

AUSTRALIAN STATISTICS ADVISORY COUNCIL

Annual Report 2015–16



© Commonwealth of Australia 2016

ISSN 01550780

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 2.5 Australia licence. In all cases, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) must be acknowledged as the source when reproducing or quoting any part of an ABS publication or other product.

Please see the ABS website copyright statement for further details.

www.abs.gov.au



AUSTRALIAN STATISTICS ADVISORY COUNCIL

ABS House, 45 Benjamin Way
Belconnen ACT 2617

Locked Bag 10
Belconnen ACT 2616

Telephone: (02) 6252 5315
Email: asac@abs.gov.au

The Hon Michael McCormack MP
Minister for Small Business

I have pleasure in submitting the Annual Report of the Australian Statistics Advisory Council for the year ending 30 June 2016.

The Annual Report outlines the work undertaken by the Council and is submitted to you for presentation to Parliament under sub-section 24(1) of the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975*.

The Annual Report is dated on the day I approved the text for printing.

Geoff Allen AM
Chair

22 September 2016

Australian Statistics Advisory Council



Mission

To ensure that, in keeping with Council's statutory charter, the advice furnished to the Minister and the Statistician, in relation to the collection and dissemination of statistics, has due regard to relative priorities, is objective, relevant, timely, constructive and practical, and that it is sensitive to the needs of both suppliers and users of statistical data.



The Australian Statistics Advisory Council and senior ABS staff with the Australian Statistician, Mr David W. Kalisch, at the meeting in Canberra on 31 March 2016.

Contents



Foreword	vi
----------	----

Chapter

1 About ASAC	1
2 Summary of Activities for 2015-16	3
3 The Year Ahead – 2016-17	9

Appendices

1 Membership of ASAC	14
2 Operation of ASAC	16
3 Agenda for ASAC Meetings	17
4 Freedom of Information Statement	18

Note: After the first reference in this report, the Australian Statistics Advisory Council is referred to as the Council or ASAC and the Australian Bureau of Statistics is referred to as the ABS.

Foreword

The role of ASAC is to provide guidance to the Minister and the Australian Statistician on the directions of, and priorities for, official statistics. This includes addressing the priority to maintain and enhance the quality of official statistics, as well as the improvement, extension and coordination of statistical services provided for public purposes in Australia.

The Council met in November 2015, March 2016 and June 2016, with discussions covering a broad range of topics including the:

- ABS' strategic work program priorities for 2016-17 onward – including the 'digital first' 2016 Census and the Statistical Business Transformation Program
- Operations and role of ASAC and its membership
- Delivering on the ABS' broader organisational transformation agenda
- Challenges and opportunities to modernise Australia's statistical system.



The Chair of ASAC, Geoff Allen AM

In June, the Council participated in a Blue Sky Workshop titled *Over the horizon: Digital disruption, megatrends and the future of official statistics*. The workshop included invited guests from government, academia and the private sector to discuss issues that may impact the future of information and the production and use of data 20 years into the future, and beyond.

ASAC has taken a keen interest in a number of new Government initiatives aimed at expanding data use and availability. These include:

- The Australian Government Public Sector Data Management report which has delivered a valuable roadmap on ways to maximise the potential use of data to achieve efficiencies in government. ASAC recognises and supports the ABS' unique position to contribute its expertise in this area via secure data integration and access to microdata. Through partnerships within Australia's statistical system, the ABS and others are seeking to maximise these opportunities, including exploring opportunities to use private sector data for official statistics.
- The Productivity Commission Inquiry into Data Availability and Use. With a view to developing new policies to increase availability and use of data to encourage innovation and build efficient services, ASAC provided a submission to the Inquiry outlining key issues and providing recommendations.

Whilst these initiatives are encouraging, there is still a need for a coordinated approach to public sector data management. Changes to data availability and sharing must extend to all users and data custodians within the statistical system, including state and territory governments. Failure to do so risks missing opportunities for a richer, more informed and higher quality statistical system. The value of partnerships and collaboration has become integral to successful initiatives in open data and data integration across the statistical system. However, even these partnerships need oversight to avoid duplication of effort; open up siloed initiatives; and to minimise reporting burden on Australia's people and businesses.

The Council has been pleased to see progress by the ABS on its organisational transformation agenda. ASAC has provided feedback on the ABS' engagement strategy and the improvements with stakeholder relationships. It has also provided comment on ABS strategies to minimise statistical risk to ensure high quality, coherent and fit for purpose official economic, population, social and environmental statistics.

