in Chapter 1), especially the remarks and comments by the SCRCSSP⁹² on the absence of reliable data for Indigenous outcome measurements, highlighted the need for the Commission to develop the regular reporting of data for outcome measurements and program evaluations.

342. While the ATSIC bill was being debated in the Parliament, an amendment was introduced to establish an independent Office of Evaluation and Audit (OEA) within the Commission to undertake evaluations and audits of expenditures and administrative procedures, reporting regularly to the Commission and the Minister, and through the Commission's annual report to the Parliament. OEA was proposed as a mechanism to enhance the ministerial accountability for the 'correct and effective' use of public funds⁹³.

⁹² Steering Committee for the Review of Commonwealth/State Service Provision (2001) *Report on Government Services 2001 AusInfo*, Canberra.

⁹³ Ministerial statement issued by the Hon Michael Tate, Minister for Justice 11, April 1989, on amendments to the ATSIC Bill of 1987.

343. The purpose of establishing OEA was thus to improve accountability and account for the performance of the Commission without compromising the independence or the greater control over matters affecting Indigenous peoples. S.75 of the Aboriginal and ATSI Act 1989 established OEA. Legislative functions of OEA expanded in subsequent amendments to the Act.

344. The key functions of OEA are to evaluate and audit the operations of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission, as well as other portfolio agencies identified in the ATSI Act, which included Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA), Aboriginal Hostels Ltd (AHL) and Indigenous Business Australia (IBA). Further, the Minister or the Indigenous Land Corporation (ILC) may request OEA to evaluate or audit particular aspects of the operations of that body or a subsidiary of that body, and to evaluate and audit the operations or activities of organisations and individuals that receive grants or loans from the ILC, but only to the extent of those grants or loans.

345. In addition to the routine evaluation and audit functions of the programs administered or funded, the ATSI Act empowers the Minister, the Commission, TSRA Board and other portfolio agencies, to ask OEA to evaluate or audit any specific aspect of the operation of the above mentioned bodies. The Minister or the Board may request OEA to evaluate or audit particular aspects of operations of Regional Councils.

346. To maintain the professional independence of OEA, its Director was made a statutory appointment, and is responsible directly to the Minister. Consequent to this legislative role of independence the Director of Evaluation and Audit exercises a greater degree of autonomy in the evaluation program of the Commission. Although the primary responsibility for conducting evaluations in the Commission rests with OEA, program managers still could undertake evaluations and reviews of their own programs.

347. S.78 of the ATSI Act specifies that OEA should evaluate and audit every program funded by the Commission at least once in every three years. From the 1991-92 financial year, OEA commenced developing a five-year work program determined on the risk assessment of the Commission's expenditure, outputs and functions. This was introduced mainly to avoid duplication of evaluation and audit functions that became apparent in the first two years of OEA's operation⁹⁴. Under their arrangement, OEA instituted a series of risk-based and process-focused audits, which assess the efficiency and effectiveness of the delivery of a program, and the evaluation strategy, which assesses program outcomes.

348. The evaluation (and audit) program is updated annually taking into account a number of factors such as the changing output-outcome structure, priorities of the Commission and accountability risks. In practice, the amount of expenditure of the program usually becomes the key determinant of the risk assessment methodology of the OEA. While this assessment gives precedence to programs that have large budgets (major programs), some policy relevant programs are also chosen for the cyclical program of evaluation event though they have small program budgets (minor programs).

349. In general, major programs are scheduled for evaluation within a cycle of 6 years and minor programs in about 7 years. This is longer than that envisaged by the ATSI Act. The major evaluations conducted in recent years by OEA are listed below:

Evaluation projects completed by OEA during last five years	
Year	Evaluation project
1997	Health Infrastructure Priority Projects
1999	Native Title
2000	Torres Strait Regional Authority
2002	Legal and preventative Service (work in progress)

⁹⁴ Dillon, MC (1992) ' Program Evaluation and Monitoring in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs: a strategic overview' in Ryan, B and O'Faircheallaigh, C (eds) *Program Evaluation and Performance Monitoring. Australian Experience*: 91-103.

350. In addition to the regular evaluation program, OEA at times employs external consultants to conduct special evaluations. These evaluations can be either a part of the normal evaluation program of OEA or as a result of a separately identified need to conduct an assessment of a specific aspect of a program or function. In 1997, ANAO carried out a survey of evaluation practices of some Commonwealth agencies including the Commission. It recommended that the evaluation strategy of OEA be linked with the overall performance framework of the Commission⁹⁵. Furthermore, OEA commenced a series of performance reviews, which were designed to review performances of different programs more frequently than has been possible with evaluations.

351. The performance reviews used program data available from the financial reporting system, which provide only a limited amount of information for program reviews. Consequently, program managers found that the findings of the reviews were similar across programs and the reviews did not discover any issues other than what they already knew from the financial information system. Due to the lack of interest from the program managers, the Performance Review program was abandoned by the OEA.

Program manager-initiated evaluations

352. In October 2001, the National Program Manager asked the Commission's Program Responsibility Managers to be aware of the need to institute a program of evaluation and monitoring of their own programs⁹⁶. This was a welcome development, which, if implemented on a systematic basis, has the potential to improve program outcomes.

⁹⁵ Australian National Audit Office (1997) *Program Evaluation in the Australian Public Service*, Australian National Audit Office.

⁹⁶ Turner, L (2001) *Program Reviews/Evaluation Paper* Circulated among Program Responsibility Managers, National Office ATSIC, Canberra (mimeo).

353. Before any evaluation activity is considered it will be necessary for the Commission to review existing data reporting systems and how they could be developed to serve the monitoring and evaluation needs of the Commission. This should be done at the output group level owing to the extreme diversity across programs. The Commission's programs are, in general, delivered through a network of community organizations. These vary widely according to their ability and capacity to maintain records and reporting. Wherever practicable, capacity building should also focus on these reporting agencies at the grass-root level.

In-house evaluations: planning considerations

Information reporting

354. Two major problems that constantly surface in conducting evaluations in the Commission are the lack of reliable and complete data on program outcomes, and a management information system capable of providing detailed data beyond what is available from the financial reporting system. Such data gaps lead to the use of poor quality, and incomplete data for evaluations or to special data collections for each evaluation, which is expensive in terms of resources and time.

355. The capacity to evaluate programs and develop performance indicators for outcome measurement depends on the ability of the program to provide reliable and valid data on a regular basis. Strengthening and developing a sound data reporting system is therefore, a prerequisite to developing any evaluation plan or measuring outcomes.

356. Data collection should provide details of inputs, the processes, outputs and program achievements according to program objectives. Inadequacies in the data could result in enormous problems for evaluators and program reviewers. It also could limit the ability of the program managers to justify program expansions for the legislature.

Capacity building: Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)

357. To develop a performance information system and a good program level evaluation strategy, it will be necessary for the Commission to focus on building Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) capacity at the agency and the program levels. The capacity development should cover all key processes including capacity to collect, verify, assess and use performance information. Without such capacity on the ground, monitoring and evaluation components of projects become ineffective⁹⁷.

358. The capacity building efforts should ideally cover all major service delivery programs of the Commission, which are significant either in terms of funds used, public visibility or policy interest. Among others, these programs should include housing and infrastructure, native title, legal and preventative services, business development program and CDEP. In order to improve the availability of data for outcome measurement, program managers should develop statistical and research capabilities within their programs.

Funding for research and statistical development

359. Each key program should set aside a reasonable proportion of their program budget for developing an information strategy. Although there is no unanimity among the policy analysts and evaluators on the exact proportion of program funds that should be allocated to research and evaluation, it is suggested that this proportion should not be lower than 5% of the total program budget⁹⁸.

Appropriate standards

360. ANAO suggests that each agency should develop standards for an outcome-focused evaluation program, to enable assessment and examination

⁹⁷ R. Picciotto (1998) 'Why Bother About ECD?' In Mackay, K (ed) *Public Sector Performance-the Critical Role of Evaluation*, World Bank. Washington :pp3-12.

⁹⁸ Owen. JM and Rogers, J (1999) *Program Evaluation: Forms and Approaches*, Sage Press: London : p 147. However, this target is seldom met, as evaluation is usually undervalued. A good quality evaluation which

of the progress with evaluations⁹⁹. In developing standards for the agency OEA has an important role to play. The Commission's Audit Committee may be a good vehicle to oversee the development of such guidelines and standards.

361. In the early 1990s, the Cabinet endorsed guidelines for evaluation reporting in government agencies¹⁰⁰. According to these guidelines evaluation results should become public documents. Among other things, public release of evaluation results should be accompanied by a summary of the key issues and findings, and should focus on the results of the evaluation.

362. The 1997-98 Performance Audit report of the Auditor-General provided guidelines for conducting evaluations in the Australian Public Service¹⁰¹. The Commission program managers could use these as best practice guidelines for evaluations. Particular emphasis should be given to timing evaluations so that they can be inputs to significant program decision points, and to incorporating data collection as a key element of the establishment of all programs.

363. In planning evaluations within the Commission it will be necessary to consider evaluation priorities in the light of business strategies, goals, and objectives of the program or the Commission. By doing so the evaluation findings could be effectively used as input to program development. Failure to meet these criteria will inevitably lead to frustration and wastage of resources.

Coordination

364. The evaluation program implemented by program managers should not be seen as a substitute for OEA's regular program of evaluations. To achieve

provides ongoing information to program stakeholders would in general require 10-15% of program budget (Rick Cummins, Murdoch University, Personal Communication).

⁹⁹ Australian National Audit Office (1992) *Auditing Program Evaluation*, ANAO Performance Audit Guide, AGPS.

¹⁰⁰ Australian National Audit Office (1992) *Auditing Program Evaluation*, ANAO Performance Audit Guide, AGPS, Canberra PP39-44.

a good balance and to prevent duplications there should be a proper coordination between the reviews and evaluations conducted by program managers and those planned by OEA. Therefore program managers should consult the Director of Evaluation and Audit for OEA's rolling evaluation program, prepared for five years and updated annually, before they decide their evaluation plans. As determined on a case-by-case basis, OEA could be a member of the steering committee of manager-initiated evaluations.

Summary

365. The OEA, according to the legislative functions, will continue with its rolling evaluation plan. It is important that there be coordination between this plan and evaluations initiated by program managers. Program managers will need to plan to devote resources to building evaluation capacity and including data collection as an integral part of all programs. Attention should also be given to the timing of evaluations so that they inform key program decision points.

¹⁰¹ Australian National Audit Office (1997-98) *Program Evaluation in the Australian Public Service*, The Auditor General Audit Report No.3, ANAO Canberra.

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Appendix ES1.1

Indicative assessment of usability of national data sets for Indigenous outcome measurements.

Note: The classification of data sets as of (a) reasonably good quality and (b) those that require caution in using them involves subjective judgments. Therefore, these categorisations should be used as broad guidance only. Program managers are advised to form their own opinion on the data by referring to specific comments provided in the data dictionary in appendix (from A4.1 to A7.6) or in the text.

Law and justice

A. Data sources that are of reasonably good quality for program managers to use for monitoring and outcome measurements (subject to coverage issues relating to the identification of Indigenous people in the collections). This group also includes data sources that are only useful to obtain data at the national level (NL) and limited data items (LD).

Annual Prisoner Census

Quarterly Prison Statistics

Persons in Juvenile Corrective Services Institutions (LD)

Police Custody Survey (LD, only useful for those held in police custody)

Deaths in Custody Collection

Legal Service Clients Collection, ATSILS and LACs, (LD)

B. Data sources that collect useful information for monitoring and outcome measurement, but should be used with caution due to incomplete identification of Indigenous persons (IID), data quality concerns (DQC) and incomplete information (ICI)

National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey (DQC)

C. Data sources that are useful but cannot be used due to insufficient numbers or small sample size.

Women's Safety Survey

Higher Courts Statistics

D. Data sets that do not currently identify Indigenous people

Victims of Recorded Crimes

National Crimes and Safety Survey (Indigenous data will be available from 2002)

Statistics on Higher Courts

Other Court Statistics

Family Courts Statistics

Health

. Data sources that are of reasonably good quality for program managers to use for monitoring and outcome measurements (subject to coverage issues relating to the identification of Indigenous people in the collections). This group also includes data sources that are only useful to obtain data at the national level (NL) and limited data items (LD).

Perinatal statistics (NPSU)

National Health Survey

Disability Services Census

B. Data sources that collect useful information for monitoring and outcome measurement, but should be used with caution due to incomplete identification of Indigenous persons (IID), data quality concerns (DQC) and incomplete information (ICI).

National Mortality Database (registration system)(IID; DQC)

Deaths and causes of death

Perinatal Deaths

National Centre for Coronial Information System (IID)

National Database on Registered Births (IID)

Aboriginal Community-controlled Health Collection (DQC)

C. Data sources that are useful but cannot be used due to insufficient numbers or small sample size.

Bettering of Evaluation and Care of Health (BEACH) Survey (IID; DCC)

Notifiable Diseases Surveillance System (IID)

National Cancer register (IID; and DQC)

National Diabetes register (IID; and DQC)

National Nutrition Survey (DQC)

Survey of Mental Health and Well-being (IID; DQC)

National Drug Strategy (IID; and DQC)

CSDA-Minimum Data Set Collection (Disability)

National Childhood Immunisation Register (IID and coverage issues)

Health Workforce Surveys (i.e. Registered and enrolled nurses)

National Hospital Morbidity Database

Longitudinal Study of Women's Health

D. Data sets that do not currently identify Indigenous people

Medicare Benefits Scheme

Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme

Disability, Ageing and Carers Survey (IID; Small sample size)

Education and training

Data sources that are of reasonably good quality for program managers to use for monitoring and outcome measurements (subject to coverage issues relating to the identification of Indigenous people in the collections). This group also includes data sources that are only useful to obtain data at the national level (NL) and limited data items (LD).

Census of Population and Housing

National Preschool Census

Census of Non-Government Schools

Survey of Subject Choice of Year 11 and 12 Students

Year 11 and 12 data collection (DEST)

TAFE Data Collection

Higher Education Student statistics

Census of Childcare Services

B. Data sources that collect useful information for monitoring and outcome measurement, but should be used with caution due to incomplete identification of Indigenous persons (IID), data quality concerns (DQC) and incomplete information (ICI).

National Schools Statistics Collection

Teachers in Australian Schools

C. Data sources that are useful but cannot be used due to insufficient numbers or small sample size.

Survey of Education and Training

Apprenticeship and Traineeship Survey

Adult Community Education Student Statistics

Longitudinal Study of Young People

Third International Comparison of Mathematics and Science Achievement

Graduate Destination Survey

Australian Youth Survey

Vocational Education and Training

Student Outcomes Survey

Survey of Employer Views on VET

National School English Literacy Survey

Survey of Education and Work

D. Data sets that do not currently identify Indigenous people

Housing and Infrastructure

Data sources that are of reasonably good quality for program managers to use for monitoring and outcome measurements (subject to coverage issues relating to the identification of Indigenous people in the collections). This group also includes data sources that are only useful to obtain data at the national level (NL) and limited data items (LD).

Census of Population and Housing

Community Housing and Infrastructure Needs Survey

Aboriginal Hostels Ltd Collection

Home Ownership Program (ATSIC)

Australian Housing Survey (ABS)

B. Data sources that collect useful information for monitoring and outcome measurement, but should be used with caution due to incomplete identification of Indigenous persons (IID), data quality concerns (DQC) and incomplete information (ICI).

National Torres Strait Islander Survey

Public Housing

Aboriginal Rental Housing Program

Community Housing Program

Program of Rent Assistance Community Indigenous Housing

Supported Accommodation Assistance Program

C. Data sources that are useful but cannot be used due to insufficient numbers or small sample size.

Survey of Income and Housing Cost

Crisis Accommodation Program

D. Data sets that do not currently identify Indigenous people

Housing Expenditure Program

Appendix A1.1

Project proposal for enhancing availability, quality and use by ATSIC program managers of data on outcomes for Indigenous peoples

Purpose

- To brief the consultative group on a three stage project proposed by OEA which is aimed at informing ATSIC program managers of currently available data on outcomes for Indigenous peoples and at improving the availability, quality and use of data on outcomes for Indigenous peoples by those managers.

Background

- For more than a decade since the mid-1980s the Australian Public Service (APS) has been undergoing substantial changes in structure, character and culture. The APS now has a sharper focus on client needs with the aim of meeting client needs through an efficient, effective and accountable service. These changes have been accompanied by a value system that emphasises program performance and program outcomes as key elements of the service delivery.
- The reforms have not been restricted to the Commonwealth or to non-Indigenous populations as evidenced by the 1992 National Commitment to improved outcomes in the delivery of programs and services for Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders.

Recently, significant initiatives have been taking place, both within and outside of ATSIC, in relation to data on outcomes for Indigenous peoples of Commonwealth and state government programs. It could help ATSIC program managers if they were made aware of them in some detail especially given that ATSIC has recognised that policy and program effectiveness are major challenges. Data being generated by these initiatives may help ATSIC managers to evaluate and modify their programs or be useful in other ways. Recent relevant initiatives include:

- the administrative restructure of ATSIC which increased staff resources available to develop and advocate Indigenous policy priorities nationally and regionally, and to advocate for demonstrable outcomes;
- developments in ATSIC Information Services Office initiatives and in ATSIC's Regional Information System (ARIS);
- increased interest within ATSIC in the systematic use of evaluation in planning and managing operations; and
- in July 2000, the Ministerial Council for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs (MCATSIA) disappointed with the lack of progress in the

Indigenous socio-economic and welfare since the *National Commitment* of 1992, appointed a Working Party to develop action plans, performance reporting strategies and benchmarks to reinvigorate the *National Commitment* and to facilitate related progress, reviews and monitoring outcomes.

The Working Party proposals include the establishment of a planning framework which:

- identifies needs, establishes clear measurable objectives, agreed outcomes and performance indicators should be set-up;
- defines clearly the responsibility among each level of government in planning, funding and delivery of services;
- recognises the need to understand the cause (input) and effect (output) relationships as an essential part of effective planning and service delivery;
- reviews by MCATSI on an annual basis on the progress of improved outcomes of Indigenous programs;
- improves the reporting of outcome measures on services provided to Indigenous people; and
- measures the outcome with the aim of improving service delivery.

