



ABS Submission to Senate Select Committee on Regional and Remote Indigenous Communities

1.0 Introduction

To assess the impact and effectiveness of government policies on the wellbeing of regional and remote Indigenous communities, high quality evidence that is comparable over time and across jurisdictions is required. Targets will only provide motivators for improvement if there is data to show whether or not they are being met. Good data also provide the broader evidence base for understanding what interventions might be successful, and in which locations and situations.

- 2 High quality data is collected when enumeration procedures are culturally appropriate and the Indigenous community is highly engaged in the statistical process. To avoid increasing respondent load, a focus on improving the quality of existing collections (statistical and administrative), rather than developing new collections, is required. High quality data in administrative data collections are attained through the application of appropriate data management principles, including the use of agreed definitions and classifications.
- 3 Statistical collections and administrative collections both provide data useful for evaluation purposes. Throughout this submission, statistical collections refer to data collected solely for statistical purposes, such as sample surveys and censuses, while administrative collections refer to data collected in the process of administering or evaluating a government or community program or service (i.e. the data are a by-product of an administration process).
- 4 This submission presents the statistical and administrative data collections currently available to support the inquiry into regional and remote Indigenous communities, and highlights key areas where an improved focus in government activity could substantially enhance the quality of these data collections, leading to better evidence for decision-making.
- 5 The key areas for such improvement, if funding were available, would be:
 - An improved Census of Population and Housing. See paragraph 16 and 17 below.
 - An improved engagement strategy to work with Indigenous communities both in the collection and in the use of data. The purpose and elements of this strategy are set out in paragraphs 18 and 19 below.
 - An improved means of coordinating government funded collections and surveys across Indigenous communities, to achieve a more integrated set

- of information, of higher quality, with less duplication and with a lower overall respondent load. See paragraphs 20 and 33 below.
- Continued efforts by all governments to improve the identification of Indigenous peoples in administrative datasets, and the data management and accessibility of such datasets for statistical purposes. See paragraphs 26 to 32 below.
- 6 One of the legislated functions of the ABS (ABS ACT 1975) is to ensure coordination of the operations of government agencies in the collection, compilation and dissemination of statistics and related information. This includes avoiding duplication in information collection, attaining compatibility between statistics compiled by agencies, and maximising utilisation of information available for statistical purposes. As such, the ABS has a strong interest in each of the above areas.
- 7 While this submission focusses on data sources relevant to Indigenous people living in regional and remote areas, the ABS also notes the need for appropriate analysis that takes account of the quality of the available data. For example, high quality data for analysis at the individual community level is generally difficult to collect and to interpret in a meaningful way. So, analytical approaches need to consider which level of geographic detail best addresses particular research questions, recognising that there may need to be trade-offs between relevance and data quality.

2.0 Data sources

- 8 Statistical and administrative collections exist that are relevant to most of the areas of further work identified by the committee, including the NTER, housing, alcohol and substance use, CDEP, mental health, education, Indigenous enterprise and employment. To assist the committee with understanding the range of data available to support the inquiry, **Appendix 1** provides a listing of relevant statistical and administrative collections.
- 9 The ABS has a well-established, regular program of Indigenous-specific statistical collections.
- Census of Population and Housing: The five-yearly Census continues to be the centrepiece of the ABS Indigenous statistics work program, providing a wide range of socioeconomic information on housing, income, employment, education and language for Indigenous people across Australia. It is the best statistical source for socioeconomic information for regional and remote Indigenous communities.
 - National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS) and National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey (NATSIHS): The ABS household survey program includes two specific Indigenous sample surveys - the six-yearly NATSISS and six-yearly NATSIHS. These surveys support estimates for a range of health and socioeconomic variables for regional and remote areas, at an aggregate level.
 - Community Housing and Infrastructure Needs Survey (CHINS): The CHINS, conducted by the ABS on behalf of FaHCSIA, provides information about Indigenous communities and Indigenous Housing Organisations across Australia.

