

# census

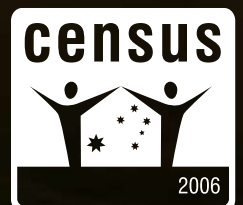
UPDATE

[www.abs.gov.au/census](http://www.abs.gov.au/census)

MARCH 2008 ISSUE 44



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**04**



**05**



**08**



**10**

## In this Issue

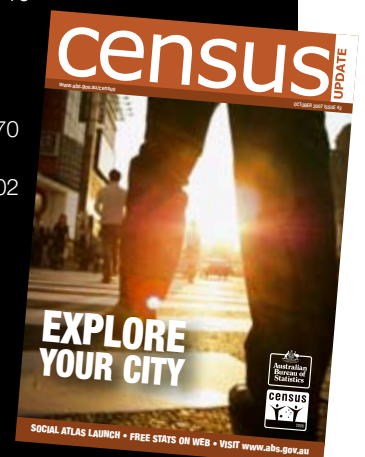
Census Corner	<b>03</b>
A Picture of Australia in 2008	<b>04</b>
Socio-economic Indexes for Areas	<b>05</b>
Explore Your City	<b>06</b>
Working Population Profile	<b>08</b>
ABS Committed to Quality Data	<b>09</b>
First Mesh Block Data Released	<b>09</b>
ABS Service Delivery Charter 2008-2011	<b>10</b>
2006 Census Release Timetable	<b>11</b>

## census UPDATE

Census Update is a regular free newsletter from Corporate Communications at the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

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[www.abs.gov.au/census](http://www.abs.gov.au/census)

# FIVE YEARS ON

## Moving Census towards 2011



After five years, outgoing Census Products and Services Director Michael Beahan, reflects on the evolution of the Census, its products and services.

The past five years has been quite a journey since I joined the Census Program in May 2003. Over this time I have almost experienced the entire Census cycle, from planning and collecting data to evaluating and releasing a range of Census products and services.

Upon entering this role, I saw that it was essential to improve access to Census data. Many casual users reported they needed to go through a lengthy trial and error process to locate their desired data. The ABS has since made some very positive improvements in that area, with Census user feedback suggesting Census data is now significantly easier to access.

The second challenge presented to me was to make it more accessible for users to not just 'access' data but to interact with it. Improvements in interactive data are very close to fruition with the launch of CData Online later this year. CData is a significant advancement in the ABS' capability in providing quality data for informed decision making.

One of the many pleasures in my Census role was getting out there and speaking with our Census user community. I've managed to visit and appreciate the uniqueness of some of our more distant capital cities including Hobart, Perth and Darwin. Census users are a remarkable group of people – knowledgeable and committed with a great sense of purpose. I'd like to thank all of the people in the Census user community for their support and encouragement.

Perhaps the most significant achievement for the 2006 Census was the move away from traditional priced publications by making basic Census data available to all Australians by publishing data free on the ABS website. In 2006, the ABS also introduced the eCensus, a secure online census form. With more than 10% of private households submitting their information via the eCensus, this will play a greater role in the 2011 Census.

The most fortunate aspect of my job has been the talented group of people working in the Census Program who've had the task of turning aspirations into reality. It's been a long time since I've had the privilege of working with such a dedicated and hard working group of people.

Jenny Telford took over the role of Census Products and Services Director on 11 February 2008. Jenny has a strong background in website publishing and brings a wealth of experience and knowledge to the Census Program.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Beahan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Michael Beahan  
Outgoing Director  
Census Products and Services



# A PICTURE OF AUSTRALIA IN 2008

Each year the ABS has produced the Year Book Australia publication, a comprehensive statistical overview of Australia which describes where we have come from and where we are now. The joint themes for the 2008 Year Book Australia are Scouts and Planet Earth to coincide with the centenary year for Scouts Australia and the International Year of Planet Earth.

The Governor-General was joined by the Australian Statistician, Brian Pink, and representatives of Scouts Australia to launch the *2008 Year Book Australia* on 7 February at ABS House, Canberra.

In launching the 90th edition of Year Book Australia, the Governor-General acknowledged the valuable work of the ABS and its predecessors over the past 100 years, since the first Year Book Australia was released in 1908.

'It [the Year Book] reflects the exceptional contribution that the Australian Bureau of Statistics and its predecessors have made in measuring, interpreting and explaining our society to ourselves. There is no facet of business, government, agriculture, our health, the arts and sport which has not benefited from the work of the Bureau.'

'A major example of the impressive work of the Bureau is the five-yearly Census — an immense effort of planning and

logistics, bringing together a small army of people to collect and then analyse the results from every household in Australia. It is rivalled only by the Federal election in its operational demands and complexity.'