Cross-agency working groups

In response to the COAG decisions on reconciliation in November 2000 the Commonwealth set-up the following cross-agency working groups to develop a coordinated approach to Indigenous policy development and programs to priority action to implement the COAG framework:

- data management and monitoring;
- environment health;
- community capacity building; and
- digital divide.

The work of these cross-agency working groups is of particular interest because of its emphasis on generating data that allows the monitoring of progress in achieving improved outcomes and is worthy of research to determine status of the data generation and collection associated with it.

Examination by the *Review of Commonwealth/State Service Provision* 2001 (of the Productivity Commission) of the performance of the mainstream services provided to Indigenous people. (see Attachment 'A' for details).

Early this year, the report of the *Indigenous Funding Inquiry* of the Commonwealth Grants Commission was released. This report paid special attention to the status of Indigenous data that can be used for performance

assessment and for measuring needs at the regional level for resource allocation.

- report of the Australian Collaboration: *A Just and Sustainable Australia* (released by ACOSS);
- performance indicator analysis of data for New Zealand Indigenous people presented in the report: *Closing the Gap*; and
- plans by the Australian Bureau of Statistics for collecting data on Indigenous Australians.

The statements of the Minister for Reconciliation and Aboriginal Affairs when he received ATSIC's Corporate Plan on behalf of the Government are of particular interest. The Minister said that ATSIC must show outcomes from its programs and (quote) 'the delivery of services is an important part of ATSIC's role and I am encouraging them (ATSIC) to keep their eye on that ball as well'.

Key issues and concerns

Although ATSIC's grant procedures require funded agencies to report periodically using agreed performance indicators, the data obtained this way has been little used in monitoring broader outcomes or in strategic planning beyond individual program planning. The effective linking of such data to ATSIC's implementation of the Commonwealth's Outcomes and Outputs financial management framework and to that of other agencies providing services to Indigenous peoples merits research and ongoing development.

Indicators used in programs and outputs for Indigenous peoples (not just by ATSIC), while having value as indicators, often are not as serviceable as measures and so they do not measure accurately the outcomes intended to be measured. Some indicators used are workload information rather than outcome measures or performance indicators.

For some programs, major performance information comes from non-program sources: Five-yearly population censuses, ad hoc surveys or regular survey programs of ABS, which are subjected to numerous data quality and sampling problems.

Data sources such as the NATSIS 1994 are outdated, and therefore, now have a limited use in measuring program outcomes. Some indicators are more meaningful when they are related to the population at risk. Indigenous population counts are of dubious reliability and increasing rapidly from one census to another. This makes the trend assessment difficult. This is particularly so for the population at the regional level.

Within ATSIC financial inputs and program outputs have not been linked to measure program effectiveness accurately. The linking effort has not been successful due to several reasons:

-
- some are associated with parallel programs with multiple objectives;
 - some organisations receive grants and funding from ATSIC and other agencies to deliver multiple programs, so that the accurate measurement of cost efficiencies of individual programs are difficult; and
 - the current accounting system does not distinguish grants from direct program assistance to clients: GMS and AFIS systems are maintained as two independent systems. As a result, identification of clients who receive program funds from multiple ATSIC projects/programs cannot be easily identified.

Proposal

A project of three stages is proposed:

Stage 1: An information paper on internally and externally generated data currently available to ATSIC on outcomes for Indigenous peoples, including consideration of data quality, source, frequency of collection and extent of their use by program managers;

Stage 2: Try to make more or better actual use of the available data in program planning and management of one or more programs and consider ways of using the data in higher-level service delivery and planning of delivery.

Stage 3: Follow-up evaluation of the implementation of Stage 2; the development of a good practice guide for using external and internal data in program planning and management; and (perhaps) recommendations to refine the evaluation framework for ATSIC that is currently under development.

Stage 1: Key actions

- recruitment of a short-term consultant;
- appoint a short-term consultant to advise the Steering Committee;
- Task Force assigned to carry out the project especially in relation to the scope and management of the project;
- appoint a Steering Committee;
- appoint a Steering Committee to guide and monitor the implementation of the project, and further action arising from it;
- establishment of a task force to review existing performance data relating to outcomes for Indigenous peoples and bring stage one of the project to completion.

Production of an Information paper

Task force Suggested membership of the Task Force is:

- Adviser/consultant (to be appointed)
- Franz Kriven (Executive Level 1 ongoing employee)
- Dr Gaminiratne Wijesekere (Assistant Manager, Evaluation. OEA)

Task force will prepare an Information Paper on status of respective data initiatives including availability of data, performance indicators currently being used with a commentary on their quality, source, frequency and outline of proposals linking the information gathered to ATSIC thinking on appropriate ways to measure and report performance and outcomes.

Stage 2: Key actions

- <To be developed>

Elements proposed for this stage include dissemination of the Information Paper produced at Stage 1 by means of a Key Managers Workshop proposed below.

Also proposed are one or two pilot studies making use of the data identified in the Information Paper leading to the development of a good practice guide for using external and internal data in program planning and management and (perhaps) recommendations to refine the evaluation framework for ATSIC that is currently under development.

Key Managers Workshop in 2002

To aid the dissemination of the findings in the Information Paper and to assist in the body of work of Stage 2, a Key Program Managers Workshop is proposed during mid-2002.

For this workshop, each key manager will be invited to present a short paper covering data availability, indicators currently being used, data issues and data needs.

- Stage 3: Key Actions<to be determined>

Early proposals include:

Evaluate the progress of the implementation of the decision taken during Stage 2 and continuous monitoring of data, research and indicator development. It may be useful to establish a permanent special unit with the responsibility of Data, Research and Indicator development.

Other action: on-going

Statistical coordination with other agencies

While ATSIC should concentrate on the development of information system of the programs administered or funded by ATSIC, it is also necessary for ATSIC to participate actively in statistical development activities initiated by other agencies, including ABS, AIHW, regional development and state and territory agencies. ATSIC could use forums such as COAG, MCATSIA and Health Ministers Conference as vehicles in achieving this goal.

Special unit proposed for Data, Research and Indicator development might be assigned the future liaison and coordination with external statistical/research agencies.

Attachment 'A'

Report on Government Services of the Productivity Commission, 2001: Reporting of at least one comparable data item on Indigenous Australians for the 2001 report

Framework/service	Descriptive data	Overall outcomes	Access and quality
Education			
School education	√	x	√
VET	√	x	√
Health			
Public hospitals	√	x	√
General practice	x	x	x
Breast cancer	x	x	x
Mental health	x	√	x
Justice			
Police services	x	√	√
Court administration	x	x	x
Corrective services	√	√	x
Emergency management			
Fire services	x	x	x
Ambulance services	x	x	x
Community services			
Aged care services	x	x	√
Services for people with disability			
Children's services	√	x	√
Child protection and out-of-home care	√	√	√
Supported accommodation	x	xxHousing assistance	
Public housing	x	x	x
Community housing	x	x	x
Commonwealth rent assistance	x	x	x

√=At least one nationally comparable data item available. x = Not available.

Note: No nationally comparable data exist on appropriateness, quality, clients views and efficiency for each framework/service listed in the table

Source: SCRCSSP (2001) *Report on Government Services 2001*, Vol 1:, AusInfo, Canberra. Table 2.3 Page 26

A4.1: Police custody survey (AIC)

Project/database description	Database contains detailed information on persons in police custody in states and territories.
Objective(s)	<p>The survey was initially conducted by the AIC as part of its role as the research unit assisting the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody. The main objective was to provide detailed information on the persons held in police custody.</p> <p>The Royal Commission also recommended that this survey should be conducted by AIC at regular intervals until such time that the state and territory police departments are capable of maintaining such statistics.</p>
Scope and coverage	National
Collection methodology/ data source	<p>The data collection is carried out by AIC with the assistance of police departments in states and territories. Data collected refers to all persons in police cells (and in watch-houses) held during the reference month (August). Data are collected through a specially designed form, completed by police officers for each person held in custody during the reference month.</p> <p>Survey forms are collected at a central location and checked for the accuracy of counts (forms) by the police departments in different jurisdictions and forwarded to AIC for data processing, analysis and publication of reports.</p>
Project/database and agency responsible for its maintenance	Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC), Griffith, ACT 2603. http://www.aic.gov.au
Year of commencement of data/series available	1988, 1992 and 1995. The next survey is planned for 2002.

Key data contents	Geographic location of police stations (or watch house), age, sex and Indigenous status of detainee, reason for, and the date and time of person lodged in the cell, most serious offence and reason for release from the cell.
Indigenous status available	Yes.
Geographic level	Information is published at the state and territory level. However, data can be disaggregated at sub-state level down to the police station level.
Data storage	Computerised.
Dissemination of data	Published reports and internet.
Comment	<p>Data are extracted from records maintained by police on persons held in custody in police cells or in watch-houses during the reference period of one month. Some of these detainees have left police cells by the time the survey forms are completed. Consequently, there is no way police could verify any information missing in police records from the client.</p> <p>The number of data items for which the required information “not supplied” is very high. AIC as a general rule, any form that does not contain details of age, sex and Indigenous status of a person was excluded at the data entry stage.</p> <p>The survey covers only persons held in custody and no information is available on those not held in custody, but are charged. The latter is numerically larger than the former.</p>

A4.2: Statistics on Victims of Recorded Crime (ABS)

Project/dataset description	Dataset includes detailed data about victims of selected crimes recorded by police. The Recorded Crime collection contains details of victims of crimes for which nationally comparable data are available.
Objective(s)	To provide information on victims of a selected range of offences recorded by police for each jurisdiction in Australia. These statistics are useful as indicators of the level and nature of recorded crime in Australia and provide a basis for measuring change over time.
Scope and coverage	The national offence categories included in the national crime statistics collection include: homicide and related offences (which includes murder, attempted murder, manslaughter and driving causing death); assault; sexual assault; kidnapping/abduction; robbery; blackmail/extortion; unlawful entry with intent; motor vehicle theft; and other theft.
Collection methodology (or data source)	Data are derived from the administrative records maintained by the police in states and territories. There are variations in the legislation and collection procedures of each jurisdiction. To ensure comparability between jurisdictions, the statistics in the Recorded Crime collection have been compiled according to national standards. The Australian Bureau of Statistics has developed standards and classifications in collaboration with each police jurisdiction and other experts. Only those offence categories for which comparable national standards have been developed are published in Recorded Crime, Australia (ABS Cat. No. 4510.0).

Agency responsible for the Recorded Crime collection & maintenance	The Australian Bureau of Statistics publishes the Recorded Crime publication annually. The crime statistics are compiled by the National Crime Statistics Unit (NCSU) of the ABS located in Melbourne, Victoria. http://www.abs.gov.au
Year of commencement of data/series available	1993 - A staged approach has been adopted in the production of national crime statistics. Additional data is progressively added to the national collection as national comparability is achieved.
Key data contents	Victim's data are available by offence type, sex and age of the victim, relationship of offender to victim, location, weapon used, and outcome of investigation.
Indigenous status	Currently not collected by all jurisdictions and not published in the Recorded Crime collection. NSW police collect Indigenous status for victims and offenders and WA collects Indigenous status for a subset of offenders.
Geographic level	The information is available at the state, territory and national level.
Data storage	Only aggregate data are sent to NCSU by state and territory police departments. These are available in electronic form.
Dissemination of data	Annual publications are issued. Additional data are available from ABS on a user-pay basis. Summary information is available free of charge from the Theme pages for Crime and Justice on the ABS website (see above).
Comments	Although national data standards and counting rules are used by all jurisdictions, there still remain some discrepancies in the data across states and territories, mainly arising from differences in state and territory legislation. ABS undertakes Quality Assurance work with the jurisdictions to improve data quality.

A4.3: National Crime and Safety Survey (ABS)

Survey description	Contains detailed information on the level of victimisation for selected offences. Information is collected from individuals and households about their experience of crimes, and whether these crimes were reported to police. Measures of both prevalence and incidence are used to determine victimisation levels along with the average number of incidents per victim for particular offences.
Objective(s)	The purpose of the survey is to provide a picture of the way that crime affects the Australian community. The survey focuses on those categories of more serious crime that affect the largest number of people. Estimates from the survey, which complements the information on crimes recorded by police agencies will enable those involved in criminal justice administration to formulate policies and strategies based on the overall incidence of crime.
Scope and coverage	National household survey.

<p>Collection methodology/ data source</p>	<p>Data were collected on households that had experienced a break-in, or attempted break-in, or had any motor vehicle theft and from persons who had experienced a physical attack, or had been threatened or abused, robbed or assaulted for the most recent incident in the 12 months prior to the survey. Since 1993 this survey was conducted as part of the Monthly Supplementary Survey series.</p> <p>Detailed information on the methodology used in the survey can be obtained from the explanatory and technical notes contained in the publication, <i>Crime and Safety, Australia 1998</i> (ABS Cat. No. 4509.0).</p> <p>The next national survey is being conducted in 2002 and the results are expected to be available from April 2003 onwards.</p>
<p>Project/dataset and agency responsible for its maintenance</p>	<p>The Australian Bureau of Statistics publishes the Recorded Crime publication annually. The crime statistics are compiled by the National Crime Statistics Unit (NCSU) located in the Melbourne http://www.abs.gov.au</p>
<p>Year of commencement of data/series available</p>	<p>1975, 1983, 1993, 1998 and every three years from 2002 onwards. The 1993 and 1998 surveys were conducted as a supplementary survey to the Monthly Population Survey (MPS-April) program of ABS.</p> <p>Also there have been a number of state-based crime and safety surveys over the years.</p>

Key data contents	Perceptions of problems in the neighbourhood, feelings of safety, household break-ins and attempted break-ins, motor vehicle thefts, robbery, assault, sexual assault, whether crime was reported to police and reasons for not reporting crime to police. New data items in the 2002 survey include male sexual assault, how crime was reported to police and support services accessed.
Indigenous status available	Not collected prior to the 2002 survey.
Geographic level	State, territory and national data. Metropolitan and non-metropolitan breakdowns are included for some tables and some regional information is available in the supplementary tables (ABS Cat. No. 4509.0.).
Data storage	Computerised from 1993 onwards.
Dissemination of data	A main publication and supplementary tables are released from the survey output, which is run every three years. With the 2002 survey direct electronic dissemination with companion data being available on the ABS website.

Comments	<p>Information is 'as reported' by respondents and their recall of the most recent incident in the previous twelve months. An advantage of self-enumeration questionnaires is that they may increase the chance of a person revealing personal information on issues such as assault and sexual assault.</p> <p>However, there are also possible problems if the respondent's literacy skills affect the understanding of questions and the quality of the information reported. The survey covered people in dwellings only. Hence, details of crimes experienced by victims in refuge in special institutions and special accommodation are not represented in the survey.</p>
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A4: 4: Women and safety survey (ABS)

Survey description	Range of data relating to women's safety at home, and in the community and the nature and the extent of violence against women are collected through a sample survey.
Objective(s)	To provide detailed information on women's experience of physical and sexual assault, threats against personal safety and measurement of the extent of violence against women which is required for policy development.
Scope and coverage	National household survey.
Collection methodology/ data source	The data were collected from 6,333 women aged 18 years and over who were usual residents of households selected for the survey. Data were collected by personal interviews by trained female interviewers. Due to the sensitive nature of the data, interviews were conducted in private, without the presence of other household members.
Project/database and agency responsible for its maintenance	The Australian Bureau of Statistics publishes the Recorded Crime publication annually. The crime statistics are compiled by the National Crime Statistics Unit (NCSU) located in the Melbourne http://www.abs.gov.au
Year of commencement of data/series available	1996. This survey is likely to be repeated in future as a survey on violence and include information on men and women.
Key data contents	Physical, emotional, and sexual violence and abuse, violence and abuse by male partner, general safety of the household and the community, child abuse, reporting to police and some demographic information including socio-economic background.
Indigenous status available	Available but the number of Indigenous respondents was very small for separate analysis of data.

Geographic level	National level only.
Data storage	Computerised.
Dissemination of data	Published as Women's Safety, Australia 1996 (ABS Cat. No. 4128.0). Confidentialised survey data tapes are available for purchase for further analysis.
Comments	<p>A response rate of 78% was achieved by the Survey. The sample size of the survey is not sufficient to yield estimates for states and territories. The number of Indigenous women covered in the survey was very low to derive reliable estimates for Indigenous women.</p> <p>Measuring violence in the community through household surveys is difficult, especially when relying on peoples' memories to recall events that occurred in the past. This is particularly so when such investigations involve traumatic events that frequently involve close members of one's family.</p>

A4: 5: Statistics on higher criminal courts (ABS)

Project/collection description	The Higher Criminal courts collection provides detailed information to assess the volume and flow of criminal law matters that pass through higher courts systems (Supreme and Intermediate) in Australian jurisdictions.
Objective(s)	To provide information on the management of workload associated with criminal law matters handled by Supreme and Intermediate Courts in states and territories. The data collected refer to the defendants charged before a higher court on criminal law matters (excluding appeal and breach matters).
Scope and coverage	National.
Collection methodology/ data source	Data on the defendants pending, initiated, or finalised are collected through the state and territory agencies responsible for the administration of Supreme and Intermediate courts on an annual basis. Each jurisdiction provides the ABS with detailed information on the criminal case workload undertaken in Supreme and intermediate courts during the financial year. In Qld the information is forwarded to ABS by OESR and in Tasmania the data are provided via the State & Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions. The defendant case is the principal counting unit. Defendant could be an individual or a corporation or an agency. If a defendant is charged for more than one criminal matter and belongs to more than one case during the reference period this defendant may be represented more than once in the data.
Project/database and agency responsible for its maintenance	National Criminal Courts Statistics Unit (NCCSU) of Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) located in the Victorian office.

maintenance	http://www.gov.au
Year of commencement of data/series available	Annual collection commenced in 1995. Since 1996/97 collected according to financial year.
Key data contents	Defendant case counts of criminal matters heard in Supreme and Intermediate courts. Number of defendants whose cases are pending, initiated or finalised, together with characteristics of defendants. Date of committal, initiation, finalisation, method of initiation and method of finalisation including acquitted, guilty verdict, guilty plea and non-adjudicated finalisations. From the 2000-2001 issue the collection has been expanded to include tables on offence and penalty data.
Indigenous status available	Not currently collected.
Geographic level	Data are presented at the state and territory level and at the Court level.
Data storage	Computerised.
Dissemination of data	Criminal Courts, Australia (ABS Cat. No. 4513.0) is released annually by the ABS. Additional data are available from ABS on a user-pay basis. Summary information is available free of charge from ABS. Theme pages for Crime and Justice are on the ABS website.
Comments	The majority of minor criminal law matters are handled by the Magistrates courts. This information is currently not collected from magistrate courts by the NCCSU. The data presented in this collection could be different from those of the states and territories due to the differences in counting rules and methodologies. There are some state and territory variations in the data supplied.