The ABS' new approaches to its statistical business, including data integration and the digital Census, have been welcomed by ASAC. The Council acknowledges the ABS' achievements to date and remains confident that the transformation will ensure the ABS is better positioned to meet the information needs of today's economy and changing society.

Membership

It has been another busy year for the Council. I would like to thank Council members for their dedication and counsel concerning Australia's statistics. I would like to acknowledge and thank the Hon Alex Hawke MP, for his support of the ABS and his interest in the Council as the Assistant Minister to the Treasurer, particularly his support for a digital Census. I would also like to acknowledge and thank the Hon Kelly O'Dwyer MP for her early recognition of the need to bring improvements to the Australian statistical system and her support of the ABS as the Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasurer.

The Council has seen a number of changes to its membership this year with the terms of Dr James Moody, Dr David Johnson, Mr Bruce Michael, Mr Michael Court, Mr Antony Skinner, Mr Matthew Quillinan, Mr Anhi Vong and Professor Lisa Jackson-Pulver AM ending.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank departing members for their contributions to the work of the Council. The work Council members undertake to support the activities of the ABS, and further the development of the Australian statistical system, is highly valued.

In particular, I'd like to acknowledge the contributions of long-term members: Dr James Moody who served on the Council for 11 years and Dr David Johnson who served for 5 years; their ongoing commitment to the Council over many years has been greatly appreciated.

I would also like to welcome Mr Nigel Ray, Mr Kurt Sibma, Dr Luci Ellis, Mr Stephen Walters, Professor Deborah Cobb-Clark, Ms Lisa Gropp, Professor Judith Sloan, Mr Mark Johnstone and Mr Craig Graham who formally joined the Council in the past year, and Mr Chris McGowan who was renominated; their combined experience and expertise will add many benefits to the Council.

I convey my appreciation to the ABS staff members who provide secretariat services to the Council, arranging our meetings each year and administering ASAC memberships.

After 10 years, I will be retiring from the position of ASAC Chair in 2017. I wish ASAC, and all participants in the Australian statistical system, well in future. Throughout my tenure, ASAC has been concerned that resource constraints have caused a slow erosion of capacity within the ABS. Whilst pleased to note Government's contribution of significant funds towards the ABS' transformation, ASAC continues to express concern about the suboptimal use of resources across the statistical system. Better use of resources across all governments can be achieved through more effective national statistical collaboration.

During my remaining tenure as ASAC Chair, I look forward continuing to work with the Council, the Minister for Small Business, the Australian Statistician, State and Territory Governments and other key stakeholders in Australia's statistical system to build a richer portfolio of official statistics for Australia.

This report will be available on the Council website (www.asac.gov.au), which also contains information about the Council, including meetings, functions and membership.

Geoff Allen AM
Chair

Chapter 1

About ASAC



Chapter 1

About ASAC



ASAC was established by the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975*.

Under subsection 18(1) of the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975*, the Council is to advise the Minister and the Australian Statistician on:

- (a) the improvement, extension and co-ordination of statistical services provided for public purposes in Australia;*
- (b) annual and longer term priorities and programs of work that should be adopted in relation to major aspects of the provision of those statistical services; and*
- (c) any other matters relating generally to those statistical services.*

The Act enables the Minister and/or the Australian Statistician to seek the advice of Council on these matters. The Council works closely with the Australian Statistician and the Council Chair meets regularly with the Minister to ensure advice and assistance is readily available to them.

The Act provides that the Council shall consist of a part-time Chair, the Australian Statistician (ex officio), and between ten and 22 part-time members, including one nominee from each State Premier or Territory Chief Minister. The responsible Minister appoints the Council Chair for five years and members for periods of up to three years. Members are eligible for reappointment when their membership expires. The membership of the Council as at 30 June 2016 is detailed at Appendix 1.

Subsection 24(1) of the Act provides that: *the Council shall, as soon as practicable after 30 June in each year, prepare and submit to the Minister, for presentation to the Parliament, a report relating to matters connected with the operation of this Act.*

Chapter 2

Summary of Activities for 2015–16



Chapter 2

Summary of Activities for 2015–16



The Council held three meetings during 2015-16, on 10 November 2015, 31 March 2016 and 21 June 2016 as well as a Blue Sky Workshop on 20 June 2016 (see Appendix 3 for agenda listings).

