

## Biggest-ever census covers nine million households

It was a project that touched everyone in Australia. It was an enormous task. It was a great success. ABS staff throughout Australia, aided by some 30,000 specially-recruited field employees, involved more than nine million households, as well as travellers, holidaymakers, and the homeless, in the 2001 Census.

And it's not over yet.

The years of work that resulted in the successful delivery and collection of census forms in every city, town, rural area and remote location in which Australians live, work and play will lead to further years of dedicated activity processing the masses of data collected, to guide decision-makers in planning for the future.

For census field staff both in Central

and remote areas, the 2001 Census was a unique experience. It was a chance to meet and talk to nine million households about when the census form was to be delivered, completed and collected; the job opportunities; the topics to be raised; the privacy provisions; the reasons why Australia needed the Census, and the changes that had occurred since the last census held in 1996.

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need for unprecedented levels of staff preparation over a number of years.

The 2001 Census saw redesigned manuals and training material as well as significant changes to the recruitment and payment procedures for the many field staff.

The Census Inquiry Service handled around 500,000 inquiries over the census period.

Regional Office staff appreciated the greater freedom to organise their own field operations to meet local needs.

It was also a massive communications effort involving extensive national advertising, media liaison, publishing and inquiry services. The task was to inform more than

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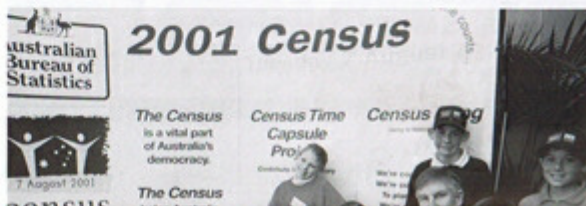
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The Australian Statistician, Dennis Twinn, attending a demonstration of the census education CD-ROM. A tale of Two Worlds, at Old Parliament House in Canberra on 30 July. Among the students from Miles Franklin Public School were some ABS staff children: Emma Den Hartog, Alexandra James and Oliver Palmer (L-R, front row).

## Key Indigenous health and welfare publication launched in Sydney

A major event at Sydney's Powerhouse Museum on 30 August saw special recognition given to the members of a small unit in the ABS Northern Territory Office: the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health and Welfare Information Unit.

The Unit is located within the ABS's National Centre for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics.

The occasion was the launching of *The Health and Welfare of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples*, the third in a series of biennial reports prepared by ABS jointly with the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW).

Members of the media joined some 100 invited guests when Rob Edwards, as acting Australian Statistician, outlined the challenges involved in gathering data about Indigenous Australians, and the ABS's strategy for improving Indigenous statistics, currently being implemented in a range of collections.

Mr Edwards introduced the Director-General of the NSW

Department of Health, Mr Michael Reid, who officially launched the publication and formally handed it to Ms Barbara Flick, a member of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Council.

Guests were given a tour of the museum's contemporary Indigenous communications exhibition, *Baragool*, following the launch.

(L-R) Rob Edwards, Barbara Flick, Richard Madden and Michael Reid at the launch at the Powerhouse Museum in Sydney.



The Minister for Financial Services and Regulation, Mr Joe Hockey, launching the Census communications campaign in Darwin on 25 July.

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