A4.6: Annual prisoner census (ABS)

Project/dataset description	Provides detailed data on persons held in gazetted prisons in each state and territory as at 30 th June each year. The information on each prisoner is extracted from administrative records maintained at corrective services institutions.
Objective(s)	The collection began to provide the Corrective Services Minister's Council with information on the prison population in states and territories and to assess levels and trends in the adult prison population and their characteristics. The information provided is at a particular point of time and hence shows the stock of the prison population (stock data).
Scope and coverage	All persons in gazetted adult prisons on the night of 30 th June. In all states and territories except Victoria and Queensland, persons in adult custody are aged 18 years and over. In Vic and Qld adult refers to persons aged 17 years and over. In NSW and ACT, the Prisoner census includes periodic detainees as well. Adult prisoners held in juvenile correctional facilities are not covered in the census.
Collection methodology/ data source	Detailed data on each prisoner are collected by the ABS from administrative records maintained by the corrective services agencies.
Agency responsible for the Prisoner Census collection & maintenance	National Corrective Services Statistics Unit (NCSSU) of the Australian Bureau of Statistics located in Melbourne, Victoria is responsible for the collection, compilation and dissemination of results. http://www.gov.au In the past (from 1982 to 1993) this census was conducted by the Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC). The data for that period is

	available at the AIC.
Year of commencement of data/series available	1982 by AIC and from 1994 onwards by NCSSU (ABS).
Key data contents	Age, sex, country of birth, Indigenous status, legal status, court of sentence, date of reception, sentencing status, type of sentence, the most serious offence/charge, duration of sentence and previous imprisonment and geographic location. From 2001 offences are classified according to the Australian Standard Offence Classification (ASOC) (ABS Cat. No. 1234.0) developed by the ABS. The 2001 edition of Prisoners in Australia contains an appendix with the concordance to the previous classification the Australian Classification of offences (ANCO).
Indigenous status available	Available. Recorded by the corrective services agencies on entry into the corrective service institution using self-identification.
Geographic level	Location of the prison/detention centre is coded and the information is available on request on a user-pays basis. Aggregated data are published at the state, territory and national levels.
Data storage	Computerised.

Dissemination of data	<p>In the past the results of the Prisoner Census were compiled and published as reports to the Corrective Services Ministers' Council by the AIC (from 1982 to 1993). The ABS published these reports, which were also available to interested users, from 1994 to 1999.</p> <p>From 2000, the results of the Prisoner Census have been published annually by the ABS in Prisoners in Australia (ABS Cat. No. 4517.0). State and territory data are available as spreadsheets via the ABS website at http://www.abs.gov.au.</p>
Comments	<p>The Census provides stock data on the prison population, which are useful for measuring trends over time. Detailed information on the flow data is available from the quarterly statistics on corrective services published in Corrective Services, Australia (ABS Cat. No. 4512.0).</p> <p>National corrections statistics are compiled in order to maximise comparability across states and territories. Although differences have been overcome through the introduction of national standards, some legislative, interpretive and processing differences remain.</p>

A4.7: Quarterly prison statistics (ABS)

Project/dataset description	This dataset contains information on persons in custody including those in community-based corrections.
Objective(s)	This collection began to provide the Corrective Services Ministers' Council with information on prison population in states and territories and to assess levels and trends in adult prison population and their characteristics. While the annual Prisoner Census provides stock data, the quarterly collection provides data on persons in custody and the flow of the prison population (flow data).
Scope and coverage	State, territory and national. All adult persons remanded or sentenced including those serving community-based court orders in all corrective service (or community-based) institutions in the states and territories. Adult prisoners are those 18 years of age and over (in Vic and Qld the minimum age of an adult prisoner is 17 years). Adult prisoners housed in juvenile facilities are out of scope.
Collection methodology/ data source	Data are derived by ABS from administrative records held by relevant corrective services agencies and the Federal Attorney-General's Department.
Project/database and agency responsible for its maintenance	National Corrective Services Statistics Unit (NCSSU) of the Australian Bureau of Statistics, located in Melbourne Victoria, is responsible for the collection, compilation and dissemination of data. http://www.gov.au In the past (from 1976 to 1994) this survey was conducted by the Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC). The data for that period is available at the AIC.
Year of commencement of	1976 by AIC and from 1994 by NCSSU (ABS).

data/series available	
Key data contents	Indigenous status, sex, legal status, periodic detention and community-based corrections.
Indigenous status available	Available. Recorded during entry into custody when persons are asked whether they identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.
Geographic level	Aggregated data are published at the state and territory level.
Data storage	Computerised.
Dissemination of data	Quarterly publications are released by ABS as Corrective Services, Australia (ABS Cat. No. 4512.0). The publication contains some basic statistical tables for Indigenous prisoners.
Comments	Data are available on daily average and first day of the month basis. Detailed information on the methodology used in the survey can be obtained from the explanatory and technical notes contained in the publication, Corrective Services, Australia (ABS Cat. No. 4512.0).

A4.8: National statistics on persons in Juvenile corrective institutions (AIC)

Project/database description	Data on juveniles in corrective institutions in states and territories are compiled on a quarterly basis.
Objective(s)	To provide levels and trends in national data on juvenile population in corrective institutions in Australia.
Scope and coverage	All juveniles in corrective service institutions in states and territories are covered nationally. However, juveniles temporarily held in police watch-houses and those in adult prisons are not covered by the collection.
Collection methodology/ data source	Data are collected on the last day of each quarter by the corrective services agencies in respective jurisdictions.
Project/database and agency responsible for its maintenance	Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC), Griffith Canberra ACT 2603. http://www.aic.gov.au
Year of commencement of data/series available	1981
Key data contents	Age, sex, legal status (remand/sentenced) and Indigenous status.
Indigenous status available	Yes, total Indigenous (from 1994) and cross-tabulated by most other variables; breakdown by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander not available. A better coverage of the identification of Indigenous persons has been achieved since 1994.
Geographic level	Data are collected at the jurisdictional level; therefore, the data collected are not released at a geographic area below the state and territory level.

Data storage	As the data are provided to AIC in aggregate form by the jurisdictions only additional tabulations are limited from the current collection. With the implementation of the Minimum Data Set developed by AIHW there will be greater flexibility in producing detailed statistics. AIC is willing to add a limited number of tables, if there is sufficient demand for detailed statistics.
Dissemination of data	Annual reports are published by AIC, most recently only on its internet site http://www.aic.gov.au .
Comments	The data available from this collection is restricted to a few items. AIHW has developed a minimum dataset for Juvenile Justice, supported by a data dictionary, which includes, standards, uniform concepts, and data definitions. Pilot tests are currently being carried out. Once adopted this will improve the data quality, coverage and reliability of information.

A4.9: National Deaths in Custody Program (AIC)

Project/database description	The NDICP collects information on all deaths occurring in prisons, police cells, juvenile detention and other custodial facilities as well as custody related police operations in Australia.
Objective(s)	To monitor Indigenous and non-Indigenous deaths in custody pursuant to a recommendation by the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (RCIADIC) which was established in 1987 to inquire into the Aboriginal deaths in custody.
Scope and coverage	National.
Collection methodology/ data source	The data are collected from each state and territory police departments, and authorities of correctional and juvenile justice and welfare agencies. Data collected on each death involve specific information on approximately 40 variables relating to each incident. A contact in each area provides completed NDICP data collection forms when an incident occurs and all relevant information is extracted and entered into the database. Data collection is ongoing.
Project/database and agency responsible for its maintenance	The National Deaths in Custody Program (and database) is managed by the Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC), located in Griffith ACT 2603. http://www.aic.gov.au
Year of commencement of data/series available	The NDICP was established at the AIC in 1992. The database contains information on all deaths in custody in Australia since 1980 (approx. 1500 cases).

Key data contents	Age, sex, Indigenous status and ethnic background of victim, legal status, specific location of death, circumstances, manner and cause of death, most serious offence prior to death and custodial authority in charge.
Indigenous status available	Yes
Geographic level	National, state and territory. Classification by the geographic location of death also possible.
Data storage	Hard copies of completed data collection forms are kept in locked filing cabinets on AIC premises. Access to the database is (a) username protected; and (b) password protected.
Dissemination of data	The NDICP produces an annual publication examining the latest non-identifiable data on deaths in custody. Occasionally thematic reports are also published using the information contained in the NDICP database. Requests for specific information regarding deaths in custody may also be fulfilled (primarily from other government organisations).
Comments	In 1994 the definition of a 'death in police custody' was broadened and divided into two broad categories: Category1 (a): deaths in institutional settings (eg police stations/lockups, police vehicles, etc or during transfer to or from such an institution; or in hospitals, etc following transfer from an institution); and Category 1(b): other deaths in police operations where officers were in close contact with the deceased (police raids and shootings). It would not include most sieges where a perimeter was established around a premises, but officers did

	<p>not have such close contact with the person as to be able to significantly influence or control the person's behaviour; death.</p> <p>Category 2: Other deaths occurring during custody-related police operations. These deaths include situations where officers did not have such close contact with the deceased as to be able to 'significantly influence or control the person's behaviour. It would include most sieges as described above and most cases where officers were attempting to detain a person, eg police pursuits ('deaths during custody-related police operations'). These deaths are now broadly referred to as 'deaths in police custody and custody-related police operations'. Some information was collected retrospectively and therefore the NDICP database holds information relating to Category 1 and Category 2 police custody deaths from 1990.</p> <p>The information collected on deaths in police custody prior to 1990 is limited to deaths in police 'institutional custody' (such deaths are now classified under Category 1(a) deaths).</p>
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A5.1: National Mortality Data Base

Project/database description	Registered deaths and information on medical certificate of death (and cause of death certified by coroners) maintained by state and territory Registrars of Births, Deaths and Marriages are coded and statistical information compiled by the National Processing Centre of the Australian Bureau of Statistics.
Objective(s)	Death registration including the known cause(s) is compulsory in all jurisdictions in Australia and is governed by the legislation of different states and territories. The certificate of death is a valid proof of the death of a person, which could be used, for legal and insurance purposes. Although maintained as an administrative and legal purpose, death statistics are important in the assessment of population trends and projections. Causes of death information are useful for developing and monitoring health policy.
Scope and coverage	National
Collection methodology/ data source	Death statistics are derived from the registered deaths maintained by state and territory Registrars of Births, Deaths and Marriages, state and territory Registrars provide the information on deaths and causes of death are reported to the National Processing Centre of Australian Bureau of Statistics to prepare statistics on deaths and coding and compilation of detailed statistics on causes of death.

Project/database and agency responsible for its maintenance	<p>Death registration in each jurisdiction is administered by the Registrars of Births, Deaths and Marriages of respective states and territories.</p> <p>Australian Bureau of Statistics National Processing Centre, Vital Statistics Section, Australian Bureau of Statistics, Brisbane Qld 4000. http://www.abs.gov.au</p>
Year of commencement of data/series available	<p>Registration of deaths at the national level commenced as far back as 1907.</p> <p>Computerised database available from 1964.</p> <p>ABS began to publish Indigenous data on deaths for NT, SA and WA in the 80s.</p>
Key data contents	<p>Age, sex, place of usual residence, country of birth, and causes of death. For the deceased aged 15 years and over the information on occupation, employment and marital status are available.</p>
Indigenous status	<p>Available. The practice of identification of Indigenous deaths began in different jurisdictions in different time periods: NT (Before 1985) ACT (1984); WA (1985), NSW and SA (1986), Vic (1987), and Qld (1996).</p>
Geographic level	<p>Lowest geographic level Statistical Local Area (SLA), determined from the usual residence of the deceased.</p>
Data storage	<p>Computerised database.</p>
Dissemination of data	<p>Annual publications: Deaths, Australia, Causes of death Australia and thematic publications.</p>

Comments	<p>Coverage of death is complete, although some delays in registering a death can occur. The identification of Indigenous deaths is still incomplete and according to ABS the NT, SA and WA data are of a publishable quality. In the past, of the information provided on death certificates only one cause known as the <i>underlying cause</i> of death was coded and detailed tabulations prepared according to WHO rules of the classification of deaths. With the calendar year 1998, ABS commenced coding all causes and conditions (multiple-cause coding) and automated both the coding and the selection of the underlying cause of death using the software developed by National Centre for Health Statistics ABS currently use ICD - version 10 for coding causes of death.</p>
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A5.2: National Coroners Information System (NCIS)

Project/database description	This database included coronial information that is 'current, comprehensive and easily accessible to authorised users'. The information is collected from the unnatural and natural deaths referred to Coroners for investigation of cause(s) of death.
Objective(s)	To collect detailed data on deaths reported to Coroners for investigation and for developing strategies to prevent deaths and injuries.
Scope and coverage	National (all deaths reported to Coroners to investigate and certify exact cause(s) of death).
Collection methodology/ data source	Data are collected from the Coroners' case files and findings. These include police reports and laboratory reports (autopsy and toxicology) and any other records on the deceased made available to the Coroner at the inquest.
Project/database and agency responsible for its maintenance	National Coroners Information System is developed and managed by the Monash University National Centre for Coronial Information (MUNCCI), 57-83 Kavanagh St., South Bank, Melbourne Vic 3006.
Year of commencement of data/series available	Pilot started in 1998; national database version 2 commenced collection of data in mid 2000, with on-going improvements.
Key data contents	Demographic information (age and sex) geographic details, marital status, employment & unemployment of deceased; nature of injury, causes of death (circumstance of death and any other natural causes known). Textual narratives of circumstances from initial police reports, toxicology/pathology and autopsy reports; Coronial findings. Drug related deaths; suicides; homicides and accidental deaths. Work related injuries causing death. Causes of death code assigned by ABS (to be available

	<p>soon to the database once the case files are matched with the causes of death information derived from the registration system available with the National Processing Centre of ABS in Brisbane). MUNCCI is currently negotiating with the ABS to match the data with the cause(s) of death and nature of injury information coded by ABS according to the current version (version10) of the International Classification of Diseases (ICD).</p>
Indigenous status available	<p>Indigenous, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander breakdown possible, although Indigenous data are not routinely published.</p>
Geographic level	<p>Lowest geographic area postcode level.</p>
Data storage	<p>Computerised database (Informix database with web interface).</p>
Dissemination of data	<p>Annual reports, special reports, customised data on limited basis to agreed authorised users; internet access to authorised data users.</p>
Comments	<p>An NCIS Data Dictionary, a reference manual with uniform definitions and classification systems, supports the database. The data items used and methodological aspects are regularly reviewed and revised. Data interrogations and textual search are possible. As part of the database, development MUNCCI is working with police across Australia in the development of more uniform procedures for police investigations, coroners and clerks and pathologists. A minimum Data Set with uniform definitions has been developed. While these activities would improve the quality of the data, the availability of ICD codes for circumstance of injury causing death (cause of death) and nature of injury would help with developing strategies for injury prevention.</p>

A5.3: Perinatal Deaths (ABS)

Project/database description	Contains data on (a) still births (foetuses weighing at least 400g or gestational period of 20 weeks); and (b) neonatal deaths (deaths among infants occurring in the first 28 days of birth). The database also contains some information on the mother.
Objective(s)	The law in each state and territory requires all stillbirths and all deaths to be registered with the Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages. The information provided in the registration forms is used by ABS for compilation of detailed statistics.
Scope and coverage	National (perinatal deaths registered during a year).
Collection methodology/ data source	State and territory registrars provide all deaths (still births and neonatal deaths) registered during a year to the National Processing Centre of Vital Statistics of the Australian Bureau of Statistics for coding, and compilation and publication of aggregate statistics.
Project/database and agency responsible for its maintenance	National Processing Centre, Australian Bureau of Statistics, Brisbane Qld 4000. http://www.abs.gov.au
Year of commencement of data/series available	1973.
Key data contents	On mothers: age, maternal conditions, pregnancy outcome, type of birth and gestation period. On stillbirth or neonate: sex, birth type, (single or multiple) weight at delivery, and condition of the foetus (or neonate).
Indigenous status available	Indigenous status of mother and father recorded.
Geographic level	State and territory; Statistical Local Area (SLA) subject to confidentiality restrictions.
Data storage	Computerised.
Dissemination of data	Annual reports; customised statistics are available on a user pay basis.