Australia's statistical system and ASAC's Role

ASAC has, for a number of years, considered reform of the statistical system a high priority. Over the last year, ASAC discussed the vast amount of data available across governments and how to prioritise and make best use of it. The Council advised on a range of issues.

- ASAC noted a new level of cooperation between agencies in the statistical system; for example, a number of Commonwealth partners are working on the Multi-agency Data Integration Project (MADIP), which is proving to be a key foundational project for informing how more data could be integrated across time and sectors.
- Data integration is viewed by ASAC as an important way of making better use of public sector data, with the Council supportive of the unique position held by ABS to add value through its expertise. The Council strongly advocated for further development and acceleration of data integration activities.

An ASAC submission to the Reform of Federation process did not proceed (as indicated in the last annual report). Instead, the Council took opportunities to heighten awareness of cross-jurisdictional benefits arising from the changing public sector data landscape. Members urged a more targeted approach to demonstrating the value of improving statistical coordination and national standards.

The Chair of ASAC actively engaged with Minister Hawke to provide ASAC's advice on issues around reform. The Chair also liaised with the Secretary of Prime Minister & Cabinet about ASAC's role and reform activities, as well as the gains that can be realised from the inclusion of states and territories in the reform process as custodians of public data.

The Council provided advice to the ABS on the challenges of the changing data landscape, including its role in leading a collaborative approach to fully realise the value of statistics in a dynamic data environment. ASAC highlighted these issues through exploring international examples e.g. Statistics New Zealand transformation lessons, and submission to the Productivity Commission Inquiry into Data Availability and Use.

ASAC discussed the need for official statistics to remain relevant in a changing environment and flagged a need to examine measures of productivity and emerging areas in the economy in more detail. The Council also supports the ABS' priority to ensure the ongoing quality of key official statistics, particularly main economic indicators of Consumer Price Index, National Accounts, Labour Force Statistics and Estimated Resident Population; and key social surveys that inform significant public policy issues including health, disability and social services. These priorities will be addressed in 2016-17.

ASAC members provided advice about new possibilities and opportunities for ABS to leverage with partners within the statistical system, now and into the future. Specifically, the Council sees benefit in maximising the ABS' ability to:

- Create relevant statistics in a changing external environment
- Seek out new data sources from both government and non-government partners
- Make effective use of existing methods, systems, legislation, etc.
- Build support for a more integrated national statistical system.

ASAC continued to work closely with the ABS to progress the Essential Statistical Assets for Australia initiative. The focus in 2015-16 was on Essential Statistical Infrastructure (ESI). Results of consultation were released in February 2016 and highlighted barriers to optimal data use previously noted by ASAC e.g. statistical standards (Essential Statistical Assets for Australia, 2015 cat. no. 1395.0).

2016 Census of Population and Housing

ASAC has monitored progress of Census 2016 and consistently noted the preparations for the predominately 'digital first' Census were on track. Census preparations and relevant strategies featured in discussion at each ASAC meeting in 2015-16.

The Council discussed, and provided its advice on, the proposal to hold a Census every 10 years, which had been before Government in late 2014 and early 2015. ASAC noted the merits of a decennial Census, complemented by adequate resourcing for household, population and other relevant surveys to ensure delivery of quality official statistics. Members have played an active role in discussions regarding retention of personal identifiers from the 2016 Census and the associated Privacy Impact Assessment.

ASAC members were generally supportive of the ABS' final decision to retain name and address information for up to four years, seeing it as a means to realising optimal value from data integration activities. Members have also provided advice to the ABS on the importance of gaining public support for these changes.

Productivity Commission Inquiry into Data Availability and Use

The Council believes that significant costs can be saved over time, and the quality of information available to decision makers enhanced, by improving the availability and use of data within and across all levels of government in Australia.

It is the Council's position that, overall, Australia's information and statistical system is not being used optimally to inform decisions. Accordingly, ASAC's submission to the Inquiry drew attention to three major issues:

- Duplication and uncoordinated data collection resulting in unnecessary burden and suboptimal use of data
- Suboptimal levels of statistical and analytical capability resulting in underutilisation of data
- Insufficient governance arrangements for the statistical system in Australia resulting in inefficient practices.

To address these issues (and others) inhibiting data availability and use, ASAC's key recommendation was that governments should work through data governance arrangements as a priority for investment.