All 90 editions of Year Book Australia are now available to download free from the ABS website [www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au). A hardcopy of the *2008 Year Book Australia* can be purchased for \$99 by calling **1300 135 070**.



Scouts Morgan Sheppard and Peter Zurcher



The Governor-General, the Australian Statistician Brian Pink, and John Ravenhall with members from Scouts ACT



# Socio-economic Indexes for Areas

*... released this month*

SEIFA is a key Census product that assists in determining Australia's social and economic conditions, assisting governments, businesses and community organisations in research, planning and analysis.

The four Socio-economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) will be released to the ABS website on 26 March. SEIFA is developed by combining multiple 2006 Census topics such as income, occupation and educational attainment to determine affluent, disadvantaged and highly skilled and educated areas based on their social and economic status. Data can be obtained for all Census geographic areas from capital cities down to the Collection District (CD) level.

SEIFA features four indexes, allowing you to rank socio-economic data for CDs,

suburbs, towns or cities relevant to your needs. Each index summarises the different aspects of SEIFA, being:

- Index of Advantage/Disadvantage
- Index of Disadvantage
- Index of Economic Resources
- Index of Education and Occupation

This data can be applied by many users for a number of purposes.

This may include:

- determining infrastructure requirements and subsequent planning;

- distributing funds and grants appropriately;
- determining new business opportunities for commercial and not-for-profit enterprise;
- identifying areas requiring community assistance programmes, and
- researching and evaluating existing government and community initiatives.

You can download SEIFA 2006 and other 2006 Census products free at [www.abs.gov.au/census](http://www.abs.gov.au/census).

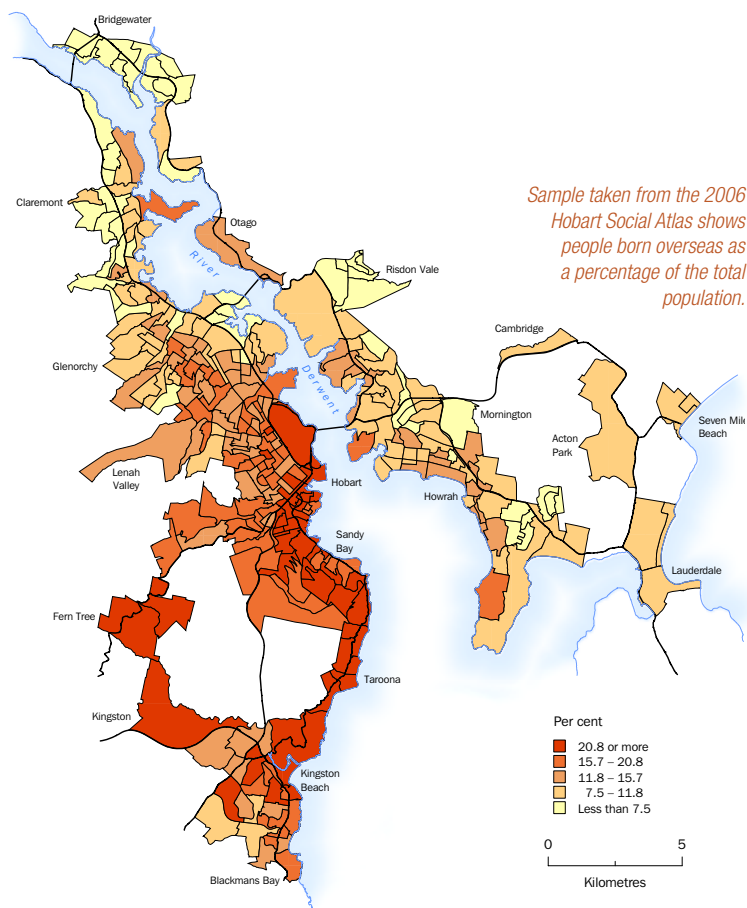
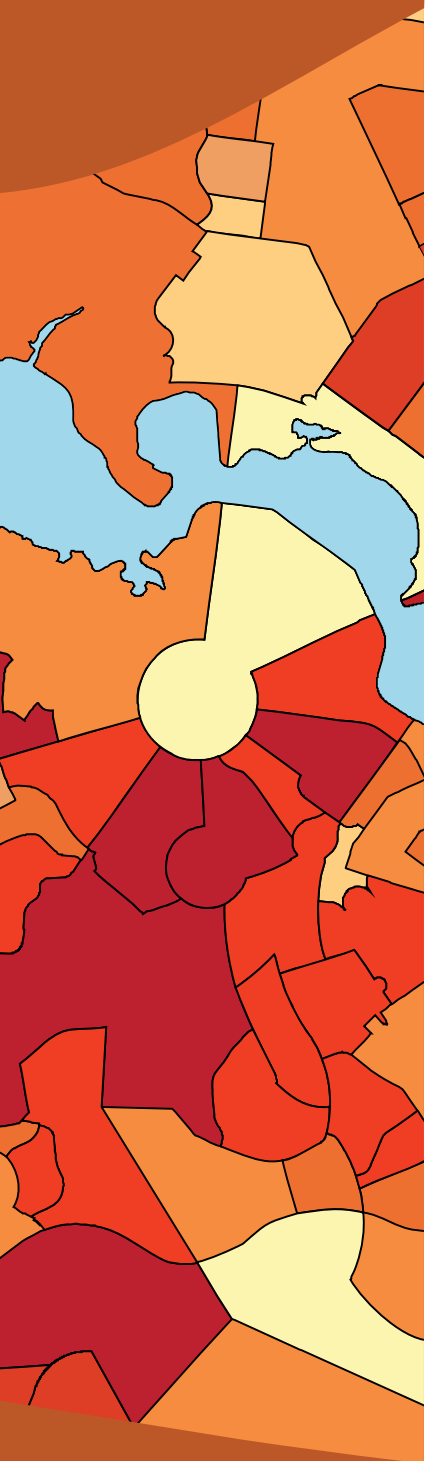