Comments	<p>Indigenous status of stillbirths and neonatal deaths are determined according to the Indigenous status of the mother or the father.</p> <p>ABS releases detailed information on the foetuses or neonates and mothers according to the legal definition (as stated above) adopted in Australian jurisdictions, which is much broader than the recommended definitions for international use by the WHO.</p> <p>Therefore, ABS also reports key information on perinatal deaths according to the WHO definition, for all foetuses and births weighing 500g or more.</p>
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A5.4: National Database on Registered Births

Project/database description	Registered births and information relating to the birth and some limited information on the mother and the father are collected by the state and territory Registrars of Births, Deaths and Marriages and are processed for compilation of statistics by the National Processing Centre of the Australian Bureau of Statistics.
Objective(s)	Birth registration is carried out under the legislations of state and territories. Data on births are useful to ascertain levels and trends in fertility of the Australian population and its major sub-groups. Births form the major component of natural increase of the population.
Scope and coverage	National.
Collection methodology/ data source	Birth statistics are derived from the registered births maintained by state and territory Registrar's of Births, Deaths and Marriages. State and territory Registrars provide the information on birth reported to the National Processing Centre of Australian Bureau of Statistics to prepare statistics on births and compilation and publication of detailed statistics.
Project/database and agency responsible for its maintenance	Birth registration in each jurisdiction is administered by the Registrars of Births, Deaths and Marriages of respective state and territories. National Processing Centre, Australian Bureau of Statistics, Brisbane Qld 4000. http://www.abs.gov.au

Year of commencement of data/series available	Registration of births at the national level commenced as far back as 1907. Computerised database available from 1964. ABS began to publish Indigenous data on deaths for NT, SA and WA in the 80s.
Key data contents	For each live birth, date, place of occurrence, sex and type (single, or multiple). For parents: place of usual residence, age and the parity, marital status, Indigenous status and employment details.
Indigenous status	Available. The practice of identification of Indigenous deaths began in different jurisdictions in different time periods: NT (Before 1985); ACT (1984); WA (1985); NSW and SA (1986); Vic (1987); and Qld (1996).
Geographic level	Lowest geographic level Statistical Local Area (SLA) determined from the usual residence of the deceased.
Data storage	Computerised database.
Dissemination of data	Annual publications: Births, Australia, and numerous thematic publications.
Comments	Coverage of births is complete, although some delays in registering a birth can occur. The identification of Indigenous births is still incomplete in most jurisdictions. ABS considers that the data for NT, SA and WA are of a publishable quality. In the absence of information recorded on birth notification forms regarding the Indigenous status of a newborn, ABS considers a birth as being of Indigenous origin, if either parent is reported to be of Indigenous origin. This contrasts with deaths where the Indigenous status of the deceased is determined from the information recorded on the death notification form regarding the

	Indigenous status of the deceased.
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A5.5 National Hospital Morbidity Database

Project/database description	Regular data collection on patients admitted ('admitted patient') to public and private hospitals.
Objective(s)	To obtain detailed information on inpatients, including diagnosis and length of stay required, for planning and monitoring delivery of service.
Scope and coverage	National (all public and private hospitals targeted. Health facilities run by Veteran Affairs and Defence are not covered.)
Collection methodology/ data source	Data are reported not at the time of admission but when discharged (separated) to allow detailed data such as diagnosis, length of stay of admitted patients can be recorded. Diagnosis is recorded according to the prevailing International Classification of Diseases (ICD). Currently ICD version 10 is used.
Project/database and agency responsible for its maintenance	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) POB 570, Canberra ACT 2601. http://www.aihw.gov.au
Year of commencement of data/series available	Uniform data collection commenced in 1993-94.
Key data contents	Age, sex and place of residence, diagnosis and other clinical information, length of stay, health insurance details and administrative information.
Indigenous status available	Yes.
Geographic level	State and territory; postcode of the admitted patient is available.
Data storage	Available in electronic form.

Dissemination of data	Annual Hospital Statistics (published by AIHW).
Comments	<p>There is no uniform system of recording Indigenous status of an 'admitted patient'. Only a few jurisdictions identify and record Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders separately (NSW, Qld, Victoria, WA, NT). The methods adopted for identification of Indigenous persons differ between jurisdictions; coverage of identification is far from complete. The number of hospitals reporting to AIHW has increased over the years. This factor should be taken into account when assessing trends. Identification of Indigenous status is far from satisfactory. A sample survey was carried out in covering 11 hospitals located in SA, NT, ACT, Vic and Qld showed that completeness of identification of Indigenous status of admitted patients in sampled hospitals ranged from 55% to 100%. The survey also found that the tendency to increase accuracy of identification with the number of Indigenous persons living in the surrounding area (catchment area of the hospital¹⁰²).</p>

¹⁰² Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health and Welfare Information Unit (1999) *Assessing the Quality of Identification of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People in Hospital Data*, Australian Health Ministers' Advisory Council, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare and Australian Bureau of Statistics, Canberra.

A5.6 National Perinatal Statistics (AIHW)

Project/database description	Contains perinatal morbidity information collected by midwives and perinatal deaths maintained by the Registrars of Births, Deaths and marriages in states and territories.
Objective(s)	Perinatal information is collected to monitor and interpret national data relating to reproductive and perinatal healthy outcomes.
Scope and coverage	National.
Collection methodology/ data source	<p>Data on stillbirths and live births and perinatal deaths (includes foetal deaths – pregnancy losses with at least 20 weeks of gestation (or birth weight is <400g) – and deaths of babies in the first month) are reported by state and territory health departments to NPSU.</p> <p>Perinatal data collection in states and territories is performed by midwives and other health personnel through different sources: mothers and hospital records.</p> <p>The information on deaths is taken from registration statistics. A national minimum perinatal data collection is collated by NPSU for preparation of aggregate tables and publication of reports.</p>
Project/database and agency responsible for its maintenance	<p>National Perinatal Statistics Unit, Sydney's Children's Hospital, 2nd Floor of the McNevin Dickson Building Avoca St., Randwick, NSW 32031.</p> <p>http://www.aihw.npsu.gov.au</p> <p>[This unit was established by the University of Sydney in 1979, and in 1987 it became the responsibility of AIHW. In 1997, this unit was relocated to University of NSW, and is functioning as one of the collaborative centres of AIHW.]</p>
Year of commencement	1991.

of data/series available	
Key data contents	<p>On mothers: type of birth, mother's age, parity, country of birth, state of residence, antenatal visits, type and place of delivery, interventions and pregnancy outcome.</p> <p>On babies: date and state of birth, birth weight, sex, gestation, whether a single or multiple birth, perinatal diagnosis.</p> <p>For foetal and neonatal deaths (deaths in the first month), cause of death (perinatal condition), and age at death.</p>
Indigenous status available	Yes. Babies born (including still born) to Indigenous mothers only.
Geographic level	Data can be disaggregated by state and territory level.
Data storage	Computerised.
Dissemination of data	Annual reports and special thematic publications of NPSU. Available on website as well as published reports. http://www.aihw.gov.au/npsu or http://www.unsw.edu.au .
Comments	<p>The perinatal collection does not collect information on the Indigenous status of fathers.</p> <p>The NPSU data on perinatal deaths do not agree with those derived by ABS from the registered deaths and perinatal collections.</p> <p>Neonatal deaths could be understated in the NPSU collection due to the lack of ascertainment of deaths that occur outside the hospital of birth admission i.e. at home or if the newborn is transferred to another hospital.</p> <p>One of the advantages of NPSU data over perinatal death statistics of ABS is that it provides additional details of the mothers, which are valuable for detailed policy analysis and are not available from the registration system.</p>

	<p>For legal purposes, all foetal and neonatal deaths of at least 400g-birth weight or a gestational age of 20 weeks (if birth weight is not known) are registered.</p> <p>The same definition is recommended in the National Health Data Dictionary of the AIHW. WHO definition for international perinatal statistics is that all fetuses and deaths among neonates weighing at least 500g or having a gestational age of 22 weeks or crown-heel body length of 25cm.</p>
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A5.7 Bettering the Evaluation and Care of Health [BEACH]

Project/database description	The BEACH program is a continuous study of general practice activity in Australia.
Objective(s)	The BEACH program aims: to collect reliable and valid data about general practice; (a) to establish an ongoing database of GP/patient encounter information; (b) to assess patient based risk factors and the relationship these factors have with services and care; and © to provide accurate and timely data to a wide variety of users.
Scope and coverage	National (data are collected from a representative sample of General Practitioners from the provider list maintained by the Health Insurance Commission).
Collection methodology/ data source	Data are collected using a structured questionnaire and encounter form from 20 General practitioners each week and providing a sample of 100,000 patient encounters from a random sample of approximately 1,000 GPs. Recruiting of GPs is by letter and phone.
Project/database and agency responsible for its maintenance	Department of General Practice, University of Sydney, a collaborating unit of the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.
Year of commencement of data/series available	1998.
Key data contents	Data collected on GPs: age, sex, practice size, time in general practice; Patients: age, sex, reasons for consultations, problems managed and treatment received.
Indigenous status available	Yes, both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander for patients.
Geographic level	All states and territories and rural remote area classification.

Data storage	Computerised database.
Dissemination of data	Annual report on General practice activity; refereed articles in peer-reviewed journals, conference papers; ad hoc reports and special studies. Internet access to reports for licensed BEACH users.
Comments	Analyses of BEACH data are undertaken on request by the GPSCU. Charges are applicable.

A5.8 National Notifiable Diseases Surveillance System (NNDSS)

Project/database description	The National Notifiable Diseases Surveillance System (NNDSS) coordinates surveillance of communicable disease notifiable under state and territory legislation. Diseases that should be notified are reviewed periodically by the Communicable Diseases Network of Australia and New Zealand (CDNANZ).
Objective(s)	To monitor the incidence of communicable diseases currently under surveillance across Australia, to implement preventative strategies and to control the spread of such diseases as and when they occur.
Scope and coverage	National
Collection methodology/ data source	State and territory health authorities are responsible for the collection and compilation of data in their respective jurisdictions. The Department of Health and Ageing receives a depersonalised unit record data on each notification from state and territory health departments on a regular basis.
Project/database and agency responsible for its maintenance	The Communicable Diseases and Environmental branch of the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing, Woden 2606 maintains the National Notifiable Diseases Surveillance System. http://www.health.gov.au
Year of commencement of data/series available	National collection commenced in 1991.
Key data contents	Type of disease with phenotype and genotype descriptors; date of onset and notification, age, sex and location (post-code) of the person contacted the disease.
Indigenous status available	Yes.
Geographic level	State and territory. Data can be disaggregated

	by post-code level.
Data storage	Computerised /Microsoft access.
Dissemination of data	Regular reports: Fortnightly and annual.
Comments	<p>Diseases that should be notified to the NNDSS include: Vaccine preventable diseases (diphtheria, hemophilus, influenza type B, measles, mumps, pertussis, poliomyelitis, rubella, tetanus); Quarantinable diseases (cholera, plague, rabies, viral haemorrhage fever, yellow fever); Vector-borne diseases (dengue, bambah forest fever, arbovirus infection, ross river fever and malaria); Bacterial infections (legionellosis, leprosy, meningococcal infection, tuberculosis). Other diseases notified by different jurisdictions: blood-borne diseases (Hp B NT does not report hepatitis B <i>unspecified</i>) hepatitis C (Qld does not report hepatitis C <i>incidents</i>), hepatitis D and hepatitis NEC in all jurisdictions except WA; gastrointestinal diseases: hepatitis, A listeriosis, salmonellosis, typhoid are reported by all jurisdictions. botulism and hepatitis E (all except WA), Campylobacteriosis and Yersiniosis (all except NSW), SLTEC and VTEC all except Qld and WA); sexually transmitted infections: chancroid, chlamydial infections, gonococcal infections, syphilis, donovaniasis (all except SA) and lymphogranuloma venereum (all except WA); zoonoses: brucellosis and leptospirosis and q fever. hydatid diseases (all except NSW) and ornithosis reported by all except NSW ad Qld).</p>

A5.9: National Cancer Registration Statistics (AIHW)

Project/database description	This database contains unit record data on persons developing cancer obtained from the registers maintained by states and territories.
Objective(s)	The major objective is to foster the development and dissemination of national cancer statistics for Australia to be used by health care professionals and all other stakeholders to assess the levels and trends in cancer incidence and resulting deaths.
Scope and coverage	National.
Collection methodology/ data source	<p>The National Committee on Vital Statistics, based on the recommendation by NHMRC asked in 1985 to set up the National Cancer Statistics Clearing House (NCSCH) within the AIHW to develop a database on cancer incidence and mortality from the individual records maintained by the states and territories.</p> <p>In 1986, in collaboration with the Australian Association of Cancer Registries (AACR, the national body overseeing the state and territory cancer registers) AIHW commenced the database. Cancer is a notifiable disease in all states and territories in Australia. Each cancer registry receives information from different sources as specified in the legislation. Cancer registries in each state and territory send to AIHW detailed information on cancer incidence and deaths occurring among residents. AIHW after reconciling any known errors, and observed duplications of reporting by a record linkage system prepares a refined database for detailed data analysis.</p>

Project/database and agency responsible for its maintenance	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare in collaboration with AACR. PO Box 570 Canberra ACT 2601 http://www.AIHW.gov.au
Year of commencement of data/series available	National database commenced in 1982.
Key data contents	Registration number, state and territory of registration, name, DOB, sex, place of birth of the individual, date of diagnosis, cancer site, and histology.
Indigenous status available	Available for some states. But the completeness varies: NSW, ACT, NT and TAS (if available from pathology reports, hospital records or from death registration for those dead); Vic (provision to record is available for most cancer types, except for cervical. Yet the coverage of identification is poor); Qld, SA (records Indigenous status largely based on the pathological reporting forms, but unreliable); WA (has a system of matching pathology reports with the Patient Master Index. Coverage, particularly cancer-related deaths, is relatively high).
Geographic level	State and territory. Location of the individual is also available.
Data storage	Computer database.
Dissemination of data	Reports.
Comments	There are substantial variations across jurisdictions, in the method of data collection, database programs used, format of reporting and coding practices. The data items reported are not uniform as yet. With the implementation of a Minimum Data Set the quality of the data will improve. Indigenous identification in the NCSHC is extremely poor.

A5.10: National Diabetes Register (AIHW)

Project/database description	This database contains unit record data on new cases of Insulin-Treated Diabetes Mellitus (ITDM) from 1 January 1999.
Objective(s)	To maintain a register of new cases of ITDM, including Type 1 and Type 2 cases, gestational and other types of diabetes treated with insulin. To monitor and report on the incidence of ITMD diabetes, more specifically type 1 diabetes; to provide detailed information on the incidence of diabetes to policy planners at Commonwealth, state and territory and local levels.
Scope and coverage	National ITDM cases. Any person with diabetes who does not meet the following criteria is not included in the NDR: if the insulin use commenced before 1 January 1999 or insulin is not used to treat diabetes. Any person who qualifies to be in the register, but does not give consent to be on the NDR is excluded.
Collection methodology/ data source	New cases of ITDM are reported to the National Diabetes Register (NDR) by Diabetes Australia (a by-product of the National Diabetic Services Scheme) and the Australasian Paediatric Endocrine Group (APEG)
Project/database and agency responsible for its maintenance	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare PO Box 570 Canberra ACT 2601 http://www.aihw.gov.au
Year of commencement of data/series available	National database commenced in 1999.

Key data contents	State and territory of registration, name, address, date of birth, sex, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin, country of birth of the individual, type of diabetes, date of diagnosis, postcode of address when diagnosed; date of first insulin injection given and date of death (if dead).
Indigenous status available	Available.
Geographic level	State/territory and postcode. Address of the individual is also held.
Data storage	Computer database.
Dissemination of data	Reports.
Comments	<p>Although the Indigenous status of the person on NDR is available, it is observed that the incidence of ITDM among the Indigenous people is under-represented on the Register. Among those on the Register during 1 January 1999 – 31 December 2000, 2% were identified as of Indigenous origin¹⁰³.</p> <p>Although this is roughly comparable with the proportion of Indigenous population in the total population, figures from the register are not compatible with the higher reported rates of morbidity and from diabetes observed among the Indigenous people. Coverage of Indigenous people in remote areas is considered low.</p>

¹⁰³ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2001) *National Diabetes Register Statistical Profile: December 2000*. AIHW Cat. No. CVD 18,(diabetes Series No.2) Canberra.

A5.11: National Health Survey (NHS)- ABS

Project/database description	A survey program designed to obtain detailed information on the health status of Australians and a range of health related topics to enable measurement of health over time.
Objective(s)	To provide detailed information on a range of health related issues for monitoring trends in health over time. It collected data on the health status of people and detailed information on health related actions and behaviours of people.
Scope and coverage	National.
Collection methodology/ data source	<p>The National Health Survey was carried out during a 12-month period from February 1995 to January 1996. The survey covered a sample of approximately 54,000 persons from all states and territories in selected dwellings.</p> <p>A multi-staged area sample was used. Within each state LGAs were used as the first stage of sampling.</p> <p>In the second stage, Collection districts were selected within the LGAs. Each person 18 years of age or more was interviewed by a trained interviewer of ABS. Persons aged 15-17 were interviewed with the parents consent or adults were asked questions on their behalf. Core questions were asked from all respondents while supplementary questionnaires were served for non-Indigenous respondents.</p> <p>In respect of half the non-Indigenous respondents the General Health and Well-being (SF36) questionnaire was served while the rest of the non-Indigenous respondents completed detailed questionnaires which contained question items on post-school information, health insurance, women's health,</p>

	<p>alcohol consumption etc.</p> <p>To increase the number of Indigenous respondents in the sample the NHS the sample was supplemented by a number of collection districts, which had a high concentration of Indigenous people. Persons interviewed in the supplementary sample were not served with SF36 although details of post-school information and alcohol consumption were asked.</p>
Project/database and agency responsible for its maintenance	<p>Australian Bureau of Statistics BO Box 10 Belconnen ACT 2616 http://www.gov.au Additional data from, and the information on, the survey are available from NCATIS of ABS in Darwin (NT).</p>
Year of commencement of data/series available	<p>The survey was conducted for the first time in 1990. The second survey was conducted in 1995. The third will be conducted in 2002.</p>
Key data contents	<p>Recent illnesses; long-term health conditions; self-assessed health status; general health and wellbeing; visits to hospitals; clinics and doctor consultations; consultation of other health professionals; medications used; days of absence from work due to illness; alcohol consumption; height and weight; injury and accidents; women's health issues, breastfeeding, doctor consultations and use of medication. The survey used a questionnaire known as SF-36 (short form) developed in USA to gather information on eight dimensions on health¹⁰⁴.</p>
Indigenous status	<p>Available.</p>

¹⁰⁴ ABS (1997), *SF-36: Population Norms*, Cat. no. 4399.0, Australian Bureau of Statistics, Canberra.