- 10 State/territory government and Australian Government agencies all contribute to the data available through administrative collections. This includes data about health, crime, housing, education and employment services. The data are generally collated and reported by a central body, such as the ABS or in specific areas of administrative data such as health and public housing, the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW). At times, governments also commission statistical collections (including surveys and other research).

3.0 Improving data sources

- 11 This section discusses the challenges for statistical and administrative collections in terms of providing high quality evidence for and about Indigenous people in regional and remote communities. Further, it presents information on strategies currently underway by the ABS and others to improve data quality, and provides comment on the additional strategies needed for future data development.
- 12 A summary of these strategies for improving data sources is provided in the table below. Sub-sections 3.1 and 3.2 provide supporting discussion.

Type of collection	Challenge/Issue	Current strategies	Strategies for further improvement
Statistical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enumeration difficulties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of the Indigenous Enumeration Strategy in the Census of Population and Housing to ensure high quality data are collected. ABS has implemented an Indigenous Community Engagement Strategy (ICES) to support enumeration and maximise the value of statistical collections. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve the quality of the Census of Population and Housing by further developing the Indigenous Enumeration Strategy. Expand the ABS Indigenous Community Engagement Strategy to increase its impact on data quality, and to improve the use of statistical information by Indigenous communities.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respondent load 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of the ICES to return statistical information to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ABS to extend its role of coordinating statistical activities

Indigenous communities.

across government to include other information collection activities that underlie or support policy-related research and evaluation in Indigenous communities.

Administrative	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Poor quality identification of Indigenous people● Limited data management● Limited data accessibility● Limited learning from program evaluations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Promotion of standard Indigenous status question and appropriate collection process.● Development of nationally agreed minimum data sets in some topic areas.● Access to non-identifiable, linked administrative data for researchers in some topic areas/jurisdictions.● Agreement and funding to develop an Indigenous clearinghouse to gather evidence from program evaluations and other research.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Increase efforts to improve identification of Indigenous people across administrative data sets, including use of identifiers across linked datasets for statistical purposes.● Improve data management of key administrative datasets.● Increase access to administrative data and promote wider support of analytical methods such as data linkage.● Government support for the use of the Indigenous clearinghouse in the policy development cycle.
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3.1 Statistical collections

3.1.1 Challenges for statistical collections

Enumeration difficulties

- 13 Standard statistical collection procedures used for the total Australian population are often not appropriate for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (Indigenous) population. This population can be difficult and costly to enumerate because:
- it is a small population, comprising about 2.5% of the total Australian population (3.7% of the population in regional Australia and 26.4% of the population in remote and very remote Australia)
 - it is geographically diverse - across Australia, Indigenous populations can be described as either geographically clustered and relatively inaccessible (remote areas), or relatively accessible but geographically dispersed (non-remote areas, including regional areas)
 - it requires special enumeration procedures in some regional and remote areas to take into account cultural, language and environmental factors.

Respondent load

- 14 Improving the wellbeing of Indigenous Australians is a key focus for Australian governments. As the demand for evidence to support Indigenous policy making continues to grow, so does the load placed on the small Indigenous population by surveys and other research.
- 15 There is significant load placed on communities through the collection of administrative data required as part of, or in support of, particular service delivery programs. In addition, large-scale, national surveys such as the ABS collections described in paragraph 9 and surveys commissioned by other government agencies (state/territory and Australian government), which generally are not national but can also be quite onerous, add to the respondent load. However, research in Indigenous communities extends beyond statistical collections such as national surveys and censuses to include smaller-scale studies, for example, case studies which may be limited to one or two Indigenous communities. In an environment of slow change, as the research load on the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population increases, so does the likelihood of the Indigenous population becoming disengaged from the data collection and statistical processes. This impacts on the ability to collect high quality, relevant information to inform policy and research.

