



Essential Statistical Assets for Australia

INVESTING IN THE INFORMATION THAT COUNTS MOST

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Origin of the ESA Initiative

“The ABS should set out to identify, in a highly consultative way, the key national datasets that are the essential indicators of the state of the nation, regardless of which organisations produce them.”

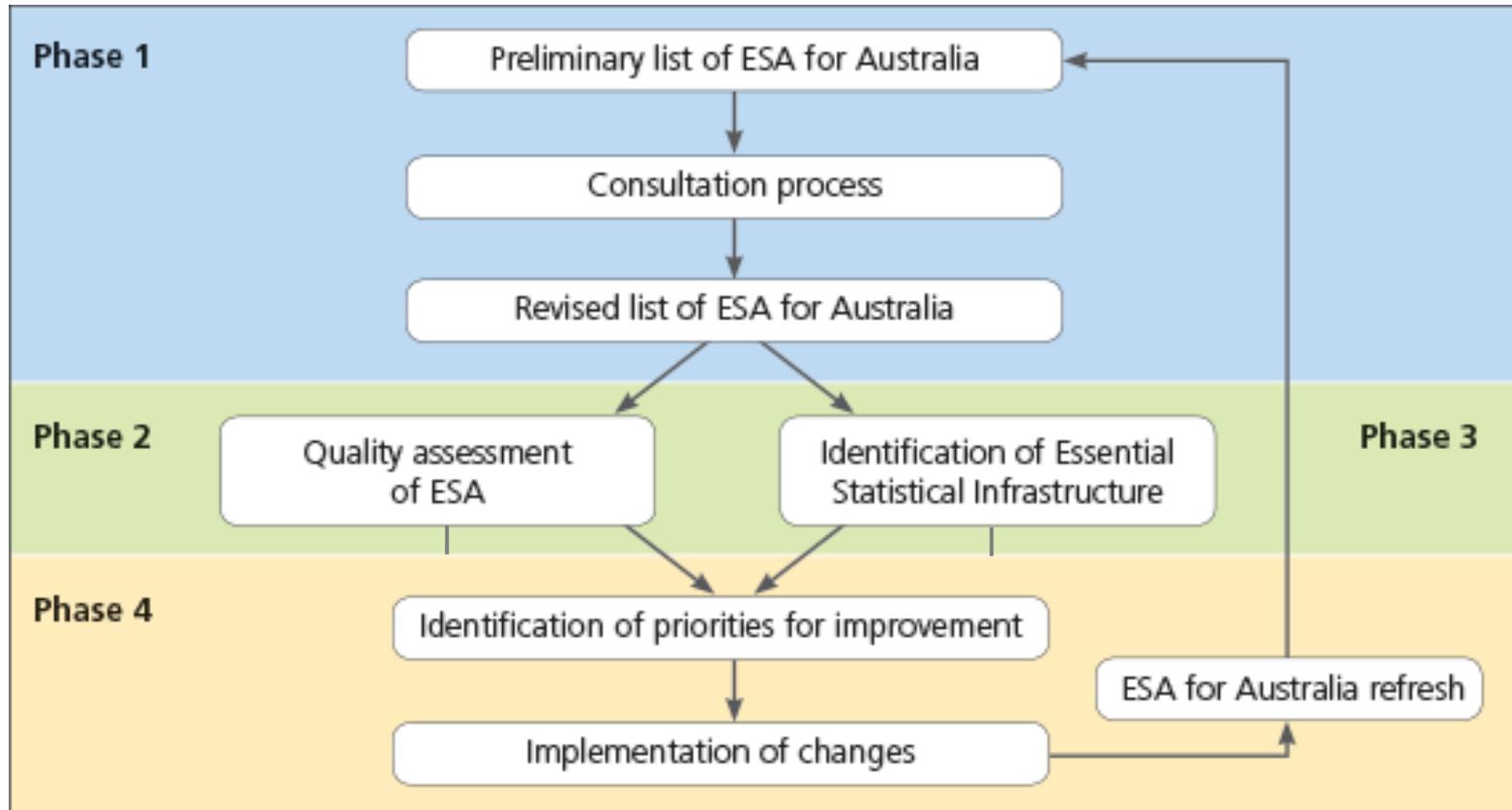
Allen Report (2004) – Recommendation 1: Areas of duplication and underutilisation

Why Identify Essential Statistical Assets?