Blue Sky Workshop

ASAC's commitment to highlighting current issues enabled the Council to also remain cognisant of long term impacts; this awareness gave rise to the Blue Sky Workshop, which will inform ASAC's thinking regarding strategic advice to the ABS and the wider statistical system.

In June 2016, ASAC members sponsored and hosted a Blue Sky Workshop titled *Over the horizon: Digital disruption, megatrends and the future of official statistics*. The workshop included invited guests from government, academia and the private sector to discuss issues that may impact the future of information and production and use of data 20 years into the future.

Themes raised in the workshop included:

- The impact changes in the economy, technology and data will have on people and the digital economy
- The increasing volume and granularity of data available from the "Internet of things"
- How we might gain more value from data for policy, innovation and productivity
- Optimising new non-government and government data, and utilising other sources of data
- Taking a different approach to thinking about, and solving, problems i.e. considering multiple scenarios and strategies for deriving solutions.

Changes in the data landscape will have implications for national statistics and other information insights. ASAC members provided advice to ABS on how to balance an expectation that ABS still produce core, competent official statistics whilst capitalising on the opportunity to maximise the value of data through data integration. The Council also suggested that there is an opportunity for ABS to partner with others to provide additional insights through tools and advisory services.

ABS Transformation Agenda

ASAC has continued to provide feedback to the ABS as it moves forward with its transformation agenda. In 2016, a number of Council members participated in ABS' independent Stakeholder Relationship Health Assessment and discussed the findings during one of its Council meetings.

ASAC provided input into the ABS' consideration of the benefits of new methods and increased exploitation of big data as part of statistical transformation. Members have provided advice on plans to consolidate and integrate business surveys and implement the Australian Population survey in conjunction with Census and administrative data.

The Council also noted the benefits realised through recent reviews of ABS policies and internal governance, including new access arrangements and partnerships. These reviews, supported by contemporary advice on the ABS' legislation, should increase efficiency and effectiveness of ABS operations as well as improve stakeholder relationships.

ABS Forward Work Program

The Council discussed the ABS 2016–17 work program, noting the following priorities:

- Delivering the Census of Population and Housing – preparations for August 9 were underway and tracking well
- Delivering and maintaining the quality of key statistics – in particular, population estimates and major economic indicators
- Investing in microdata and integrated data – to enable better decision making for policy makers and the community
- Transforming the ABS for the future – in particular, the Statistical Business Transformation Program and broader organisational transformation.

Members provided their support for these priorities, whilst also expressing an appetite for capturing more social and economic trends in the ABS forward work program. These include the need for better measures on productivity and national savings, insights into the performance of the service sector, and measures that will keep pace with the changing structure of the economy.

ASAC acknowledged the progress made by the ABS to deliver and maintain the quality of key statistics through effective management of statistical risk. Members were briefed on development towards cultural change and adoption of refreshed, nuanced approaches with clear accountability for risks.

The Council welcomes the ABS' increased focus on partnerships, improved access to microdata and achievements in flagship data integration projects – consistent with the wider transformation agenda. ASAC acknowledged the consultative approach the ABS has adopted to determine its work program through early and in-depth engagement with ASAC and other stakeholders.

The ABS welcomed the active role of the Council during 2016-17 forward work program discussions and continues to seek a stronger role from ASAC members in helping to shape and prioritise the ABS work program in future years.

ASAC Role and Operations

At the March 2016 meeting, the Council considered the role and operations of ASAC for 2016. A 2016 'Statement of Intent' outlining the role of ASAC and its operations and priorities for 2016 was endorsed by members.

Members also considered the balance of ASAC membership and gave support to further discussions between the Chair and the Minister and states/territories on this issue.

Consideration was also given to the alignment with the State Statistical Forum, with discussion on the important role of state and territory members in providing feedback on ASAC discussions to State Statistical Forum members.

Chapter 3

The Year Ahead 2016–17



Chapter 3

The Year Ahead – 2016-17



ASAC members have agreed on the following issues as Council priorities in 2016-17:

Reform of Australia's Statistical System

The outcomes of the 2016 Blue Sky Workshop will inform ASAC as it advises the Minister and the ABS on its role in both 2016 and beyond. ASAC's contribution to the continued reform of Australia's statistical system will align with the changing data landscape and the need for:

- Improved data standards
- New approaches to reduce duplication in creating data
- Increased access to data
- Standardised definitions for improved comparability of statistics from different sources
- Improving sharing and use of non-government and government data sources, and utilising other sources of data.