3.1.2 Strategies for improving statistical collections

Improved data quality in the Census of Population and Housing

- 16 The Census of Population and Housing is a key data source for the Indigenous population, and it also provides the best available statistical data source for small areas. The Indigenous Enumeration Strategy (IES) aims to achieve the most accurate count of Indigenous peoples in the Census in both nominated discrete communities and elsewhere. This strategy has been developed, over a number of Censuses, to have sufficient flexibility to allow for the unique cultural aspects of Indigenous society which could affect the enumeration and to reduce any impact these may have on the count of this small but significant population.
- 17 The IES has been successful in improving Indigenous Census data over time, however, continual improvement is necessary. Further improvements to the IES would be aimed at reducing the level of under-enumeration in the Indigenous population, thereby expanding the quality of Census information available on this population. Improvements would include a greater focus on local engagement and more detailed planning, more tailored public relations strategies, strengthened procedures in the field and expansions to data validation and evaluation. Together with improved staffing structures and numbers to support an overall reduced enumeration timeframe, these changes would result in improvements in data quality.

Expanded Indigenous Community Engagement Strategy (ICES)

- 18 To avoid increasing respondent load, a focus on improving the quality of existing collections (statistical and administrative), rather than developing new collections, is required. High quality data are collected when enumeration procedures are culturally appropriate and the Indigenous community is highly engaged in the statistical process. To this end, the ABS established the Indigenous Community Engagement Strategy (ICES) in 2004. The strategy aims to improve enumeration for the Census and for the major Indigenous-specific national surveys, and to enhance Indigenous peoples' understanding and use of data relating to their communities. However, the scope of the current strategy is limited by available resources. It currently employs one Indigenous Engagement Manager in each of the states and the Northern Territory.
- 19 An expanded ICES would involve building a greater capability across communities, with a stronger network of Indigenous engagement staff across urban, regional and remote areas. This network could then be used across government to promote statistical activity, collect and disseminate data, and build statistical capacity.

Coordination of data collection and surveys in communities

- 20 The ABS could extend its role of coordinating statistical activities across government to include other information collection activities that underlie or support policy-related research and evaluation in Indigenous communities. This would ensure that:
- minimal load is placed on Indigenous communities participating in statistical and research activity, reducing duplication of research where it occurs
 - the quality of resulting information is maximised, and is sufficient to add real value to the evidence base.

3.2 Administrative collections

3.2.1 Challenges for administrative collections

Identifying the Indigenous population in administrative data

- 21 While administrative data often provide valuable sources of information on a small and geographically dispersed population, the use of administrative data to derive statistics about the Indigenous population correctly is limited by the extent to which Indigenous people are identified in the data. Identifying the Indigenous population in administrative data collections can be problematic for a number of reasons. Firstly, not everyone who is of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin may choose to identify themselves as such (this issue also applies to statistical collections, although in this case there are no administrative implications which might motivate such choices). In addition, the standard question about Indigenous status is not implemented consistently across administrative data collections, and the willingness of data collectors to ask the question may also vary. Furthermore, often the question process itself can influence whether someone is recorded as Indigenous or not.

Data management

- 22 The ability to extract high quality statistical information relies on good data management principles being applied to administrative systems. Good data management is resource intensive and generally speaking, service delivery agencies are not adequately funded for the appropriate level of data management activity. Additional challenges arise because administrative systems are primarily designed to enable service delivery, rather than for statistical purposes. Further, different systems are used for different service areas and across jurisdictions. This limits the degree to which nationally consistent, comparable data can be extracted from across administrative systems.
- 23 Good data management principles include maintenance of metadata (information that describes the data), application of quality assurance processes (e.g. to manage duplicate records and missing values), the use of standard data definitions and classifications (including

geographical classifications that will allow consistent data for regional and remote areas to be reported) and appropriate technologies to extract and interrogate the data.

Data accessibility

- 24 Competing priorities for resourcing, and inadequate technologies limit the accessibility of data for statistical purposes for many administrative collections. This applies both within and across jurisdictions. Privacy legislation imposes some restrictions on how data are accessed and used.