Due to strong demand, a preliminary version of the Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage (IRSD) was released on 18 February. We strongly advise users, especially those with no prior experience of SEIFA indexes, to wait for the full release with complete accompanying documentation.

# explore your city

with the 2006 Census  
**Social Atlas Series**

The 2006 Census Social Atlas Series was launched by the Assistant Treasurer, the Hon Chris Bowen MP, and the Australian Statistician, Brian Pink, at Parliament House, Canberra on 17 March 2008.





The 2006 Census Social Atlas Series provides snapshots of the social, demographic and economic characteristics of each capital city, using thematic colour maps and commentary. They highlight the geographic distribution of characteristics of the population such as employment and income, age and ethnicity, and family dwellings.

Social Atlases are available for all Australian capital cities and for the first time include selected regional centres.

- Sydney, also includes Newcastle, Central Coast and Wollongong
- Melbourne, also includes Geelong
- Brisbane, also includes Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast
- Adelaide, also includes Mount Gambier and Whyalla
- Perth (including Mandurah), also includes Bunbury and Kalgoorlie
- Darwin and Palmerston, also includes Alice Springs and Litchfield Shire
- Hobart, also includes Launceston and Burnie-Devonport
- Canberra (including Queanbeyan)

The Social Atlas Series contain maps covering seven broad topics:

- Population
- Cultural Diversity
- Education
- Labour Force
- Income
- Families and Households
- Dwellings

Another great feature of the Social Atlases is the set of reference maps which assist you to identify specific locations, Statistical Local Areas and Postal Areas. Reference maps may be copied to produce overlays that can be placed over the thematic maps to assist you in locating areas and topics of interest.

**The 2006 Census Social Atlases are available for purchase for \$29 each or \$193 (a saving of \$39) for the full set. To purchase simply call the National Information and Referral Service on 1300 135 070 between 8.30am and 5.00pm.**



## Did you know

According to the 2006 Census of population and housing:

- Adelaide recorded the highest proportion of people aged 75 years and over
- Canberra-Queanbeyan region recorded the lowest unemployment rate.



# Working Population Profile

The much anticipated Working Population Profile (WPP) was released on the ABS website on 29 February 2008. The WPP is the final release in the 2006 Census Community Profile series; it takes a closer look at the characteristics of Australia's working population.



The WPP gives you access to a range of data, including how many people work full-time or part-time, their incomes, which industries they work in, which industries have people working long hours, which occupations utilise the Internet, and how people travel to work. The Working Population Profile is available for a variety of geographic areas, from the whole of Australia down to Place of Work Statistical Local Areas.

## How can I access the Working Population Profile?

Access to the WPP is easy and free. Simply download the WPP workbook at [www.abs.gov.au/census](http://www.abs.gov.au/census) for the area of your choice.

The WPP along with other profiles in the series can be purchased as a CD-ROM product titled Census DataPacks. Census DataPacks contain profile data in CSV format and would suit users who need to:

- access profiles for a large number of areas, and
- import profile data and digital boundaries into their own data analysis system.



Each DataPack on CD-ROM is priced at \$115 and includes digital boundaries and the Community Profile data. Call **1300 135 070** to discuss your requirements with an ABS Information Consultant.



# ABS committed to quality data

The ABS is committed to providing Census users with accurate and timely Census data. This commitment is supported by the Census data quality declaration. The declaration provides information about the quality of Census data in terms of its relevance, timeliness, accuracy, coherence, interpretability and accessibility.

Data Quality Statements are also produced for each Census data item. They outline non-response rates for each variable, known quality issues specific to each data item, and comparisons with other ABS data collections, where available.

