

Building Statistical Capability

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Session Outline

Statistical Capability:

- What it is
- Why it is important
- Basis for ABS involvement
- Current ABS approach
- Future directions

What it is

Refers to the:

- Attitudes
- Knowledge
- Skills

needed to effectively perform statistical tasks

What it is

Statistical Capability Dimension	Government	
	Data producers	Policy developers
Statistical Leadership		
Statistical Production		
Statistical Literacy		

Why it is important

Having statistically capable staff supports:


- Designing, considering and communicating choices and alternatives,
- Identifying consequences, implications or impacts.

Why it is important

Governments are both data users and data custodians

- Importance of capability to manage data holdings to ensure relevance, quality, and accessibility for use as part of the evidence base

Basis for ABS Involvement



Australian Bureau of Statistics
Corporate Plan Summary

Why we are here

Australian Bureau of Statistics Act (1975)
Census and Statistics Act (1905)

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

Our Vision
A trusted and progressive world-class statistical leader

Our Values

- Integrity
- Trust of providers
- Relevance
- Professionalism
- Access for all
- Service

Basis for ABS Involvement



Goals: What we aim to achieve

- Informed and better use of Australia's statistical assets
- Continued trust and support of providers
- Long-term organisational sustainability
- Respected leader in the national and international statistical communities

Strategies: How we aim to achieve our Goals

- Deliver high quality, objective and flexible official statistical solutions.
- Improve accessibility, timeliness and relevance of Australia's statistical information.
- Improve the management and informed use of official statistical information.
- Effective engagement with providers.
- Develop solutions that maintain confidentiality but unlock the value of information.
- Better prepare our people for the future.
- Transform our business systems and processes.
- Foster our ability to innovate.
- Enhance the coordination of, and investment in, the National Statistical Service.
- Build strong statistical capacity and capability domestically and within the Asia-Pacific region.
- Shape and influence national and international discussions regarding statistical frameworks and policies.

Current ABS Approach

- Various ABS areas with responsibility for building statistical capability
- Wide range of strategic priorities and governance arrangements are in place
- Demand exceeds supply capacity

Current ABS Approach



Statistical Training



Outposted Officers



Program Area Assistance



Conferences, Seminars and Workshops



National Statistical Service



Guide to Evidence Based Decision Making



Understanding Statistics Resources

Future Directions

Better Integration
of Statistical
Capability
Building Activities



Future Directions

Four key goals:

- better planning, decision making and assessment of progress;
- significantly increased capacity to build statistical capability;
- more effective and efficient methods;
- improved governance

Future Directions

Strategy: Adopt a Standardised Framework

Statistical Capability Dimension	Target Audience										
	Internal ABS	Government		Education		General community	Media/Opinion leaders	Industry		Not for Profit sector	NSOs (Asia Pacific region)
		Data producers	Policy developers	Educators	Students (Y11-12)			Small & medium size businesses	Industry associations & large businesses		
Statistical Leadership	✓	✓	✓				✓				✓
Statistical Production	✓	✓									✓
Statistical Literacy	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Footnotes:

✓ - indicates the broad statistical capability required by target audience

Note - that for each statistical capability dimension there is a basic, intermediate and advanced skill level.

Note - Statistical production includes work on statistical infrastructure.

Future Directions

Strategy: Develop and Monitor Key Performance Indicators

- Need to show changes over time in the quantity and quality of statistical capability
- Better demonstrate success/progress
- Inform important decisions as the nature of statistical capabilities growth and change.

Future Directions

Strategy: Build more Partnerships with External Bodies

- Successful statistical capability building collaborations already exist
- Arrangements should be selectively expanded with appropriate guidance and support.
- Institutions include universities, other NSOs (local and overseas) and other government agencies, or a combination of these

Future Directions

Strategy: Adopt Longer-term Planning Techniques

- A need for a longer term approach while still maintaining flexibility to respond to unforeseen events in the short term.
- Planning for statistical capability development should be using a five yearly window.

Future Directions

Strategy: Adopt an Improved Funding Model

- Clearer and more consistent policy and guidelines on the use of ABS and non-ABS resources to build statistical capability

Future Directions

Strategy: Establish a Statistical Institute in Australia

- Expand statistical capability building capacity
- Promote and advise on best practice methods
- Operate as a centre of excellence (rather than as a 'training' institute per se)

Future Directions

Strategy: Improve the Leadership of the ABS Program

- Consideration being given to establishing a program encompassing all the strategies
- As a minimum, a very senior ABS officer should be designated as the ultimate leader of this 'program'.