Learning from program evaluations

- 25 Evaluation is a routine part of government program implementation. While evaluations collect potentially valuable data about the Indigenous population, the quality of evaluations vary and the learnings from evaluations are often not widely available. This means that opportunities to learn important lessons from across evaluations may be missed.

3.2.2 Strategies for improving administrative collections

Improving the identification of Indigenous peoples

- 26 There are continued efforts by agencies (including the ABS and the AIHW) and other bodies to improve the identification of Indigenous people in administrative data sources, by promoting consistent use of the standard Indigenous status question and by employing appropriate and consistent collection methods across jurisdictions. This work is supported by agencies responsible for administrative data in most cases, as well as by the COAG Working Group for Indigenous Reform (WGIR).
- 27 Analytical approaches have also been used to improve understanding of the level of coverage of Indigenous people in administrative collections. For example, through the Census Data Enhancement Project, the ABS linked 2006 Census records with death registrations to compare Indigenous identification across the two collections. This enabled independent estimates of coverage of Indigenous identification in death registrations data for the first time. Strategies to improve Indigenous identifiers on statistical versions of administrative datasets by linking to related datasets and comparing identification, are being investigated.
- 28 Increased resources and support, from all levels of government, for improving identification of Indigenous people in administrative datasets is essential for the ABS and others to maintain the momentum for further progress in this area.

Data management

- 29 In some areas, for example health, good progress has been made to improve the quality of administrative data sources through the development of nationally agreed minimum datasets (a dataset including consistent data elements which have been agreed upon by all jurisdictions and are supplied for national reporting).
- 30 More generally, the ABS is assisting governments across all jurisdictions, and across various sectors, to improve their administrative datasets through improved data management activities, use of consistent definitions and geographical standards, and improved identification of Indigenous people. Increased resources for data management would enable the ABS to provide more comprehensive assistance to individual agencies as well as enabling agencies to implement appropriate systems changes.

Data accessibility

- 31 In some jurisdictions, multiple data sources have been made available for analysis by researchers through data linkage. Non-identifiable linked data have been provided to researchers for analysis, in particular in the health field. This is a useful approach for extracting value from existing data sources without imposing additional load on the Indigenous population, while at the same time maintaining the confidentiality and privacy of individuals.
- 32 Improving access to data for statistical purposes, in particular for researchers, will ensure increasing value can be extracted from existing data sources without imposing additional load on the Indigenous population. Support of analytical methods such as data linkage will further enhance the value of data sources. For this to occur, a review of privacy legislation across jurisdictions may be necessary.

Indigenous clearinghouse

- 33 The Building the Evidence sub-group of the COAG WGIR has been tasked with establishing an Indigenous clearinghouse. The functions of the clearinghouse will include gathering research and evaluations in one place and making them publicly available, providing an assessment of their quality, and undertaking 'meta-analyses' to extract learnings from across evaluations. This will be a valuable resource for policy-makers and researchers if it is used. Senior support and promotion of the use of the Indigenous clearinghouse in the policy/program development cycle will contribute to its success. This will lead to increased value extracted from existing data collection activity, and to better outcomes for Indigenous people, including those in regional and remote Indigenous communities.

