Wiesbaden Group on Business Registers -
International Roundtable on Business Survey Frames

Country progress report 2015 and future plans

Country:

> **Australia**

Reporter:

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Institution:

> Australian Bureau of Statistics

I. Organisation, Population and Usage of the Statistical Business Register

1. Name of the register

> ABS Business Register

2. Name of the organisation responsible for holding the register

> Australian Buearu of Statistics

3. Position of the register unit in the organisation

> Part of the Statistical Services Group

4. Number of employees in the register unit (Headcount employees)

> 63

5. Primary goal and use of the register

> Survey frames and business demography

6. Year of establishment of the register

> 1970s

7. Year(s) of the main re-engineeering(s) of the register

> 2002, 1998, 1985

8. Number of active enterprises* in the register at the end of 2015
   *If it is difficult to use Enterprises, you can use Legal units instead.

Enterprises:	Legal units: 2.2 million (active units)

II. Progress and Developments in the Past Year
Please list main achievements (maximum 3) in the past year (2015) or the problems you have tackled.

1. Short title of work which was done

Development of the new ABS Business Register conceptual model

Description of work (max 4-5 sentences)

> The ABS has embarked on a significant organisational transformation program. To underpin the economic statistics strategy a new ABS Business Register conceptual model has been developed. There has also been work done on the future maintenance and outputs strategies. Work is continuing on the strategy to support data linking under the new model.

2. Short title of work which was done

Migration of the Survey of International Investment (SII) frame to the ABS Business Register

Description of work (max 4-5 sentences)

The SII is a legal entity based collection. For convenience the SII requests consolidated data from all Legal Entities within an Enterprise Group that are classified to the same insitutional sector. This work has involved matching SII units to the ABSBR, remediating the ABSBR to include SII stratification variables, populating the ABSBR with the SII information and developing the new survey frame. This has been the first migration of a legal entity-based collection to the ABSBR.

3. Short title of work which was done

Statitical unit / Legal entity mapping

Description of work (max 4-5 sentences)

Mappings have now been completed and quality improvements are continuing.

III. Future plans

Please list themes/projects (maximum 3) which you plan to tackle in the current (2016) and following year(s).

1. Short title of work planned

Pilot combing profiling and editing functions

Description of work (max 4-5 sentences)

The Business Register Unit and the Annual Industry Survey team have created a joint team to undertake a pilot study to investigate how profiling and editing activities can be combined. The aim of this project is to identify how a joint team could improve quality, achieve efficiencies and reduce provider burden.

2. Short title of work planned

Location statistical units

Description of work (max 4-5 sentences)

The revised version of the ABS Economic Units Model released in 2013 reinstated the location. External sources of business locations have been assessed however there is no source that that has an acceptable level of coverage. Work is continuing with a key administrative source to improve their data locations data quality, plus some modelling approaches will also be investigated.

3. Short title of work planned

Expanded and outwardly facing ABS Business Register

Description of work (max 4-5 sentences)

Significant re-engineering of the ABS Business Register will be undertaken over the next 2 years in order to support the new ABS Business Register conceptual model. The key outcomes will be: * an expanded and outward facing ABS Business Register   * an ABS Business Register that is the integrating spine for firm level data to support   * an ABS Business Register that supports regional and longitudinal outputs

IV. Main challenges

Please list main challenges (maximum 3) with respect to development, maintenance and use of your statistical business register.

1. Main challenge 1

Staffing availability

Description of the challenge

The ABS budget is tight and there has been little recruitment in recent years with capable staff in demand throughout the organisation. There is an emerging requirement for BRU staff to have strong analysis and technical skills. The BRU needs to attract competent staff and to retain them.

2. Main challenge 2

Transformation program

Description of the challenge

Organisational transformation, including re-engineering of the ABSBR will be complex and will need to be delivered within a fixed budget and timeframe while maintaining the core work program. Expected challenges include project managing multiple work streams and building staff capbility in shorter timeframes than the current expectations. Significant remediation work on the ABS Business Register is required in preparation for this re-engineering.

3. Main challenge 3

Quality of source stock information

Description of the challenge

Legal entity-based industry and some other coding are maintained by the Australian Business Register (ABR) which is part of the Australian Taxation Office. The BRU has an ongoing work program with the ABR to improve the quality of industry coding. There are now plans for new ABN registrations to also be offered through a whole of government website and accounting software. Industry coding via these mechanisms will need to be carefully monitored.