An up-to-date list of Census data errors and corrections is also available. When data quality issues are identified, changes are reflected on the ABS website detailing the issue, the affected product/s and proposed actions in place to address the issue.

The data quality declaration, data quality statements and list of data errors and corrections are available to view at the [www.abs.gov.au/census](http://www.abs.gov.au/census).



## First Mesh Block data released

On 29 February 2008, the ABS released the total number of dwellings and total population counts for the 2006 Census at Mesh Block level. Mesh Blocks are a new geographical unit which are being developed by the ABS to improve geographical and statistical comparisons and increase data accuracy. Mesh Block data is 'experimental' for the 2006 Census.

Most Mesh Blocks contain 30-60 dwellings compared with an average of 220 dwellings per Census Collection District (CDs).

For more information on Mesh Blocks visit the ABS website [www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au), or email [geography@abs.gov.au](mailto:geography@abs.gov.au).

# INFORMING DECISIONS

## Australian Bureau of Statistics Service Delivery Charter 2008-2011

The new ABS Service Delivery Charter: *Informing Decisions*  
- *Australian Bureau of Statistics Service Delivery Charter*  
2008-2011 was released on 24 January 2008.

The Charter outlines our commitment to providing quality customer service and specifies what our customers can expect when they approach us for statistical or other information through any of our service channels.

In addition to information about the ways in which we can assist our customers in making informed decisions, the Charter also includes a range of performance indicators for which we are accountable. We will report on our performance against these measures in the ABS Annual Report.

The Charter was developed through a process of consultation with ABS clients, customers and staff, and will be reviewed in 2010.

An electronic version of the Charter can be found on the 'About Us' page of our website at [www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au).



# 2006 Census Release Timetable\*

## QuickStats

**First Release:** 27 June 2007

**Second Release:** 25 October 2007

## MapStats

**First Release:** 27 June 2007

**Second Release:** 25 October 2007

## Census Tables

**First Release:** 27 June 2007

Includes Time Series tables for  
Place of Usual Residence

**Second Release:** 25 October 2007

## Community Profiles

- **Basic**

**First Release:** August 2007

**Second Release:** 25 October 2007

- **Indigenous**

**First Release:** August 2007

**Second Release:** 25 October 2007

- **Place of Enumeration**

**First Release:** 25 September 2007

**Second Release:** 27 November 2007

- **Expanded**

**First Release:** 25 September 2007

**Second Release:** 27 November 2007

- **Time Series**

**First Release:** 27 August 2007

**Second Release:** 27 November 2007

- **Working Population**

29 February 2008

## Census DataPacks

**First Release:** from August 2007

**Second Release:** from October 2007

## CDATA Online

**First Release:** TBA

**Second Release:** TBA

## SEIFA 2006

**Preliminary Release:** 18 February - Index of Relative  
Socio-Economic Disadvantage (IRSD) only

**Full SEIFA Release:** 26 March 2008

## TableBuilder

TBA

## Census Sample File

24 June 2008

## Social Atlas Series

17 March 2008

## Picture of the Nation: The Statistician's Report

August 2008

## The Census Dictionary

May 2006

## Census Fact Sheets

Released progressively

## Digital Boundaries

**First Release:** July 2007

**Second Release:** September 2007

\* accurate at the time of printing

## More information required? Use Census Information Consultancy

If the information you require does not appear to be available in the standard product range, please contact an ABS Information Consultant. They can advise you on customised 2006 Census data, tailored to suit your specific needs. Customised Census tables are a priced service and prices will vary depending on the complexity and size of the data tables requested. Call 1300 135 070 or email [client.services@abs.gov.au](mailto:client.services@abs.gov.au) to receive a tailored information solution.



# ABS Offices in your State/Territory

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# FOR MORE INFORMATION

## WEB

Visit [www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au) and follow the Census link to check out new and future Census developments as they happen.

**ABS Statistics  
are FREE online**

## PHONE

Call the National Information and Referral Service on **1300 135 070**.

# census.users@abs.gov.au



The best way to be kept informed of Census data releases and receive the latest news from the Census program is through **census.users@abs.gov.au**.

This free email notification service ensures you are kept up to date with the latest Census developments. Links within the emails will take you to relevant parts of the ABS website for information on current issues and Census data.



## HOW TO JOIN

Simply send an email to [census.users@abs.gov.au](mailto:census.users@abs.gov.au) and type 'add to census email' in the subject field. Your details will automatically be loaded to the alert system.

Take advantage of this fast information service and receive the latest Census news, including the Census Update newsletter, direct to your desktop.

If at any time you wish to stop receiving these informative updates, send an email to the above address and type 'remove from census email' in the subject field.