Geographic level	National. However, basic tables for state and territories and some detailed statistical tables for capital cities and other areas within a state are possible.
Data storage	Computerised.
Dissemination of data	Published reports. Depersonalised survey data files are available for public use.
Comments	<p>ABS found that the data collected from the supplementary collection districts in remote areas were defective and of poor quality. Therefore, the NHS report excluded records pertaining to both Indigenous and non-Indigenous persons in remote regions covered in the supplementary sample. This exclusion yielded an estimated number of 52,685 non-Indigenous persons and 1,753 persons of Indigenous origin in the data file.</p> <p>The survey only covered persons in dwellings and excluded those living in hospitals and other residential institutions, found in sampled collection districts. Therefore, the survey understates the data relating to many aspects such as the sickness, health care utilisation, and contact with health professionals and medication use.</p>

A5.12: National Nutrition Survey (NNS) ABS

Project/database description	Data on food and beverage intake, physical measurements, food-related habits and food consumption patterns of the Australian people collected through a national sample survey carried out over 12 months.
Objective(s)	To provide data required to develop food and nutrition policy. Revision of Recommended Dietary Guidelines and any revision required for the National Health Goals and Targets. Also, to identify groups at risk of health problems related to diet and nutrition.
Scope and coverage	National.
Collection methodology/ data source	This survey was conducted on a sub sample of the 1995 National Health survey, excluding the supplementary Collection Districts (CDs) selected from remote areas. NNS covered up to two persons per household in rural areas and up to three persons per household in urban areas. In Qld three persons per household were selected in both urban and rural samples. Persons to be interviewed in households were selected randomly. Information in respect of persons aged 2 years (N=13,800) and over was collected. Only those living in private dwellings were included in the survey. Food intake was collected from all respondents for a 24-hour period for one day. These data were collected again from a sub-sample of respondents for another 24-hour period (Day 2).

Project/database and agency responsible for its maintenance	Australian Bureau of Statistics PO Box 10 Belconnen ACT 2616 http://www.abs.gov.au NNS was conducted by ABS with the financial and technical assistance from the Commonwealth Department of Health and Family Services (now Department of Health and Ageing).
Year of commencement of data/series available	NNS was conducted in 1983 and in 1995.
Key data contents	Age, sex, marital status, geographic details, socio-economic characteristics including, housing information, food and beverage consumption during a 24-hour recall period, vitamin use, physical activity, physical measurements (weight, height, hip and waist), blood pressure; dietary habits and beliefs.
Indigenous status available	Available. Since the supplementary sample from remote regions selected for NHS was excluded, the number of Indigenous people covered in the NNS was low.
Geographic level	State and metropolitan, rural and remote breakdown.
Data storage	Confidentialised data file matched with NHS records are available for public use.
Dissemination of data	Published reports and public use data tape.
Comments	The ABS data file prepared for public use contains for all NNS respondents relevant records from the NHS, so that nutrition related information can be cross-classified with the health related information collected at the NHS. Although the Indigenous status of NNS respondents is available, the sample was too small to produce any reliable estimates for Indigenous status even at the national level.

**A5.13: National Survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing of Adults
(NSMHWBA-ABS)**

Project/database description	Contains information relevant to assessing the prevalence of major mental disorders among persons 18 years of age and over, and any disabling conditions associated with such disorders.
Objective(s)	<p>To collect detailed information on prevalence of major mental health disorders and disabilities associated with these disorders, together with the health service used and care received.</p> <p>The results of the survey are valuable for monitoring different components of the National Mental Health Strategy. Mental health is one of the four priority areas of health. This survey (1997) will provide baseline data against which any future survey results can be compared.</p>
Scope and coverage	National.
Collection methodology/ data source	<p>Data were collected from one adult member from randomly selected households. The survey used a multi-stage sample. In the first stage the sample was stratified by states and territories and in the second stage Collection Districts (CDs) within states and territories, and from these CDs households were selected for the sample.</p> <p>Only private dwellings were selected for the survey. The Survey targeted 15,500 private dwellings to achieve a coverage of about 10,000 persons. The survey covered 13,624 households with 10,641 persons responding to the survey. The response rate for the survey yielded 78%.</p>

Project/database and agency responsible for its maintenance	Australian Bureau of Statistics. Po Box 10 Belconnen ACT 2616 (The survey was funded by the Department of Family and Human Services (now Health and Ageing)).
Year of commencement of data/series available	1997. It is likely that this survey will be repeated at a future date.
Key data contents	Demographic and geographic data. Different types of mental health disorders: anxiety, affective and substance use disorders. Chronic physical conditions, disability and details of health and personal care received by persons with the given mental health problems. Data were collected by trained interviewers.
Indigenous status available	Available, although the number of Indigenous people covered in the survey was too small to produce any reliable statistics.
Geographic level	National level. However, state level data can be derived only for populous states.
Data storage	Public use data file available.
Dissemination of data	Reports and public use data file.
Comments	This survey was developed in consultation with the Clinical Research Unit for Anxiety Depression (CRUFAD), and the Department of Health and Ageing. The survey published data on broad disorders such as those relating to anxiety, affective and substance abuse disorders. Generally, the prevalence of psychotic disorders is low, and the prevalence of personality disorders is high. The prevalence rates estimated from the survey for these conditions were found to be too low.

	<p>Therefore, the survey results for these two conditions were not released. However, it is difficult to capture such disorders accurately from field surveys such as this (NSMHWBA).</p> <p>The data collected from the survey of mental disorders were coded according to both version 10 of the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-10) and the Diagnostic Statistical Manual for the classification of mental disorders.</p> <p>It has also been commented that whether survey instruments used to assess mental health status and classify illnesses were culturally appropriate for Indigenous people¹⁰⁵.</p>
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¹⁰⁵ Wisener, K (1998) *Indigenous Disability Data- Current Status and Future Prospects, Report on Proceedings of the Canberra Workshop* (April) Page 8. A Joint Program of the Australian Bureau of Statistics, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, and Department of Health and Family Services, ABS Canberra.

**A5.14 Australian Longitudinal Study of Women's Health
(ALSWH-University of Newcastle)**

Project/database description	ALSWH is a longitudinal study of health and well being of women in three age cohorts.
Objective(s)	The study is designed to explore: (a)determinants of health and illness of women taking (b)investigate health service needs of women and how
Scope and coverage	National sample.
Collection methodology/ data source	The sample of women belonging to three age cohorts (aged 18-22 years, 45-49 years and 70-74 years in 1996) has been chosen for the longitudinal study. Respondents are selected from the Medicare database women's participation in the study and is purely voluntary. Data are collected through mailed questionnaires (followed by telephone queries where necessary). The three age cohorts have been selected from urban, rural and remote areas, with over-sampling in remote areas mainly to increase the sample for Indigenous women. Baseline data were collected in 1996. Follow-up studies conducted in 1998 and are being conducted on a three yearly cycle.
Project/database and agency responsible for its maintenance	Research Centre for Gender and Health, University of Newcastle. The study is conducted in collaboration with the University of Queensland and commissioned by the Department of Health and Human Services (now Health and Ageing).
Year of commencement of data/series available	1996.
Key data contents	Wide range of data including, socio-demographic; general health; health conditions/problems; utilisation of and satisfaction with health services; weight; exercise, pregnancy and live birth; menstruation, tobacco and alcohol use; work and

	leisure; and family and social support.
Indigenous status available	Yes.
Geographic level	State and territory; postcode information is available.
Data storage	Computerised. Available from the University of Newcastle and Social Science Data Archives of the Australian National University.
Dissemination of data	Regular reports; special studies on different themes.
Comments	Reviewed and refunded in 1999. Being reviewed again in 2002. A related study of Indigenous women in Queensland communities was part of the original project but is now being conducted separately.

A5.15: National Drug Strategy Household Survey (NDSHHS-AIHW)

Project/database description	Database contains information on licit and illicit drug use among Australians 14 years of age and over selected from a random sample. The 1998 Survey covered a some 10,000 persons.
Objective(s)	The survey was conducted to provide information on the licit and illicit drug use, the pattern of drug use by individuals, and to identify groups with high risk of drug abuse. It also intended to provide information for monitoring trends in drug use and community awareness and knowledge about drugs. This survey was conducted as part of the National Drug Strategy of the Commonwealth.
Scope and coverage	A national sample survey of persons 14 years and over living in households.
Collection methodology/ data source	<p>A sample of households was randomly selected using a multi-stage quota sample. Quotas were determined for each stratum to ensure a sufficient number of respondents to enable reliable estimates. Some jurisdictions (NSW, VIC QLD, TAS and ACT) provided funds to enhance the sample over and above the quota allocated for those jurisdictions.</p> <p>For the survey a split sample was used. One part contained a selection of (sample 1) a person 14 years or more from each household on the basis of next-birthday for interviewing. This sample covered 4,012 persons.</p> <p>The second part of the sample included the youngest person of the sample 1 households other than the sample 1 respondent. The data were collected by serving questionnaires for self-completion. A total of 1,983 were covered in this portion of the sample.</p>

	<p>The third component of the sample was selected only in capital cities. Persons aged 14-39 years were chosen from randomly selected households, and served questionnaires for self-completion. This portion of the sample covered 4,035 respondents. The survey was completed during June-September 1998.</p>
<p>Project/database and agency responsible for its maintenance</p>	<p>Australian Institute of Health and Welfare PO Box 570 Canberra ACT 2601. http://www.aihw.gov.au AIHW maintains the database on behalf of the Department of Health and Ageing. (This survey series to date have been conducted by private research agencies. The 1988 Survey was conducted by Roy Morgan Research Centre Pty. Ltd.)</p>
<p>Year of commencement of data/series available</p>	<p>1985, 1988, 1991,1993, 1995, 1988 and 2001.</p>
<p>Key data contents</p>	<p>Data items collected varied across surveys. The 1998 survey collected data on: Demographic data (age, sex and marital status); how the respondents perceived different types of drugs as problem drugs; perceptions on different drugs and their direct or indirect impact on deaths; community concerns over alcohol and different types of drugs; sources of information on health effects of tobacco and drugs; health risks of alcohol , tobacco and drugs, respondent's knowledge laws relating to drug use existing in his/her jurisdiction; personal health; respondent's own experiences in using drugs, alcohol or tobacco.</p>

Indigenous status available	Yes. But the sample size is too small to produce estimates for the Indigenous people. As in the 1993 Survey, a supplementary survey was conducted in 1994 to obtain data from the Indigenous population. This survey was confined to urban areas only.
Geographic level	National.
Data storage	Computerised.
Dissemination of data	Publication of reports. Data files are available for public use through the Social Science Data Archives of the Australian National University.
Comments	<p>Estimates derived from the survey on the level of illicit drug use and drug-related behaviours are believed to be understated due to a number of reasons among which:</p> <p>(a) households were the primary sample unit selected;</p> <p>(b) persons homeless and living in institutions were not covered;</p> <p>© persons using illicit drugs are less attached to households and likely to have been missed by the survey; and</p> <p>(d) even among those who responded, the actual use may have been underreported.</p> <p>In 1994, an Indigenous survey was conducted in urban areas as a supplement to the main survey.</p>

A5.16: Disability, Ageing and Carers Survey (DACS-ABS)

Project/database description	DACS was conducted to collect data on people with a disability, elderly people and carers of people with disabilities.
Objective(s)	Obtain information required to: (a) measure the prevalence of disability in Australia and need for support for people with disabilities; (b) compile a profile of people with disabilities and older people; and © provide information on people who provide care to those with disabilities.
Scope and coverage	This survey was conducted in urban and rural areas, and remote areas were not covered .
Collection methodology/ data source	<p>The survey was conducted on a random sample of households in private dwellings and non-private dwellings and persons in carer's institutions.</p> <p>Only persons in households with one or more disability, or persons aged 60 years and over together with any carers whether or not living in the house were selected for the survey.</p> <p>The data collection from persons in households was carried out by trained interviewers by computer assisted personal interviews.</p> <p>The survey among children under 15 years of age (including those aged 15-17 years whose parents refused granting personal interviews) was conducted by proxy.</p> <p>Disabled persons were asked about the help and care they received and aged persons without disabilities were asked about the help they require to perform household work,</p>

	<p>meal preparation and transport.</p> <p>Primary carers were interviewed to gather basic information on the type of assistance they provide and employment. They were also given self-completed questionnaires designed to obtain detailed data on attitudes to, and experience of their caring role.</p> <p>For those in institutions, a special short questionnaire was used. In these institutions the survey was conducted among eligible respondents by an officer of the institution.</p>
Project/database and agency responsible for its maintenance	<p>Australian Bureau of Statistics Po Box 10 Belconnen 2616 http://www.abs.gov.au</p>
Year of commencement of data/series available	<p>DACS was conducted during 16.03.1998-29 May 1998. Before this survey ABS carried out similar surveys in 1981 (Survey of handicapped persons), 1988 (Survey of Disabled and Aged persons) and 1993 (Survey of disability, ageing and Carers). Next survey will be conducted in 2003.</p>
Key data contents	<p>Socio-demographic and economic information (age, sex, marital status, living arrangements, educational attainment, employment status and income). Type of disability and activity restrictions and mobility. Diseases and injury, long-term health conditions, tasks performed and care received.</p>
Indigenous status	<p>Not collected. The 1993 survey collected Indigenous status of the respondent but the number of Indigenous persons in the sample was found to be too low to produce any reliable estimates.</p>
Geographic level	<p>State and territory.</p>
Data storage	<p>Computerised.</p>

Dissemination of data	Reports and confidentialised data tape is available for public use.
Comments	<p>In the 1998 Survey, a person with a disability was defined as having a number of condition(s) including loss of sight, speech or hearing; chronic or recurrent pain, breathing difficulties blackouts etc, that restrict day-to-day activities.</p> <p>To qualify for the definition such condition(s) should prevail (or likely to prevail) six months or more (for detailed account of conditions see ABS (1998) <i>Disability, Ageing and Carers: Summary of findings</i> (Cat no. 4430.0).</p> <p>The survey experienced some difficulties in obtaining data from some respondents due to their disability status and old age. ABS also observed that inaccurate responses to some questions as a result of poor question wording or inability of the respondent to understand questions (see ABS (1998) above P47).</p>

A5.17: Disability Services Census (DFaCS)

Project/database description	Database contains the information on access to vocational programs and employment for Persons With a Disability (PWD) collected annually through a network of services in states and territories. Funding is received from the Commonwealth Department of Family and Community Services and is provided to improve the access of PWD to vocational programs, employment, economic, social participation, and choice in work and community life.
Objective(s)	The information is collected to assess effectiveness of the disability services program and to assist in the planning, development and management of the program. The data collected will also meet the reporting requirements under the Commonwealth/State and Territory Disability Agreement.
Scope and coverage	National. This Census is carried out through approximately 900 service providers and covers all PWD enrolled with the respective services.
Collection methodology/ data source	Census forms are prepared by the DFaCs and distributed among service providers for completion for every client/consumer who is enrolled in the employment assistance program in the service centre. The data on clients/consumers are recorded as on the reference day. The reference day used for the 2001 census was 29 June 2001. Information relating to all PWD enrolled in the registers of that day are required to be reported irrespective of whether the PWD received assistance on that day. Individual forms received from service outlets are processed by

	DFaCS for compilation of detailed statistics. As part of the funding agreement service outlets are required to report to DFaCS information on the services and consumers on a set of agreed data items (Minimum Data Set).
Project/database and agency responsible for its maintenance	Commonwealth Department of Family and Community Services. Disability Services Census Section. Tuggeranong, Office Park, GPO Box 7788, Canberra Mil Centre 2609. http://www.facs.gov.au/dscensus/
Year of commencement of data/series available	1995.
Key data contents	Location of service. Client's date of birth, sex, country of birth. Indigenous status, living arrangements, disability type. For each given activity (i.e. self-care, mobility, communication, home living, learning, working etc) what level of support or assistance needed; allowances and benefits currently receiving; main source of income and employment experience. The 2001 Census form also included some question items to enable deriving some key performance indicators in respect of each beneficiary.
Indigenous status available	Yes. Reported from the information available (with the service outlet).
Geographic level	Postcode information is available.
Data storage	In the past, processing was done manually. Since 1998, data are available in electronic form.

Dissemination of data	Published reports ¹⁰⁶ ; Internet.
Comments	To assist service outlets in completing the census forms, a comprehensive data guide has been prepared. Each year internal evaluation is carried out – although results are not publicly available – to improve the quality of the data and streamline the reporting process.

¹⁰⁶. See for example, Department of Family and Community Services (2000) *Disability Services Census, 1999*, December. AusInfo, Canberra.

**A5.18: Commonwealth/State Disability Agreement
Minimum Data Set collection (CSDA-MDS)**

Project/database description	Database contains the information on services funded under the Commonwealth/State Disability Agreement (CSDA) and consumers of these services.
Objective(s)	<p>Under the CSDA: "Governments will participate in the collection of nationally consistent data on services and service users under this Agreement as the basis for the agreed performance indicators." (CSDA 1998 part 8b).</p> <p>Information is collected from service outlets for each recipient to obtain a profile of CSDA-funded services and of consumers using these services, as specified under the CSDA.</p>
Scope and coverage	National.
Collection methodology/ data source	<p>Service outlets that receive CSDA funding obtain data from consumers who use their service on a specified annual 'snapshot' day. Service outlets complete a 'Consumer Form' for each recipient assisted on that particular day. Information about these consumers, along with service details (from a 'Service Form'), is passed on to their jurisdiction/funding department (state, territory or Commonwealth). The jurisdiction collates and cleans the data, and forwards it to the AIHW annually. The AIHW checks and further refines the data from each jurisdiction, and combines data into a national data set.</p> <p>The collection takes place under the auspice of the National Disability Administrators (NDA). The technical details of the survey (including production of annual data guides and forms) are the responsibility of the AIHW, who are</p>

	assisted by the CSDA Minium Data Set network. This network has a member from each state and territory, as well as the Commonwealth Department Family and Community Services.
Project/database and agency responsible for its maintenance	The national database is maintained by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) PO Box 570 Canberra ACT 2601 http://www.aihw.gov.au
Year of commencement of data/series available	The collection began in 1995. Annual reports from 1995–2000 are available, however, full annual data were not received until 1997.
Key data contents	Consumer form collects information on postcode, selected letters of first and last name (for linkage), date of birth, sex and country of birth. Indigenous origin, method of communication, main language spoken at home, primary disability group, other significant disability groups, need for support or assistance (10 items). Carer allowance (child under 16), main source of income (adult over 15) and living arrangements/accommodation type.
Indigenous status available	Yes. Usual ABS question is included with a not known category. This option will not be available in the 2002 collection.
Geographic level	Postcode (consumer and service outlet) and SLA (service outlet).
Data storage	Available in electronic form.
Dissemination of data	Published reports. Internet (including interactive data cubes). Tables are produced on request (a charge may apply).