"To guide Governments' investments in official statistics by prioritising and protecting those statistical assets that are critically important for the nation."

- i. To identify where there are critical information gaps, so that these can be addressed;
- ii. To ensure that information (statistics and datasets) are of sufficient quality, and;
- iii. To ensure the efficient use of Government resources by identifying areas of duplication and underutilisation

ESA initiative – Project phases



Phase 2 – Quality Assessments

- Will produce overarching indicators of quality for each of the 74 ESAs
- Aim to understand how well the currently produced information meets the critical needs of users, highlighting areas for investment within existing statistics
- Collaborative process between ABS and ESA data custodians
- Data custodians highly supportive overall

Phase 2 – Quality Assessments Progress

	ABS datasets		non-ABS Federal datasets		non-ABS State and Territory datasets**		Total	
Total datasets	86		85		66		237	
Initial contact made	n/a	n/a	83	98%	66	100%	149	*99%
Quality consultation completed	n/a	n/a	77	91%	62	94%	139	*92%
Assessment tool returned to ESA team	83	97%	58	68%	58	88%	199	84%
Initial scoring applied by ESA team	83	97%	58	68%	58	88%	199	84%
Scoring follow up	45	52%	8	9%	0	0%	53	22%
Signed off by data custodian	2	2%	0	0%	0	0%	2	1%

*Percentage completed is calculated from external datasets only.

** This includes multiple jurisdictions for the one dataset on the ESA list e.g. CATI Health Survey dataset is counted 8 times, once for each state and territory.

Phase 2 – Revised Timelines

June 2014

- All quality consultations complete

July 2014

- Scoring and follow up with data custodians complete

August 2014

- All quality assessment tools signed off by data custodians as completed and accurate

September 2014

- ABS produces quality assessments for all 74 essential statistics

October 2014

- ABS leads high level consultation process on quality assessment results

November 2014

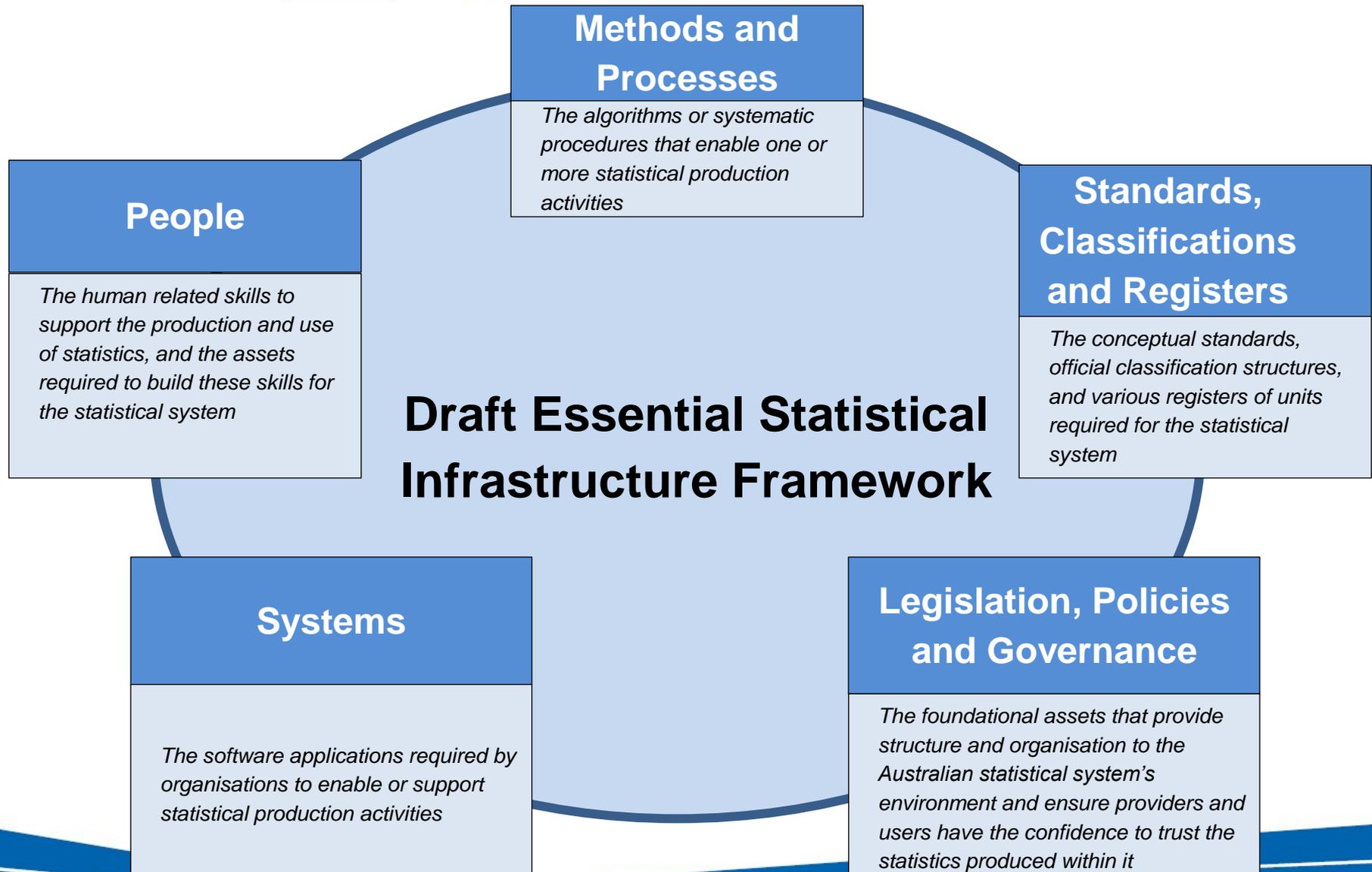
- Present ESA quality assessments to ASAC
- ABS sends relevant ESA quality assessments to data custodians for information only

