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## Population Census and Household Surveys **Australia**

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# Population Census and Household Surveys in Australia

## Session Outline

- Background on the Australian Census
- Role of the Census in the calculation of Population Estimates and Projections
- Demographic challenges
- Census as the cornerstone of Australia's Social Statistics Program
- Promoting the use of Census data
- Directions for the 2011 Australian Census and beyond

# Background on the Australian Census

- Population and Housing Census held every 5 years
  - high rates of population growth and mobility
  - benchmark for population estimates and projections
  - main source of data for small areas and small populations
- Census collection methodology
  - 9 million households, 20 million people
  - 50 personal questions, 10 dwelling questions
  - drop-off, pick-up for most
  - mail back for 9% in 2006
  - eCensus for 9% in 2006
  - collector based for a small minority
- Australia's 16<sup>th</sup> Census will be held in August 2011

# Population estimates

- Estimated Resident Population
  - Australia's official Population measure
  - benchmarked against each Census
  - updated and published quarterly
  - based on the concept of usual residence
    - ✓ Census counts adjusted for net undercount,
    - ✓ residents temporarily overseas and
    - ✓ timing differences
  - determine parliamentary representation
  - used in the design of electoral boundaries
  - used to determine distribution of GST (funding)

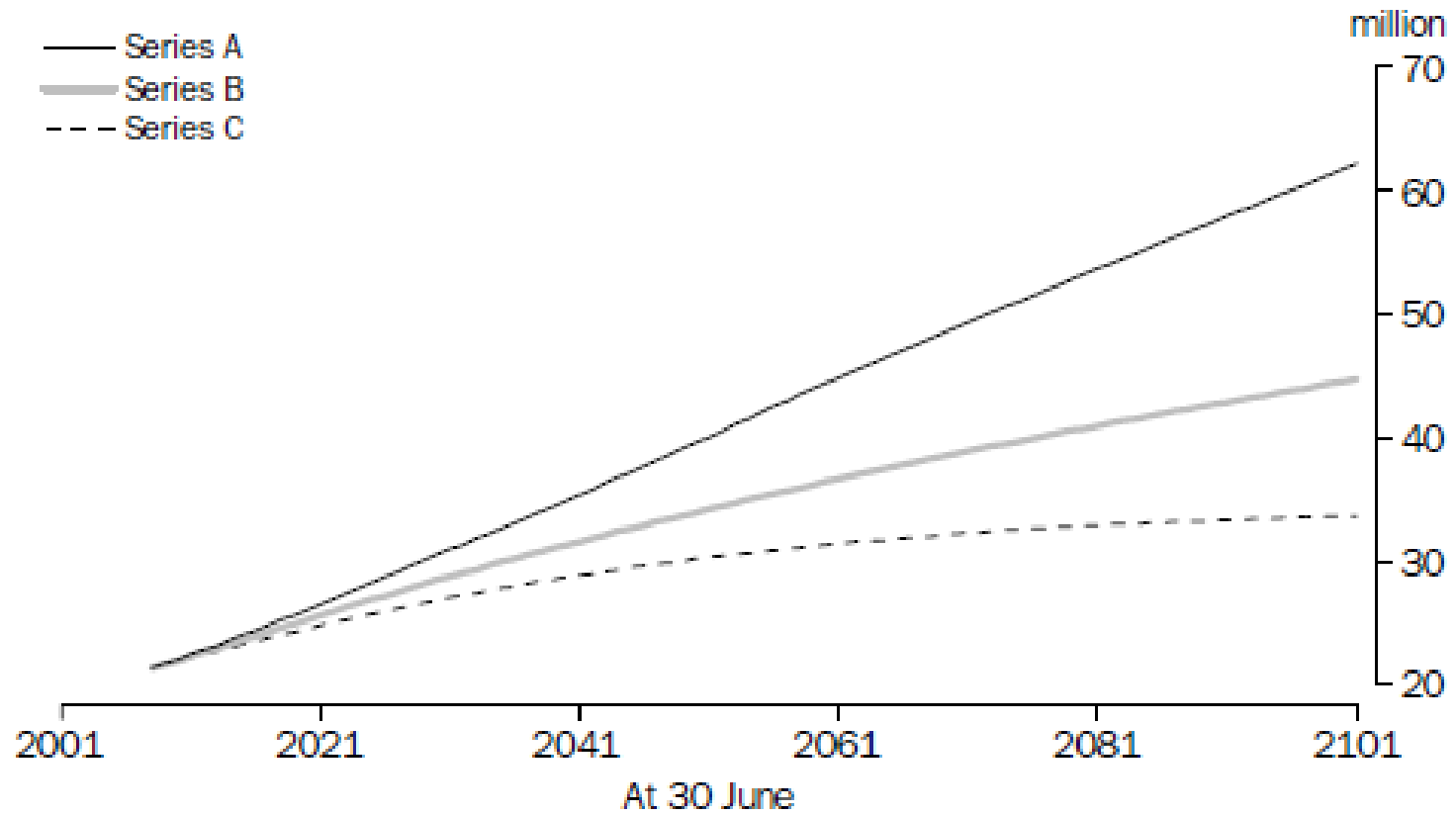
# Population projections

- produced twice between Censuses
- illustrates the change in population which would occur if certain assumptions about future levels of fertility, mortality, and migration prevail
- 3 series produced with different assumptions
- critical input to planning of infrastructure and services

# MAIN PROJECTION SERIES, Australia

ASSUMPTIONS				PROJECTED POPULATION AT 30 JUNE			
			<i>Life expectancy at birth (a)</i>				
<i>Total fertility rate (b)</i>	<i>Net overseas migration (c)</i>			<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>2056</i>	<i>2101</i>
babies per woman	persons	years	years	million	million		
Series A	2.0	220 000	93.9	96.1	42.5	62.2	
Series B	1.8	180 000	85.0	88.0	35.5	44.7	
Series C	1.6	140 000	85.0	88.0	30.9	33.7	

## PROJECTED POPULATION, Australia



# Demographic Challenges

- increasing rates of people who have more than one residence
- a heightened mobility of the population
- growing numbers of migrants from non-English speaking backgrounds