Comments	<p>Indigenous status is a key item in the MDS. However, the proportion of recipients whose Indigenous status is not reported is high (around 9% in 2000). The quality of this item is improving with each collection (dropped to 5% in 2001).</p> <p>Some outlets provide information on services provided some time after the 'snapshot' day. The CSDA MDS has been under redevelopment since early 2000. The redeveloped collection will collect ongoing data from all consumers who access CSDA-funded services over the year (replacing the current snapshot collection). The new collection is due to commence in mid to late 2002. There will be one final snapshot day collection in May – June 2002.</p>
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A5.19: Australian childhood immunisation register (ACIR)

Project/database description	Database contains information on immunisation and vaccination status of children less than 7 years of age.
Objective(s)	To provide information on the immunisation status of children living in Australia. To identify geographic areas of poor coverage for intervention; to monitor immunisation coverage of children at the national, state and local level to improve service delivery.
Scope and coverage	National.
Collection methodology/ data source	Registration of children is linked to the Medicare scheme of the Health Insurance Commission (HIC). Service providers registered with HIC reports to ACIR about immunisation and vaccination status of the target child population. In Qld and two territories immunisation and vaccination status of children is reported to HIC through the respective health authorities and in all other jurisdictions immunisation providers report the required information to HIC direct.
Project/database and agency responsible for its maintenance	Health Insurance Commission, 134 Reed Greenway ACT 2900 http://www.hic.gov.au Since 1997 this program is administered by a Registrar whose work is guided by a management committee comprising of representatives of state and territory health departments.
Year of commencement of data/series available	1996.
Key data contents	Medicare number, age, sex, vaccination type, date of vaccination, and details of the provider.

Indigenous status available	Yes, Indigenous status is an optional data item. Before recording the Indigenous status of children, parents are required to give a written consent for recording Indigenous status of their children. The present coverage of identification of Indigenous children is extremely poor.
Geographic level	Published data are presented only at the national and state and territory level. Data collected can be classified at the regional council level, or even at the postcode level.
Data storage	Computerised.
Dissemination of data	Data are released in annual reports of HIC and reports released by Department of Health and Ageing.
Comments	<p>A review undertaken in 2000 reported that the vast majority (75%) of the practices surveyed were satisfied with the quality of the ACIR data. However, some anomalies in the reported data on coverage levels were found between the ACIR and those maintained by local public health units. Also observed were some delays in reporting. Part of the delay is due to the time lag of some 60 days taken for Medicare registration of a newborn.</p> <p>The HIC has now introduced Pneumococcal into the immunisation schedule and some high-risk groups including Indigenous children and all babies in NT are targeted for vaccination. This might improve the identification of Indigenous children as this program mainly targets them. Although current identification of Indigenous children is poor, ACIR is a potential source of valuable data on the illness control practices and behaviours among Indigenous parents in respect of their babies.</p>

A5.20: Survey of Registered and Enrolled Nurses (AIHW)

Project/database description	Regular collection of data on the number and characteristics of registered and enrolled nurses who have a registration with at least one of the nursing boards in states and territories.
Objective(s)	To provide detailed information on the nurse workforce and aspects of their work to be used for workforce planning at the national and jurisdictional level.
Scope and coverage	National (all nurses with an active registration to practice in one or more jurisdictions).
Collection methodology/ data source	<p>Survey forms are prepared by AIHW in consultation with the state and territory health departments and nursing boards, although there could be variations in the type of questions included in the survey form used in different jurisdictions.</p> <p>Forms are distributed among registrants along with the renewal of registration (or enrolment) notices. Completed forms are collected and processed by the respective nursing boards, unless other arrangements have been made with AIHAW.</p> <p>AIHW receives from each jurisdiction, an electronic copy of data files to prepare aggregate data at the national, state and territory levels.</p> <p>Nurses normally keep registrations active in more than one jurisdiction, although they normally practice in one or two jurisdictions. To avoid multiple counting of nurses, AIHW tabulates information on nurses according to the jurisdiction that they</p>

	reported practising 'solely' (or 'mainly').
Project/database and agency responsible for its maintenance	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare in collaboration with state and territory nursing health departments and nursing boards. AIHW PO Box 570 Canberra ACT 2601. http://www.aihw.gov.au
Year of commencement of data/series available	1993-1996 annually; since 1997 two-yearly.
Key data contents	Personal characteristics, age, sex, place of usual residence, place of work, place of birth, nursing qualifications, employment status, area of work, second nursing job, and hours worked.
Indigenous status available	Yes.
Geographic level	State and territory. Postcode information is available to produce sub-state estimates.
Data storage	AIHW prepares an electronic master data file from the data sent by states and territories. States and territories do not have a common software and format in recording data.
Dissemination of data	Regular reports.
Comments	Participation in the survey is voluntary leading to a sizeable non-response. In 1999 the response rate for the survey was estimated as 79% ¹⁰⁷ . Although the general policy and understanding are to include Indigenous status in all surveys some jurisdictions do not follow this. For example, in 1997 Northern Territory did not include Indigenous status in the nursing survey form.

¹⁰⁷ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2001) *Nursing Labour Force, 1999*, AIHW Cat. No. HWL 20, National Health Labour Force Series No. 20, Canberra.

	<p>Despite the potential undercount, the survey provides useful information to assess the nurse work force available for work, their attachment to different nursing fields, and their work patterns.</p> <p>Nurses of Indigenous origin can be determined from the survey subject to the possible undercount. This survey is a good source of the Indigenous nurse work force, their characteristics, and geographic location of their practice.</p>
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A6.1: National Indigenous Preschool Census (DEST)

Project/database description	Contains national data on preschool enrolments and related statistics.
Objective(s)	To obtain information on preschool enrolments in preschools and to monitor programs to increase participation of Indigenous children. The data collected from the census is also providing the basis for funding preschools under the Indigenous Strategic Initiatives Program (IESIP) of DEST.
Scope and coverage	National coverage. All preschools both government and non-Government are covered.
Collection methodology/ data source	Data on Indigenous children in all government preschools are obtained from states and territories. Although the data items collected by states and territories are not identical there is a broad consistency in key data items collected from all jurisdictions. In all non-government preschools the data collection is performed by the Data Analysis Australia (DAA) in WA for DEST. The information that should be reported for the census refers to the week of 29 July – 2 August each year, although some states collect data using different reference periods. States and territories report data for government preschools in different formats and modes, which are converted to a common format by DAA and aggregate data for all preschools, are compiled.
Project/database and agency responsible for its maintenance	The data collection is carried out by DAA for the Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST); PO Box 9880 Canberra ACT. http://www.dest@gov.au
Year of commencement of data/series available	1993.

Key data contents	<p>Whether a separate and identifiable preschool program is available, whether childcare facilities offered, any priority access for Indigenous children, the total number of children, the number of Indigenous children enrolled, and the number of Indigenous children in waiting list.</p> <p>Enrolment and personal information on Indigenous children (age, sex, total hours per week and details of the sessional participation in days during the reference week).</p>
Indigenous status available	Yes.
Geographic level	States and territories. The data are available by the location of the individual preschool.
Data storage	Electronic format.
Dissemination of data	Annual reports and internet.
Comments	<p>Over the years the content of the questionnaire and survey methodology have been changed. For example, in the 1993 survey, all preschools were asked to provide the information as at the 4-weeks from the last day of the reference week (11 August). If the preschool had any Indigenous children enrolled during the reference week, preschools were required to complete an additional part of the questionnaire.</p> <p>Since 1994 this process was reduced to one stage. Data validation checks have not been carried out except for the overall consistency checks.</p> <p>In Victoria all preschools are run by non-government agencies. The survey is carried out throughout the state by DAA. Some information is also collected by state governments.</p>

A6.2: Census of Childcare Services (DFaCS)

Project/database description	Contains information on the Commonwealth funded childcare services in Australia.
Objective(s)	To collect information required to assess to what extent the objectives of the Child Care Services program of the Department of Family and Community Services.
Scope and coverage	All Commonwealth funded childcare programs operating on 30 June each year are covered. All children below the school age cared for, and school age children attending childcare outside school hours are covered.
Collection methodology/ data source	All Commonwealth funded childcare service outlets are provided with a questionnaire and the persons in charge of these outlets are asked to complete and return completed questionnaires. The information provided refers to a reference period of one week (i.e. 14-20 August). Details of children attending childcare services are extracted from the enrolment forms. Details of the services provided and the staff details are completed in the questionnaire by management.
Project/database and agency responsible for its maintenance	Department of Family and Community Services Woden ACT 2606. http://www.facs.gov.au
Year of commencement of data/series available	Annually, since 1986 (Census not held in 1990). Future surveys will be conducted on a regular intervals (say 2-3 years).

Key data contents	<p>Characteristics of children: age, address details, labour force status of parents, English speaking background and hours worked and fees paid.</p> <p>Staff characteristics: age, location, employment pattern, type of work, qualification and experience, hours worked and in-service training received in the previous year.</p> <p>Type of services provided by service outlets.</p>
Indigenous status available	Yes. The information as reported by parents/guardians at the time of enrolment.
Geographic level	State and territory.
Data storage	Electronic.
Dissemination of data	Annual publications. Additional data available on request.
Comments	Usually over 98% of service outlets report by the due date. Information on preschool children and services can be obtained from the survey particularly from the 1995 Census. The information on preschools were collected from 1995.

A6.3: National Schools Statistics Collection (ABS)

Project/database description	An annual census carried out covering all schools in states and territories to collect data on schools, students and staff.
Objective(s)	Data are collected primarily to obtain information on primary and secondary school education in states and territories according to uniform definitions and concepts for assessing levels and trends in the number of students and staff in government and non-government schools. National schools statistics are reported annually to the Parliament by the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA).
Scope and coverage	All government and non-government schools (NGS) in states and territories. These include all fulltime day primary, secondary or special schools including education provided by correspondence and by radio.
Collection methodology/ data source	Data for the government schools are collected through state and territory Education Departments. ABS has identified from each state and territory persons to assist in the collection and coordinate the survey work in respective jurisdictions. Each year ABS sends out to State Action Officers computer disks with spreadsheets for completion of the relevant data along with guidelines and instructions. Action Officers complete the spreadsheet according to guidelines provided and send to ABS aggregate data for each state and territory. The data for NGSs are collected by DEST (see Census of Non-Government Schools). Both these components are included in the national data collection of the ABS.

Project/database and agency responsible for its maintenance	ABS is primarily responsible for the maintenance of the database with the assistance of DEST and state and territory Education Departments. Education and Training Statistics Section, Australian Bureau of Statistics, P O Box 10 Belconnen 2616. http://www.abs.gov.au
Year of commencement of data/series available	The data based on uniform definitions and concepts are available from 1984. Government school statistics were collected on uniform definitions and concepts from 1981 and this was extended to cover non-government schools in 1984.
Key data contents	Schools: category, affiliation, type of school (primary, secondary, combined or other), enrolments in state and territory. Students: number of students, age, sex, schooling year, and level of schooling. Staff: number including full-time equivalent (FTE), sex, type of staff (teaching, specialist support, administrative, clerical etc) are collected.
Indigenous status available	Indigenous status of students are available, but this information is not available for staff.
Geographic level	State and territory.
Data storage	Spreadsheets.
Dissemination of data	Annual reports; reports by MCEETYA.
Comments	Although the efforts were made to collect data on a uniform basis across jurisdictions and between government and non-government schools (NGS), comparability of the information is affected by variations in schooling policies and practices and in staff categories. A much more serious limitation is observed in staff data, where the current collection cannot produce total staff numbers by combining the numbers in staff categories reported in all Govt. and NGSs.

A6.4: Census of Non-Government Schools (DEST)

Project/database description	Data on staff and students and school characteristics in all non-government schools are collected on an annual basis.
Objective(s)	The census is carried out under the provision of the <i>State Grants (Primary and Secondary Education Assistance) Act 1992</i> . Data collected from this census are provided to ABS to be incorporated in the National School Census.
Scope and coverage	All non-government schools in states and territories whose main function is either the administration or provision of fulltime day, primary, secondary or special schools. These schools should be registered and approved by the education department of the relevant state or territory and have students enrolled for over four successive weeks including school holiday breaks.
Collection methodology/ data source	<p>The data are collected using the mail-out and mail-back approach. Each school included in the survey is mailed two booklets: a workbook and return book.</p> <p>The workbook is designed to give the school instructions and guidelines for completion of the survey booklet (return book) and could be completed before the entries are transferred to the return book.</p> <p>Completion of booklets are certified by the Principal. Completed Return books are sent to DEST a week after the census date. The reference date is the first Friday of August except in the Northern Territory, it is usually two weeks after the designated census date in other jurisdictions. (For student's, age reference date is as of 1 July).</p> <p>DEST, after receiving Return books prepare electronic data files and validates, queries and prepares statistical reports. A copy of the data file</p>

	is also sent to ABS.
Project/database and agency responsible for its maintenance	Department of Science and Training P O Box 9884 Canberra ACT 2601. Http//www.dest.gov.au
Year of commencement of data/series available	Commenced in 1984 as part of the uniform data for the National School Census collection.
Key data contents	Schools: category, affiliation, type of school (primary, secondary, combined or other), enrolments in state and territory. Students: number of students, age, sex, schooling year, and level of schooling. Staff: number including full-time equivalent (FTE), sex, type of staff (teaching, specialist support, administrative, clerical etc) are collected.
Indigenous status available	Available for children from 1995. Indigenous status of staff is not available.
Geographic level	State and territory.
Data storage	Computerised.
Dissemination of data	Reports, special tabulations are also available from ABS (National School Census).
Comments	A post census enumeration is conducted four weeks after the census. This study is carried out usually covering about 3% of the non-government schools covered in the survey. Information provided on Return books are checked with the registers to ascertain the accuracy.

A6.5: Survey of Subject Choice of Year 11 and 12 students (ACER)

Project/database description	Data on enrolment in subjects by year 11 and year 12 students.
Objective(s)	To provide information on subject selection by year 11 and year 12 students, course participation rates and to provide indicators of students choice for different subjects and courses.
Scope and coverage	National sample of students aged 16-19 years.
Collection methodology/ data source	<p>The data for the survey were collected by self-enumerated questionnaires supplemented by data collected from administrative records maintained in state and territory education departments.</p> <p>Information on size of the year 11 and 12 student cohorts were also collected from education departments.</p> <p>The main sample included over 10,000 students drawn from about 200 schools.</p> <p>In WA most of the data on students were taken electronically from school records. To enhance the coverage of Indigenous students a supplementary sample of 23 schools where Indigenous students are concentrated was taken.</p>
Project/database and agency responsible for its maintenance	<p>In the past, this survey was carried out by the Commonwealth Department of Education, Employment, Training, and Youth Affairs (DEETYA). The Australian Council for Education Research took over the responsibility for the survey. ACER, Private Bag 55, Camberwell, Vic.3124.</p> <p>http://www.acer.gov.au</p>
Year of commencement of data/series available	1989-90, 1993 and part of LSAY since then.

Key data contents	Age, sex, marital status, birth place, details on educational attainment, subjects currently studying, reasons for selection of subjects, aspirations for further study, educational attainments of parents, employment and unemployment status.
Indigenous status available	Yes.
Geographic level	Capital city, other city, rural (or country town).
Data storage	Computerised.
Dissemination of data	Reports.
Comments	The survey covers both government and non-government schools. Over-sampled in states where non-government schools form only a small proportion.

A6.6: Survey of Education and Training (ABS)

Project/database description	Contains information on training and education provided to employed persons (including employers and self-employed) aged 15-64 years.
Objective(s)	The survey was conducted to provide information required to assess training policies and more particularly to review Training Guarantee Legislation.
Scope and coverage	A national survey, which covered a sample of dwellings (both private and other). All persons aged 15-64 who were employed (including employers and self-employed) in the 12-months before the survey were covered.
Collection methodology/ data source	Using a multi-stage area sampling method, eligible persons were selected from a random sample of private special dwellings. After recording demographic and work experience details of household members respondents for the survey were selected for detailed interviewing. The respondents selected were those aged 15-64 years of age who had worked in the 12-months before the survey.
Project/database and agency responsible for its maintenance	Australian Bureau of Statistics PO Box 10 Belconnen 2616. http://www.abs.gov.au
Year of commencement of data/series available	1989, 1993 and 1997.

Key data contents	Age, sex, marital status, whether have children aged under 12 years, age of last born child, disability status, labour force characteristics, work history; qualifications and skills required for the job, qualifications and skills possessed, details of courses of study completed/followed, computer literacy; vocational training courses completed or attended; type of training received and access to training.
Indigenous status	Yes.
Geographic level	State and territory.
Data storage	Computerised.
Dissemination of data	Reports.
Comments	Response rate was high 92% in the 1993 Survey. The survey scope expanded from 1989 to include self-employed, unemployed and persons marginally attached to the labour force. Although the Indigenous respondents can be identified from the survey, the survey was not designed to collect data on Indigenous people. Therefore, the data for Indigenous people may be reliable only at the national level.