December 2014

- Public release of quality assessments for all 74 essential statistics

Phase 3 – Essential Statistical Infrastructure (ESI)

- The purpose of Phase 3 is to identify the ESI owned, developed and used by governments to collect, produce, disseminate and access essential statistical assets.
- Need for ESI initially identified during consultation for ESA for Australia list
- Discussion paper released for consultation across governments released in February 2014, including AGSF members



ESI Scope and Criteria

- Focus on identifying infrastructure assets that are particular to the operation of the Australian statistical system
- Four initial criteria were suggested :
 1. Infrastructure that are critical foundational elements for a well-functioning statistical system;
 2. Infrastructure that are critical to the production of essential statistical assets within the system;
 3. Infrastructure that have broad/multi-purpose applicability;
 4. Infrastructure that expected to provide enduring benefits to the statistical system.

ESI List Example:

Principles, Legislation and Governance Category

Sub-category	Infrastructure Asset Dimension	Infrastructure Asset (Custodian/Owner)	Potential Relevance to Criteria			
			1	2	3	4
Legislation	Other enabling legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Census & Statistics Act 1905 (ABS) • ABS Act 1975 (ABS) • Statistics (Arrangements with States) Act 1956 (ABS) • Privacy Act 1988 (OAIC) • State and Territory Privacy legislation (various) 	x		x	x
Principles	Policies and Principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics (UNSC) • Australian Governments SDI Principles (ABS, Department of Health) • Australian Government Information Privacy Principles (OAIC) 	x		x	x
Governance	Statistical Prioritisation Forums	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australian Statistics Advisory Council (ABS) • Peak state statistical forums 	x		x	x
Governance	Compliance and Regulatory Processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statistical Clearing House (ABS) • Standard Business Reporting (ATO) • COAG National Performance Agreements (COAG Reform Council) 	x		x	

Phase 3 - Key messages from feedback

- Feedback received from a good cross-section including Australian Government, State and Territory governments and other NSOs (Stats NZ and Stats Canada)
- Strong recognition of the need for list to complement ESA
- Reinforced that further refinement of framework and tiered approach to the list is required
- Suggestion that criteria are not strong enough to highlight 'essential' infrastructure
- Relationship between ESI assets and ESA list requires further clarification and articulation

ESI Next Steps

- ABS developing a plan to proceed taking into account feedback received to present to ASAC
- Preferred option will be to develop the list iteratively (focusing on infrastructure categories in turn)
- Ongoing focus on developing the list collaboratively into the future

For more information

The ESA webpage on the NSS website:

www.nss.gov.au/esaforaustralia

Catalogue no. 1395.0

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Questions