New approaches will enhance productivity and improve policy making for a better Australia. The Council will actively support ABS in its role going forward in terms of being responsive to government need and deploying capability to optimise data.

ASAC will identify opportunities and strategies to improve the coordination and effectiveness of Australia's statistical system, supporting initiatives such as:

- Stronger alignment with, and application of, the UN Fundamental Principles of Statistics by all levels of government in Australia. This should include further discussion and agreement between the Commonwealth and states and territories to maximise the development of administrative data for official statistical purposes through sharing and statistical data integration.
- All governments working towards establishing governance arrangements for the statistical system, providing coordinating arrangements for data initiatives which highlight both opportunities for, and the obligations of, all parties.

Census of Population and Housing 2016

ASAC has traditionally played an important and valuable role in relation to the five yearly Census of Population and Housing. In 2016–17, ASAC continued to assist the ABS in achieving its plans for a digital Census for the 2016 Census of Population and Housing. ASAC was regularly briefed and felt comfortable with directions. Members provided advice and advocated strong support for the Census to encourage participation.

ABS Forward Work Program Priorities

The ABS has implemented a new approach to determining the ABS statistical forward work program, which includes publishing a work program prioritisation document, using a tier categorisation process as part of the 2016-17 Forward Work Program publication. The ABS will be engaging with governments, users and other stakeholders on the prioritisation. Following the consultation, the ABS will seek input from ASAC and the Australian Government into the final determination of the statistical forward work program.

The priorities agreed by ASAC for the ABS Forward Work Program in 2016-17 are:

- Delivering the Census of Population and Housing – with a predominantly ‘digital first’ approach
- Delivering and maintaining the quality of key statistics – in particular, managing statistical risk to maintain and improve the quality of key major economic indicators and population statistics
- Investing in microdata and integrated data – to enhance data use and availability, through initiatives such as Data Integration
- Transforming the ABS for the future – through the Statistical Business Transformation Program and the broader organisational transformation agenda.

In 2016–17, the Council agrees the need for a continued high priority and low tolerance for risk for the National Accounts, Consumer Price Index, Labour Force Statistics and Estimated Resident Population. The Council will continue to provide the ABS with the benefit of members’ advice on appropriate strategies to manage risk without stifling innovation and collaboration.

ASAC will continue to support the ABS in its case to develop an extensive data integration resource, akin to the New Zealand Integrated Data Infrastructure provided by Statistics New Zealand. The Council sees a need for recognition by government that the ABS is uniquely positioned as an institution to maximise data for public benefit, and that it possesses the appropriate capability to provide this function.

ABS will take action to address the results of the 2016 Stakeholder Relationship Health Assessment over the coming year. The Council will continue to provide feedback on the progress toward improved and effective stakeholder relationships.

Government Data Reform Agendas

ASAC will maintain a watching brief over government data reform agendas, including the outcomes of the Productivity Commission Inquiry into Data Availability and Use. The Council will also monitor key data initiatives, particularly at the Commonwealth and State/Territory level (such as the NSW Data Sharing (Government Sector) Bill, 2015), with a view to maximising opportunities enabled by these.

Emerging International Developments

ASAC will maintain a watching brief over key international statistical systems and international government data reform agendas such as the Integrated Data Infrastructure (IDI) in New Zealand, the United Kingdom approach to better use of government data through data sharing and the digital economy, the progress of review of the New Zealand Statistics Act (1975), and the Peer Review Report on Sweden's National Statistical System (2015), to identify potential benefits applicable to Australia's statistical system.

Appendices



Appendix 1

Membership of ASAC



Member	Date first appointed
Mr Geoff Allen AM Director, ACIL Allen Consulting	1 March 2007
Mr David W. Kalisch Australian Statistician (ex officio)	15 December 2014
Professor Deborah Cobb-Clark University of Sydney	2 November 2015
Dr Luci Ellis Head of Financial Stability Department Reserve Bank of Australia	2 November 2015
Ms Kathy Goth Director, Economic and Financial Analysis Branch, Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate	1 Oct 2014
Mr Craig Graham Acting Under Treasurer, Northern Territory Department of Treasury and Finance	26 April 2016
Ms Lisa Gropp Chief Economist Business Council of Australia	2 November 2015
Mr Mark Johnstone Acting Deputy Secretary, Economic Division, Victorian Department of Treasury and Finance	26 April 2016
Mr Chris McGowan Director, National and State Reporting, Cabinet Office, South Australian Department of Premier and Cabinet	22 May 2011
Mr Nigel Ray PSM Deputy Secretary, Macroeconomic Group The Treasury	2 November 2015
Mr Kurt Sibma Acting Director Western Australian Department of Treasury	9 July 2015
Professor Judith Sloan University of Melbourne	2 November 2015