A6.7: Vocational Education and Training (NCVER)

Project/database description	The database contains data on Training Package Qualifications, nationally endorsed courses and other courses and associated Units of Competency and Modules offered by the VET system.
Objective(s)	To provide detailed information on training offered and students enrolled in the training activity in the VET system.
Scope and coverage	<p>The scope includes In-scope and Out-of-scope activity delivered by Registered Training Organisations.</p> <p>In-scope activity includes all VET activity delivered by: TAFE providers; higher education institutions; other government providers (e.g. agricultural colleges); community providers; government-funded registered private providers; schools funded through government allocations for VET; all other Commonwealth and state recurrent and specific purpose funded VET, regardless of the location of the provider.</p> <p>Out-of-scope VET activity includes: all delivery at overseas campuses other than Australian overseas Territories; all fee-for-service delivery by private providers; all delivery by private providers to full-fee paying overseas clients; all non-VET activity.</p>
Collection methodology/ data source	<p>States and territories collect data on enrolment activity in Vocational Education and Training Qualifications and Courses offered by registered Training Providers.</p> <p>Student enrolment data, including demographics are collected from an enrolment form. The minimum requirements for the enrolment form are included in the Australian</p>

	<p>Vocational Education and Training Management Information Statistical Standard (AVETMISS)</p> <p>Data are collected and validated by states and territories using AVETMISS Validation Software prior to sending the data to the NCVER for final validation and entry into the national database.</p> <p>The collection is on an annual basis and each collection is discrete.</p>
Project/database and agency responsible for its maintenance	<p>The National Centre for Vocational Education Research Ltd., 252 Kensington Road, Leabrook SA 5068 http://www.ncver.edu.au</p>
Year of commencement of data/series available	<p>Data are available from 1990. Those collected according to AVETMISS are available from 1994.</p>
Key data contents	<p>Student details: date of birth, sex, country of birth, Indigenous status and residential postcode, employment status, disability, language spoken at home, prior educational achievements, highest school level completed.</p> <p>Qualification and Course details: nominal hours, Australian Standard Classification of Education (ASCED) level and field of education, Australian Standard Classification of Occupation (ASCO), national qualification of course accreditation status, vocational or non-vocational intent.</p> <p>Unit of Competency and Module details: (ASCED) field of education, nominal hours, vocational or non-vocational intent.</p> <p>Enrolment details: activity start and end date, funding source, activity outcome, delivery mode, year commenced.</p> <p>Training provider location, awards completed are also collected.</p>

Indigenous status available	Yes. Indigenous status indicates a client who self-identifies as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent. The classification is based on the Australian Bureau of Statistics, Standards for Statistics on Cultural and Language Diversity (ABS Catalogue No. 1289.0, Nov. 1999).
Geographic level	State and territory.
Data storage	Computerised.
Dissemination of data	Annual reports, Internet http://www.ncver.edu.au/statistics/index.htm http://www.ncver.edu.au/pubs.htm
Comments	Information on students is obtained at the time of enrolment. Therefore, some information may not be current. Indigenous status of the student is an optional data item in enrolment forms. This information is frequently not reported. The Adult and Community Education (ACE) in the collection could be different across states and territories. Since the collection extracts personal information from enrolment forms, the coverage of data items are affected by the information provided at the time of enrolment. Consequently, "non stated" category is high for the ACE sector.

A6.8: Student Outcomes Survey (NCVER)

Project/database description	A national survey of TAFE graduates and “module completers”.
Objective(s)	<p>The survey is designed to measure the characteristics of the graduates and module completers and relate these to employment outcomes, and in the case of graduates, further study plans. It is also designed to measure the relevance of their training and determine their satisfaction with it.</p> <p>Information is presented annually to the Australian National Training Authority and other stakeholders.</p>
Scope and coverage	National. A stratified randomly selected sample of TAFE graduates who successfully completed a course during the year preceding the survey. Of module completers, students who have successfully completed at least one module during the previous year and have left the TAFE system.
Collection methodology/ data source	A self-completed questionnaire mailed to their last-known home address.
Project/database and agency responsible for its maintenance	National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) Ltd 252 Kensington Road Leabrook SA 5068. http://www.ncver.edu.au
Year of commencement of data/series available	1995, 1997-ongoing (annual).
Key data contents	Age, sex, course or module details, satisfaction with courses/modules completed, further study plans, employment status after training, labour force status, industry, occupation, part or full-time work, movement to higher skilled occupation and average weekly earnings.

Indigenous status available	Yes (self-identification) as: Aboriginal; Torres Strait Islander; and both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.
Geographic level	National and state/territory.
Data storage	Computerised.
Dissemination of data	Annual reports in hard copy and electronic.
Comments	<p>Response rates of 52% for graduates and 41% for module completers were achieved in 2001. A telephone survey was carried out in 2001 on a sample of non-respondents to assess any bias arising from the non-response¹⁰⁸.</p> <p>The survey found that those who did not respond were more likely to be male, who were employed after their training, who are satisfied with all aspects of training and who have achieved their main reason for doing the training.</p> <p>The number of Indigenous graduates/module completers identified in the survey is generally too small to produce detailed statistics for this group.</p>

¹⁰⁸ National Centre for Vocational Education Research (2001) *Statistics 2001. Student Outcomes Survey in Summary*, NCVER

A6.9: Survey of Employer Views on VET (NCVER)

Project/database description	Data on employer views on recent graduates employed by them are collected along with their general views on different aspects on the quality and usefulness of VET for their organisations.
Objective(s)	To provide information on employer views on the VET courses in general and their satisfaction with the skill levels of recently recruited VET graduates.
Scope and coverage	The survey data relate to a nationally representative sample of employers. The number of employer groups covered in the sample included: employers with at least one employee who completed a VET course of at least 200 hours duration within two years before the survey; employers with VET graduate employees, none of whom completed their training in the last two years; and employers without any current employees who have graduated from a VET course of at least 200 hours duration.
Collection methodology/ data source	Survey is conducted by Computer Assisted Telephone Interviews (CATI) and data was collected in 2001 from over 2,600 employer organisations selected for the survey. Questionnaires were developed by focus group discussions with the relevant employer groups. The survey results are weighted by the size of employer organisation to present national estimates.
Project/database and agency responsible for its maintenance	National Centre for Vocational Education and Training (NCVER) manages the collection on behalf of the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA). NCVER, 252, Kensington Rd., Leabrook, SA

	5068 http://www.ncver.gov.au
Year of commencement of data/series available	1995, 1997, 1999 and 2001 (conducted so far every two years and will be conducted every three years in future).
Key data contents	Data on graduates: type of training received, institution of training, details of the course/module. Employer details: size of establishment/business, industry, degree of satisfaction with VET system, attitudes to training, and improvements needed to VET courses/modules.
Indigenous status available	Yes.
Geographic level	State and territory.
Data storage	Computerised.
Dissemination of data	Reports.
Comments	Over the years the survey methodology has changed and the 2001 Survey covered all employer groups for the first time. It now focuses more on the skill levels of graduates and module completers than has been done in the past surveys .

A6.10: Apprenticeship and Traineeship Statistics (NCVER)

Project/database description	The Database contains data on apprentices and trainees who have. This contract is a contractual arrangement between a client and an employer committing both parties to experiential forms of training. A training contract is registered with an appropriate administrative body.
Objective(s)	To provide detailed information on apprenticeships and traineeships under a Apprenticeship/traineeship Training Contract with a state or territory.
Scope and coverage	<p>The AVETMIS Standard for New Apprenticeships is designed to apply to information collected for all persons employed under an Apprenticeship/Traineeship Training Contract and includes both apprentices and trainees.</p> <p>In some cases, the State Training Authority in each state or territory is responsible for both the administration of training agreements and the collection of apprentice and trainee data. In other cases, the administration of training contracts has been outsourced to other organisations. Where this has occurred, the State Training Authority remains the organisation responsible for the provision of apprentice and trainee data to the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER).</p>
Collection methodology/ data source	<p>States and territories collect data from the Apprenticeship/Traineeship Training Contract, which are administered by New Apprenticeship Centres.</p> <p>A National Apprenticeship/Traineeship contract is in place (2002).</p>

	Data are collected and validated by participating states or territories using AVETMISS Validation Software prior to sending the data to the NCVER for final validation and entry into the national database. The collection is on a quarterly basis and is cumulative.
Project/database and agency responsible for its maintenance	The National Centre for Vocational Education Research Ltd., 252 Kensington Road, Leabrook SA 5068. http://www.ncver.edu.au
Year of commencement of data/series available	From 1994 (AVETMISS database format).
Key data contents	Personal details: date of birth, sex, residential postcode, highest school level completed, Indigenous status, language spoken at home, country of birth, disability (yes or no) prior educational achievement, at school or not. Contract details: history, commencement and end date, type of employment arrangement, full or part time status, Australian Standard Classification of Occupation (ASCO), workplace postcode; Qualification details: national code, Australian Standard Classification of Education (ASCED) level of education (including employer and contract details); Employer details: legal name, postcode, Australian and New Zealand Standard Industry Classification (ANZSIC)
Indigenous status available	Yes. Indigenous status indicates a client who self-identifies as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent. The classification is based on the Australian Bureau of Statistics, Standards for Statistics on Cultural and Language Diversity (ABS Catalogue No.

	1289.0, Nov. 1999).
Geographic level	State and territory.
Data storage	Computerised.
Dissemination of data	Quarterly and annual reports. http://www.ncver.edu.au/statistics/index.htm http://www.ncver.edu.au/pubs.htm
Comments	Data before 1994, although available, should be compared with caution due to variations in the data definitions and recording procedures. Since 1994, data are maintained according to the AVETMIS national guidelines. Indigenous status in the collection is determined from the information provided on the trainee and apprentice forms available in states and territories.

A6.11: Adult and Community Education Statistics (NCVER)

Project/database description	Contains information on all education and training provided by the Adult and Community Education (ACE) Service of States and territories.
Objective(s)	To provide detailed information on Adult and Community Education sector students, courses, educational qualifications and employment status.
Scope and coverage	All adult, community and education service providers registered or recognised by the state and territory are included in the collection.
Collection methodology/ data source	<p>Coordinating bodies of Adult and Community Education in states and territories collect data for each student from enrolment forms used by ACE service outlets. This form used across states and territories is based on the guidelines provided by AVETMIS.</p> <p>The data collected are arranged by students into modules and courses. The data are sent to NCVER by reporting outlets during April-May each year.</p> <p>The data are submitted to NCVER electronically according to AVETMIS file formats. NCVER using these state and territory data files a national data file is prepared and standard reports are produced.</p>
Project/database and agency responsible for its maintenance	NCVER, VET Statistics Section, 252 Kensington Rd, Leabrook SA 5068. http://www. <u>NCVER@edu.au</u>
Year of commencement of data/series available	Annually from 1996.
Key data contents	Personal details of the participant, (i.e. age, sex, educational attainment and employment)

	training provider, location, course, curriculum hours, module, and enrolment details.
Indigenous status available	Yes.
Geographic level	States and territories.
Data storage	Computerised.
Dissemination of data	Standard reports.
Comments	The ACE outlets covered in the collection is not clearly defined. Therefore, the coverage of the collection could be different across states and territories. Since the collection extracts personal information from enrolment forms the coverage of data items are affected by the information provided at the time of enrolment. Consequently, “non stated” category is high for many data items.

A6.12: Higher education student collection (DEST)

Project/database description	Contains information on higher education students and staff in higher education institutions listed in the <i>Higher Education Funding ACT, 1988</i> (HEF Act). The database does not contain information on private higher education institutions.
Objective(s)	As part of the Commonwealth funding each higher education institution is required regularly to report basic information on students and staff to DEST. This information is used for assessing outcomes in the higher educational sector and individual institutions.
Scope and coverage	All government higher education institutions to which operating grants were provided by DEST under the HEF Act are covered by the collection. In the year 2000 a total of 42 higher educational institutions were covered by the collection. The collection also includes the Australian Film, Television, Radio School, the National Institute of Dramatic Art and the Australian Defence Force Academy (N=45).
Collection methodology/ data source	DEST circulate among reporting higher education institutions a relevant year's edition of a manual called "Higher Education Student Collection Documentation". This manual provides necessary details relating to the collection of information on students and staff of respective institutions and how it should be reported. A special data reporting form is also provided. DEST provides for each institution software with a built-in system of basic data validation and inconsistency checks to enable extracting of data electronically. Student data are collected from higher education institutions twice a year electronically without

	<p>duplicating the student counts: once in May and the other in October.</p> <p>The data reported relate to three reference periods: for student numbers and HECS 31st March; for student load information 30 August and for Award Course Completion data, previous calendar year.</p>
Project/database and agency responsible for its maintenance	Higher Education Division, Department of Science and Training, PO Box 9880 Canberra ACT, 2601. http://www.dest.gov.au/highered/
Year of commencement of data/series available	Although the Indigenous status of students was collected since 1987, detailed data classified by Indigenous status, commenced in 1989.
Indigenous status available	Yes.
Geographic level	State and territory, postcode of institution is available.
Data storage	Computerised.
Dissemination of data	Annual reports; customised data are available on payment.
Comments	<p>This collection is conducted as a census of all students and staff attached to each of the relevant higher education institutions. DEST is attempting to collect <i>flow data</i> on students by conducting the census twice a year.</p> <p>In addition to the limited data validations included in the software used for data gathering and extraction, DEST performs further edit checks and data validations before the final tabulations are made for publication. DEST does not provide unit record files or any data that have the potential to identify individuals.</p>

A6.13: Longitudinal Survey of Australian Youth (ACER)

Project/database description	Provides information on behaviours in respect of education and work of cohorts of young people as they move from school to postsecondary education and work.
Objective(s)	To collect detailed information on what young Australians are doing when they complete schooling by following adolescent cohorts of year 9 children until they reach the age of 25 years.
Scope and coverage	First cohort for the study was selected in 1995 from randomly selected households. The survey is expected to provide estimates at the national level.
Collection methodology/ data source	The initial cohort of year 9 children selected for the study are followed annually and collect detailed data on education, training and work experience, until all persons in the cohort reach the age of 25 years. For the initial collection, data were collected at school. For wave 2, data were collected by mail questionnaires. For waves 3 and beyond, data collection is carried out by a Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) method.
Project/database and agency responsible for its maintenance	Australian Centre for Education Research took over the responsibility for the survey. ACER, Private Bag 55, Camberwell, Vic.3124. http://www.acer.gov.au
Year of commencement of data/series available	The first cohort was interviewed in 1995.

Key data contents	<p>Personal and social characteristics such as age, sex, ethnicity, urban-rural residence and family details, schooling and educational data such as attendance, achievement in literacy and numeracy, school and post-school study.</p> <p>Labour force status, educational outcomes, living arrangements, life cycle characteristics and general well being.</p>
Indigenous status available	Yes.
Geographic level	National.
Data storage	Computerised.
Dissemination of data	Reports.
Comments	<p>This is a follow-on of two earlier projects. One project, Youth in Transition, covered birth cohorts in 1961, 1965, 1970 and 1975. The follow-up of cohorts from 1961 to 1970 ended in 1995. See Australian Youth Survey (A6.14), for the other project.</p>

A6.14: Australian Youth Survey (ACER)

Project/database description	Longitudinal data on youth education and training and access to labour market programs.
Objective(s)	To assist monitoring at the national level patterns of school completion, entry into higher education, transition from school to work, take up of education and training programs and involvement in the labour market programs by young Australians.
Scope and coverage	National. The longitudinal survey follows a nationally representative sample of youth who were aged 15-19 years in 1989 when the initial cohort of youth was selected for the survey.
Collection methodology/ data source	<p>A sample of young people of 5,350 persons aged 16-19 was selected for the survey. The first data collection commenced in 1989, since then the cohort was followed annually.</p> <p>The sample was expanded in 1990 by adding about 1,500 from a fresh sample of 16-year-old persons.</p> <p>Each year from 1991 to 1994, a further addition of 16-year olds were made: 1,200 per year.</p> <p>Until 1989, the survey was conducted by personal interviews. Since then respondents in the sample have been interviewed by telephone.</p> <p>When the respondent turns age 25 they are excluded from the survey.</p>
Project/database and agency responsible for its maintenance	Initially, DEET was responsible for conducting the survey. In 1996, the Australian Council for Education Research took over the responsibility for the survey. ACER, Private Bag 55, Camberwell, Vic.3124. http://www.acer.edu.au
Year of commencement of data/series available	Initial cohort interviewed in 1989.

Key data contents	Age, sex, birth place, marital status, age left school, highest qualifications, educational attainment, job history, employment and unemployment status, job history, income, participation in training, problems experienced in finding employment. Socio-economic status of parents.
Indigenous status available	Yes.
Geographic level	Section of state.
Data storage	Computerised.
Dissemination of data	Reports.
Comments	The number of Indigenous youth covered in the sample is too small to produce reliable estimates.

A6.15: Graduate Destination Survey (GCCA)

Project/database description	Contains information on the labour market experience and the further education of recent graduates who completed courses in higher education institutions.
Objective(s)	Collect details of personal characteristics, course details, current employment, to measure educational outcomes, aspirations for employment and further education among recent graduates.
Scope and coverage	All graduates of Australian universities who completed an award course during the previous year: the award courses range from bachelors degree or graduate certificate through to postgraduate qualifications. The survey covers all graduates including those living overseas, those enrolled in higher courses, Australian Defence Force Academy and those passed out from private Universities in Australia.
Collection methodology/ data source	The GDS is a complete census of recent graduates who passed out from Australian Universities. The census is conducted by serving a standard questionnaire mailed-out to relevant graduates through the respective universities and mail-in method. Institutions collect relevant data twice a year (around 30 April and 31 October). A single report for the year is also prepared. Some Institutions dispatch questionnaires along with the invitation letters for the graduation ceremonies. A reply-paid envelope is also sent for the graduate to return the completed questionnaire and graduates are requested to complete the information as at the reference date. Those who did not respond by due date are sent reminders with fresh questionnaires. The response rate is over 55%.
Project/database and agency responsible	GDS is conducted by Graduate Careers Council of Australia with the assistance from Australian

for its maintenance	<p>Higher Educational Institutions and financial provision from the Department of Education, Science and Training. While each Higher Education Institution makes some financial contribution towards the GDS in the survey work relevant to their institution, the Australian Vice Chancellors Committee also provides some financial contribution towards the administrative cost of the survey.</p> <p>The survey program is coordinated by the Project Manager, Graduate Careers Council of Australia, PO Box 28, Parkville Vic 3052. http://www.gradlink.edu.au</p>
Year of commencement of data/series available	1972.
Key data contents	Age, sex, address, Indigenous status, disability, first post school educational qualification, highest educational qualification, level of qualification, course details, length of time taken to complete course, employer support during course (if any), employment details, salary, further study plans including the field of study, institution and location.
Indigenous status available	Yes.
Geographic level	State and territory; location details of the institution is also available, but graduates personal details including residential location are not released.
Data storage	Computerised.
Dissemination of data	Annual publication is released.
Comments	Although limited to a few question items, information on courses completed are recorded several months after the course is completed. This time lag may affect the quality of the data. The non-response to the survey is generally high.