- difficulties associated with enumerating Indigenous populations, and
- a rising proportion of dwellings which were identified as being occupied, but from which no completed Census Forms were returned.

# Social Statistics Framework

Social Statistics Framework built around 2 key dimensions

- ✓ areas of social concern
  - eg population, health, housing, work, education and training, family and community, crime and justice, culture and leisure
- ✓ key population groups
  - eg children, youth, older people, long-term unemployed, lone parents, low income earners, indigenous people, etc

# Census as the cornerstone of the Social Statistics Program

- key information about the size and characteristics of populations in small areas and small population groups (which survey samples generally cannot support).
- base data used to select samples for household surveys
- essential sample design information for household surveys focussing on small populations (e.g. indigenous peoples)
- critical population counts which support estimation methodologies for household surveys, and

## Options

- Census not always the best source
  - not suitable for in depth analysis of a particular topic due to the number of questions that need to be asked
  - unsuitability of self enumeration methodology for complex topics
- Household Surveys better for
  - in-depth focus on particular topics
  - where complex question modules are required
  - where trained interviewers are required
- Administrative data even better
  - Where available, consistent, reliable

# Promoting the Use of Census Data

- Most Census data now released via the Web
- Quickstats
- Mapstats
- Individual tables
- Community profiles
- CDATA Online
- TableBuilder
- 1% and 5% Sample File
- Australian Statistician's Report
- Census Data Enhancement

## Directions for the 2011 Australian Census

- focus on improved field operations to address rising levels of underenumeration
- particular attention on enumeration of indigenous populations and northern Australia
- variable workload structures depending on complexity with a view to improved enumeration outcomes
- increased advertising, particularly after the Census
- aiming for 20% eCensus take-up rate.

## Directions for 2016 Census

- continuing attention to strategies to minimise underenumeration
- possible new approach to field operations in the context of significant eCensus coverage
- implementation of the new statistical Geography
- further development of output products and use of Webservices
- build on the Statistical Longitudinal dataset, the release of Tablebuilder and the 5% Sample File.

# Questions