Member	Date first appointed
Mr Stephen Walters Chief Economist Australian Institute of Company Directors (AICD)	2 November 2015
Mr Anton Voss Deputy Secretary, Economic and Financial Policy Division Tasmanian Department of Treasury and Finance	14 July 2014

Changes in Membership between 1 July 2015 and 30 June 2016

The following members left ASAC during 2015-16 (either because they retired, resigned or their terms expired):

Mr Anhi Vong
Mr Bruce Michael
Dr David Johnson
Mr Matthew Quillinan
Mr Michael Court
Dr James Moody
Mr Antony Skinner
Professor Lisa Jackson Pulver AM

Appendix 2

Operation of ASAC



The Australian Statistics Advisory Council was established by the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975*.

The Chair of the Council receives an annual fee, set by the Remuneration Tribunal, and members are reimbursed their travel costs, where applicable. Apart from the Chair, no members receive remuneration for serving on the Council.

Secretariat services for ASAC are provided by the ABS. The office of ASAC Secretary is held by the Program Manager, Strategic Policy Branch. Secretariat support provided by the ABS includes organising and recording meetings, administering membership and the members' website, and the preparation of the Council's Annual Report.

All costs outlined above are met from within the ABS Budget.

Appendix 3

Agenda for ASAC Meetings



10 November 2015 Meeting – Agenda

1. Introduction and Chairperson's Report
2. Statistician's Report
3. Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet – Public Sector Data Management Initiative
4. Modernising the Statistical System
5. ABS Statistical Transformation Directions
6. Update on 2016 Census Preparations
7. ASAC 2016 Priorities – Blue Sky Conference
8. Bringing Forward Member Issues
9. Members Closed Session

31 March 2016 Meeting – Agenda

1. Introduction and Chairperson's Report
2. Statistician's Report
3. Australia's Statistical System: Challenges and Opportunities including discussion on the Blue Sky Workshop
4. ABS Work Program Priorities over the Next Four Years
5. Census Update: Retention of Names and Addresses
6. ASAC's Role and Operations in 2016
7. Bringing Forward Member Issues
8. Members Closed Session

21 June 2016 Meeting - Agenda

1. Introduction and Chairperson's Report
2. Statistician's Report
3. Update on Delivering the 2016 Census of Population and Housing
4. Statistics New Zealand Transformation
5. Delivering and Maintaining the Quality of Key Statistics – Managing Statistical Risk
6. Transforming ABS for the Future - Strengthening External Partnerships
7. Update on Productivity Commission Inquiry into Data Availability and Use
8. ABS Functional and Efficiency Review
9. ASAC Business – Blue Sky Workshop wrap up
10. Bringing Forward Member Issues
11. Members Closed Session

Appendix 4

Freedom of Information Statement



Below is a statement, as required by section 8 of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*, about the structure of ASAC and how members of the public can obtain access to information held by it.

Establishment, organisation and functions

For information regarding the establishment, organisation and function of ASAC see Chapter 1 – About ASAC.

Powers

As an advisory body, ASAC has no decision-making or other powers directly affecting members of the public. It does not administer any enactments or schemes.

Arrangements for outside participation

ASAC members are appointed by the Minister responsible for the ABS so that a broad range of views and interests are reflected in the advice that it offers to the Minister and the Australian Statistician. For membership details see Appendix 1.

Persons or bodies outside the Australian Government administration may participate in the Council's policy formulation by making representations to the Minister or the Chair on matters of concern to them.

Categories of documents

The ASAC Annual Report, which is tabled in Parliament, is available from all ABS offices, and on the ASAC and ABS websites. The ABS maintains files, on behalf of ASAC, which contain documents relating to: the administration of the Council; papers discussed at Council meetings; summary records of proceedings of meetings; and correspondence relating to the activities of the Council.

Freedom of information procedures and initial contact points

All inquiries concerning access to documents, including inquiries under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*, may be directed on weekdays, between 8.30am and 4.30pm, to -

Secretary

Australian Statistics Advisory Council
c/- Australian Bureau of Statistics
Locked Bag 10
Belconnen ACT 2616

Telephone: 02 6252 5315