A6.16: Survey of Education and Work (ABS)

Project/database description	An annual household survey which provides information on education, work status and apprenticeship details and personal characteristics of 15-64 year old persons currently receiving education or were studying in the previous year.
Objective(s)	To provide key indicators and detailed information on the patterns of transition from education to work or apprenticeships among persons 15-64 years old who are currently (or were) in education.
Scope and coverage	National household survey of 15-64 years old with some exclusions (i.e. members of defence forces, overseas visitors, persons permanently unable to work, patients in hospitals).
Collection methodology/ data source	<p>This survey is conducted annually as a supplement to the monthly labour force survey (LFS) and is conducted in May each year. The respondents of the LFS were asked additional questions on the educational attainment, and details of the courses and educational institution attended.</p> <p>The 2001 survey covered both urban and rural areas, but the sample of households selected in remote and sparsely populated areas was not covered in the survey.</p>
Project/database and agency responsible for its maintenance	Australian Bureau of Statistics PO Box 10 Belconnen 2616 http://www.abs.gov.au
Year of commencement of data/series available	1983.
Key data contents	Educational attainment, main field of study, year last attended educational institution (fulltime), study arrangements, level of courses, age leaving school and details of apprenticeships held.

Indigenous status available	Yes.
Geographic level	State and territory.
Data storage	Computerised.
Dissemination of data	Reports and customised data available on payment.
Comments	<p>The participation of Indigenous people in the survey is low, mainly due to the exclusion of remote and sparsely populated areas. Therefore, reliable estimates even at the national level may be difficult.</p> <p>The survey was conducted in the month of May, and therefore, the seasonal effects on schooling and employment patterns cannot be assessed from the data.</p> <p>The survey program (LFS) underwent a methodological change (including the classification of educational qualifications), which can affect the analysis of trends¹⁰⁹. In the past this survey was known as <i>Transition from Education to Work</i>.</p>

¹⁰⁹ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2001) 'Implementing the Redesigned Labour Force Survey Questionnaire', *Information Paper* (Cat. No. 6295.0), ABS (2001) *Australian Standard Classification of Education* (ASCED) (cat. No. 1272.0) and ABS (2001) *ABS Standard Classification of Qualifications* (Cat. No. 1262.0).

A7.1: Australian Housing Survey (ABS)

Project/database description	ABS housing surveys collect information on demographic characteristics, household composition, income, dwelling characteristics and conditions, housing finance and costs through a sample survey of private dwellings.
Objective(s)	To provide detailed information required for the administration, evaluation and planning of housing services. It will also be used to provide information on housing affordability, adequacy and suitability for population groups such as older people, low-income earners and Indigenous people.
Scope and coverage	ABS housing surveys cover usual residents in a random sample of private dwellings in all areas in states and territories, except remote and sparsely settled areas.
Collection methodology/ data source	The 1999 housing survey was collected through Computer Assisted Personal Interviews, during 10 August-December 1999. Information about each household and dwelling was collected from the person who nominated him/herself as the head or the spouse/partner of the head. Personal interviews were then conducted for persons aged 15 years and over living in the household. Information in respect of young persons (15-24 years) not present in the household were collected from adults present at the time of the survey.
Project/database and agency responsible for its maintenance	Australian Bureau of Statistics PO Box 10 Belconnen 2616 http://www.abs.gov.au
Year of commencement of data/series available	The Australian Housing Survey was conducted in 1988, 1994 and 1999. It is not proposed to conduct another survey in this series, but to collect priority information through survey

	vehicles such as the Survey of Income and Housing Costs, the Household Expenditure Survey, and the Multipurpose Household Survey.
Key data contents	<p>Data items collected varied between surveys. The data collected in 1994 and 1999 included at the household level: household characteristics, physical, characteristics of the dwelling, vocational aspects such as the satisfaction/dissatisfaction with the location, housing costs and other financial costs, recent home buyers, tenancy details, and housing history.</p> <p>At the personal level data include: demographic information, education, labour force, and travel information of the reference person and spouse; geography, tenure, income, income support, assets and liabilities, and temporary residents.</p> <p>At the personal level: tenure, satisfaction with the location and rent, household transition, housing history, renter/tenancy details, travel to work and shops.</p>
Indigenous status available	Yes. Only relate to those in rural and urban areas.
Geographic level	States and territories with capital city and 'balance of state' breakdown.
Data storage	Computerised. Public use data file available. Special tabulations are available in printed or electronic form.
Dissemination of data	Reports and internet; additional data on request.

Comment	<p>The survey methodology and focus changed over time, which affected comparability of the data. Although the AHS did not cover remote areas, the Indigenous representation in the sample was enhanced by adding Collection Districts with high Indigenous concentration in non-remote areas.</p> <p>The final Indigenous data file contains both the sample of Indigenous households covered in the original sample and those in the supplementary sample.</p> <p>The response rate for the 1999 survey was estimated at 88%. The final sample survey consisted of 13,788 households and 27,688 persons. Missing data were imputed using responses to other question items. Such imputations were carried out for records relating to 1,350 respondents.</p>
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A7.2: Household Expenditure Survey (ABS)

Project/database description	An ABS sample survey which collects information on household expenditure, income and household characteristics from persons in private dwellings.
Objective(s)	To provide detailed information to assess patterns of household income distributions, expenditure on housing and other goods and services. One of the aims of the survey is to provide up-to-date information on household expenditure patterns to review and revise the weighting structure used for constructing the Consumer Price Index.
Scope and coverage	National sample of some 6,890 households resident in private dwellings.
Collection methodology/ data source	Information was collected through Computer Assisted personal interviews and diaries in which all survey respondents recorded information on expenditure over a period of two weeks. Interviews were equally spread over a year i.e. in the 1989-90 survey from July 1998 to June 1999.
Project/database and agency responsible for its maintenance	Australian Bureau of Statistics PO Box 10 Belconnen 2616 http://www.abs.gov.au
Year of commencement of data/series available	Household expenditure surveys were conducted in 1974-75, 1975-76, 1984, 1988-89, 1993-94 and 1989-90. The next survey will be conducted in 2003-04.
Key data contents	Income and expenditure data and data collected in relation to housing include type of dwelling, number of bedrooms, ownership and tenure type, rent (mortgage payment and rates), maintenance, and repair costs.
Indigenous status available	Not collected.

Geographic level	States and territories with urban-rural breakdown.
Data storage	Computerised. Public use data tape available.
Dissemination of data	Reports and additional data on request.
Comment	The survey methodology, scope and focus changed over time, affecting comparability of the data between surveys.

A7.3: Survey of Income and Housing Costs (ABS)

Project/database description	Survey of Income and Housing Costs (SIHC) is a regular survey series designed to collect detailed data on household income and housing costs.
Objective(s)	To provide detailed information relevant to assess housing adequacy, affordability, housing tenure, housing costs and related information for policy planning and monitoring.
Scope and coverage	National Household Survey of private dwellings.
Collection methodology/ data source	<p>This survey is conducted as part of the monthly supplementary survey carried out on a multi-stage sample of private dwellings. Data are collected over eight consecutive months¹¹⁰. This is done by partitioning the sample into eight groups, and data are collected from one group, which is rotated each month. The size of the sample in each month is about 650 households. The survey covers persons aged 15 years and over residing in private dwellings selected for the sample. The sample includes a total of 5,500 persons drawn from about 7,800 private dwellings. From 1996-97 the survey excludes remote and sparsely populated areas from the sample.</p> <p>The survey presently covers both urban and rural areas in states and territories. Data are collected by personal interviews. Information collected through monthly labour force survey on the household and other members 15 years and over are combined with the data collected through the SIHC.</p>
Project/database and agency responsible for its maintenance	Australian Bureau of Statistics PO Box 10 Belconnen 2616 Http://www.abs.gov.au

¹¹⁰ For the 1997 survey details see: ABS (1997) *Survey of Income and Housing Costs, Australia. User Guide*, Abs Cat no. 6553.0.

Year of commencement of data/series available	1990
Key data contents	Demographic information (age, sex, marital status, ethnicity, etc.) and household data are transcribed directly from the monthly labour force survey and SIHC collects detailed information on the level, type and sources of income, housing costs, and tenure.
Indigenous status available	Yes.
Geographic level	State and territory.
Data storage	Computerised.
Dissemination of data	Published reports, customised tables on payment available, and public use data tape is available for purchase.
Comment	The representation of Indigenous people in the survey is relatively small as the remote and sparsely settled areas are excluded from the survey. The survey response rate was high, 83% responding to the survey with complete responses.

A7.4: Community Housing and Infrastructure Needs Survey (ABS/ATSI)

Project/database description	Community Housing and Infrastructure Needs Survey (CHINS) collects housing and infrastructure information relating to Indigenous Housing Organisations (IHOs) and discrete Indigenous communities throughout Australia. This includes data relating to housing stock as well as infrastructure such as water, sewerage, health and education services.
Objective(s)	The CHINS is intended to assist in the monitoring and evaluation of programs designed to improve housing and infrastructure services for Indigenous peoples living in both houses managed by AHOs and in discrete communities. It provides detailed information about the housing and infrastructure needs of discrete Indigenous communities. For people to assist in monitoring policies and programs relating to housing and infrastructure developments in the Indigenous discrete communities and community managed Indigenous housing.
Scope and coverage	The latest CHINS was conducted in conjunction with the 2001 Census of Population and Housing. CHINS enumerated all discrete communities which were occupied (or intended to occupy within next 12 months) and all IHOs, managing housing for Indigenous peoples.
Collection methodology/ data source	The 2001 CHINS used an updated list of discrete communities and AHOs based on the 1999 CHINS results. The 2001 CHINS data were collected by ABS field officers in conjunction with the 2001 Census of Population and Housing. Personal interviews were conducted with key informants who were expected to have knowledge about housing and infrastructure issues relating to AHOs and in discrete

	<p>communities.</p> <p>Among the key informants, were chairpersons of councils, council clerks and housing officers. The data were collected over a period of 4 months (March-June), with some telephone follow-up. For the 2001 CHINS three types of questionnaires were used:</p> <p>(a) housing form - used to collect information about housing stock and details of repairs and maintenance of houses managed by AHOs;</p> <p>(b) community form - used to collect information on infrastructure in discrete communities. These included communities with usual resident populations of 50 or more and those with less than 50 usual resident population, but which were not administered by a larger discrete community or agency; and</p> <p>(C) short community form – used to collect a subset of data items in the Community, was used to gather information on discrete communities with less than 50 usual resident population, which was administered by a large discrete community or a resource agency.</p>
Project/database and agency responsible for its maintenance	<p>The CHINS 2001 was conducted by the ABS on behalf of, and with full funding from ATSIIC. The survey was conducted under the provisions of the ATSIIC Act</p> <p>PO Box 10 Belconnen 2616 Http// www.abs.gov.au</p>
Year of commencement of data/series available	<p>The predecessor to CHINS, the Housing and Infrastructure Needs Survey (HINS) was conducted in 1992. The first CHINS was conducted in 1999 and with the second in 2001.</p>
Key data contents	<p>Current housing stock, management practices, details of rent/mortgage, repair costs, number of bedrooms and financial arrangements of</p>

	<p>Indigenous organisations providing housing to Indigenous people.</p> <p>Details of the infrastructure included: health services, health personnel, educational institutions, water supply, sewerage systems, garbage collections, and electricity supply.</p>
Indigenous status available	Yes. CHINS is an Indigenous specific survey program.
Geographic level	State and territory; community level.
Data storage	The CHINS Unit Record file is available at the National Housing and Infrastructure Centre, ATSIIC. Special tabulations are provided by ABS in printed or electronic form.
Dissemination of data	National publications and ABS website. Unit Record file available on request.
Comment	<p>The CHINS 2001 achieved a high level of response, 98.1% for discrete communities and 98.6% for Indigenous Housing Organisations¹¹¹. An analysis carried out by ABS comparing the results of CHINS 2001 with those of 1999 revealed a high level of consistency in aggregates between the two surveys (see http://www.abs.gov.au).</p> <p>Comparability between the 1992 and the 1999 was limited, because of the variations in the scope, methodologies, concepts, data items and methods of output derivation. Due to these variations it may be necessary to use the 1999 CHINS as the baseline and compare with the 2001 CHINS.</p>

¹¹¹ ABS (2002) *Housing and Infrastructure in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities*, Cat.no. 4701.0, ABS, Canberra:p77. Pages 78-79 give information on the extent of inconsistencies observed in key data items between the two surveys.

7.5: Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (FaCS/AIHW)

Project/database description	Contains detailed information on homeless persons sought for and assisted by the Supported Accommodation Assistant Program (SAAP) and issues relating to homelessness among persons who approached a SAAP service outlet.
Objective(s)	The objective of the program is to provide transitional supported accommodation and other services to assist people who are homeless to achieve self-reliance and independence ¹¹² . The data are collected to assess and monitor the extent to which SAAP services are provided to clients and to better understanding of the causes and issues associated with homelessness.
Scope and coverage	National. The National SAAP Data Collection includes five components: the Client collection; the Administrative data collection; the Unmet demand data collection; the casual client collection and Special issues collection. Client collection is the major component of the SAAP National Data Collection.
Collection methodology/ data source	SAAP is jointly funded by the Commonwealth and states and territories and the day-to-day administration is carried out by states and territories. The services are provided by Non-Government agencies and some local governments. The Client collection focuses on all clients receiving support under SAAP. The collection records services provided to clients if the duration of the provision of service exceeded one hour. Services are provided by a network of some 1,200 service outlets, mostly non-government agencies funded by the Commonwealth and state and territory

¹¹² Supported Accommodation Assistance Act, 1994.

	<p>governments.</p> <p>These service outlets record information on services provided during the period of support. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) acts as the National Data Collection Agency (NDCA). NDCA receives detailed information from each agency about clients at regular intervals and on each service outlets by states and territories.</p> <p>Administrative Data Collection focuses on the general information on the agencies providing services to clients and is reported to NDCA by the community services portfolios of state and territory governments responsible for SAAP in their jurisdictions.</p> <p>The Unmet Demand Collection is not a regular collection and was conducted in 1991 over a period of two weeks.</p> <p>The Casual Clients Collection is carried out annually during May-June to obtain information on the short-term or one-off assistance given to clients.</p> <p>The Special Clients Collection is an ad hoc program developed to study specific issues relating to SAAP. For example, a special data collection focussing on low-income clients was conducted in May-June 2000.</p>
Project/database and agency responsible for its maintenance	<p>Australian Institute of Health and Welfare PO Box 570 ACT 2601 Http://www.aihw.gov.au</p>
Year of commencement of data/series available	<p>The SAAP commenced in 1985 and the National Data Collection providing annual data on service provision is available from 1996.</p>
Key data contents	<p>Age, sex, family details, housing before and after SAAP assistance, assistance sought and provided, referrals made, reasons for seeking</p>

	assistance, duration of support and a range of outcomes.
Indigenous status available	Yes.
Geographic level	The data are collected according to the Rural, Remote and Metropolitan area classification of the Department of Health and Ageing. According to this classification all metropolitan and urban centres with more than 100,000 population are considered as 'urban'. Most SAAP services are located in urban areas.
Data storage	Computerised.
Dissemination of data	Reports. Special monographs are prepared (Monograph No.1 provides details of Indigenous SAAP clients ¹¹³). Special Confidentialised Unit Record Data File is also available for detailed policy analysis. Additional data are available from AIHW on cost recovery basis.
Comment	The SAAP data provide details of homeless people who only sought assistance from a SAAP outlet. The data available from the collection refers to the support periods (number of times assistance of more than 1 hour's duration have been provided) and not the actual number of clients serviced, because the same client could be getting assistance from any SAAP agency more than once during a year.

¹¹³ Department of Family and Community Services (2001) *SAAP Monograph: Indigenous SAAP Clients*, Performance Information and Data Section, FaCS, Canberra (December).

A7.6: Aboriginal Hostels Data Collection (AHL)

Project/database description	Information on temporary accommodation provided to Indigenous persons by Aboriginal Hostels Ltd. and by community organisations assisted by AHL.
Objective(s)	Data are collected for administrative and budgetary purposes.
Scope and coverage	All Aboriginal hostels, and community organisations supported by the Community Hostel Grants program of AHL.
Collection methodology/ data source	Aboriginal hostels send fortnightly reports to AHL on the number and characteristics of occupants, occupancy and revenue details. Personal information recorded are obtained from the Registration card. Community Support hostels are expected to provide only a limited type of detail required for monitoring utilisation of funds and meeting standards set along with funding.
Project/database and agency responsible for its maintenance	Aboriginal Hostels Ltd. Level 2, Bonner House 7 Neptune St, Woden 2606 http://www.ahl.gov.au
Year of commencement of data/series available	1973 but only available for the last seven years (due to archiving requirements).
Key data contents	Data items collected from AHL hostels include hostel name, location, number of beds, hostel category and revenue details. Client details include occupation, residential status, type of resident, occupancy details and revenue collected. The community support hostels provide only limited information without the details of clients.
Indigenous status available	Data available are for Indigenous people only.
Geographic level	Precise location of hostels and accommodation centres within states and territories.

Data storage	Hard copies of reports are received by AHL. AHL prepares an electronic data file containing common data items.
Dissemination of data	Annual reports. Additional data available on request.
Comment	AHL currently operates 48 hostels and funds and 86 community support hostels. In the past, Commonwealth funding to AHL was channelled through ATSIC. Since 2000 AHL receive funding direct. The Community Support accommodation centres receive only a part of the funding from AHL and the information currently reported to AHL is only the minimum required to meet the budgetary requirements. Therefore, it is difficult to collect nationally consistent data as the same level of detail collected by hostels operated by AHL.