

Transforming Australia's Population, Labour and Social Statistics: Meeting the needs of tomorrow

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In common with other National Statistical Offices (NSOs), the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) is facing a number of challenges to its current operations, including increasing financial constraints, capability limitations, complex work programs and ageing technical infrastructure. Furthermore, the ABS recognises the increasing demand for access to more detailed information to support informed decision making processes by the Australian Government and community.

To meet these challenges, the ABS is radically transforming its business processes and is implementing a significant investment in statistical infrastructure. Statistical processes are being re-engineered, and all statistical production is being aligned to the international Generic Statistical Business Process Model (GSBPM) and the Generic Statistical Information Model (GSIM).

Under the auspices of this transformation environment, the ABS' Population, Labour and Social Statistics (PLaSS) Division has commenced work on a range of initiatives which will ultimately deliver an integrated social statistics program, maximising coherence across administrative, household survey and Census information collections and utilising the newly developed corporate infrastructure.

This paper will describe the broad program of change including the introduction of an address register to support a list-based sampling framework for household surveys; the introduction of web forms; extending the time in sample for the Monthly Population Survey (MPS); data integration activities; and the potential use of split forms and greater utilisation of multi-topic vehicles to manage respondent load.

This paper will also outline some of the challenges that have been encountered and the opportunities that are yet to be realised.

Key words: Transformation; Household surveys; Web forms; Data integration