Appendix 1 - Data sources

Topic Area	Type of Collection	Data Owners	Data Reporting	Output Geography	Timing/Frequency	Comments
Northern Territory Emergency Response (NTER)	Administrative - various	Various Australian and NT Government agencies	Department of Families, Housing, Community Services, and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA): <i>Monitoring Report - Measuring progress of NTER activities, August 2007 to 30 June 2008</i> http://www.facsia.gov.au/nter/docs/reports/monitoring_report/default.htm	Northern Territory intervention areas	Aug 07 - June 08	Data sources and key performance indicators are highlighted in Part 2 Appendix and include data on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • health • education • law and order • sexual assault • housing • income management • employment
	Administrative - NTER Child Health Check data	Department of Health and Ageing (DoHA)	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) and DoHA: <i>Progress of the Northern Territory Emergency Response Child Health Check Initiative</i> http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/aihw/pnterchci/pnterchci.pdf	Northern Territory intervention areas	July 07 - Oct 08	Provides information on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • number of health checks • patient demographics • health conditions diagnosed • referrals and vaccinations • children requiring follow ups
Housing	Statistical - Census of Population and Housing	ABS	ABS: <i>Census of population and housing</i> http://www.abs.gov.au/WEBSITEDEBS/D3310114.nsf/Home/census	Collection district (CD) level	5-yearly Last conducted in 2006	Can provide information about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • overcrowding • tenure • landlord type • dwelling structure • rent and mortgage repayments • number of bedrooms.
	Statistical - National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS)	ABS	ABS: <i>National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey, 2002</i> http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/mf/4714.0/	State/territory and remoteness areas	6-yearly Last conducted in 2002 (2008/09 collection underway)	The survey provides the following information on housing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tenure type • landlord type • rent/mortgage payments • household facilities • number of bedrooms • major structural problems

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> repairs and maintenance conducted in last 12 months.
Statistical - Community Housing and Infrastructure Needs Survey (CHINS)	FaHCSIA (collected by ABS)	ABS: <i>Housing and Infrastructure in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities</i> http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/4710.0Main+Features22006?OpenDocument	Discrete Indigenous communities	Last conducted in 2006	Collects the following data on discrete Indigenous communities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> current housing stock, dwelling management and selected income and expenditure arrangements of Indigenous organisations that provide housing to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples details of housing and related infrastructure in discrete Indigenous communities such as water quality and supply, electricity supply, sewerage systems, drainage, rubbish collection and disposal.
Administrative - Indigenous housing	State and Australian Government agencies responsible for Indigenous housing, including Indigenous community housing	AIHW: <i>State owned and managed Indigenous housing 2006-07: Commonwealth State Housing Agreement national data report</i> http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm/title/10551 <i>Indigenous housing indicators 2005-06</i> http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm/title/10485	State/territory	Annual Latest release 2006-07	AIHW holds information about many housing programs, including Indigenous specific programs such as the State Owned and Managed Indigenous Housing (SOMIH) program and the Indigenous Community Housing (ICH) program. They are the secretariat to various groups reporting to the Housing Ministers Advisory Council (HMAC) and have been funded to

					develop the collection of administrative data on Indigenous community housing.
Administrative - Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP)	State/territory SAAP agencies	AIHW: <i>Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) National Data Collection</i> http://www.aihw.gov.au/housing/saaps/ndca/index.cfm	National for Indigenous data	Annual Latest release 2005-06	The Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) National Data Collection is a nationally consistent information system that combines information from SAAP agencies and State/Territory and Commonwealth funding departments. Topics include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • funding • level of support/support provided • client demographics • meeting the needs of clients
Administrative - FaHCSIA housing dataset	FaHCSIA	AIHW: <i>National Housing Assistance Data Repository</i> http://www.aihw.gov.au/housing/assistance/data/index.cfm	State/territory	Data access on request	The FaHCSIA Housing Dataset holds data on those in receipt of Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA). A copy of this dataset is provided to AIHW each year and added to the National Housing Assistance Data Repository.
Statistical - National Social Housing Survey	AIHW	AIHW: <i>The National Social Housing Survey</i> http://www.aihw.gov.au/indigenous/housing/somih_survey.cfm	State/territory	2005, 2007	There have been two National Social Housing Surveys (NSHS) of State Owned and Managed Indigenous Housing (SOMIH) tenants, the first in 2005 and the second in 2007. The surveys provide data for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • amenity/location, • customer satisfaction, • tenant satisfaction with service

						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • delivery, dwelling condition, • tenant needs and • tenant characteristics such as household composition and labour force participation
	Administrative - Fixing Houses for Better Health Program	FaHCSIA	AIHW: <i>Fixing houses for better health (FHBH) dataset</i> http://www.aihw.gov.au/indigenous/datacubes/fhbh.cfm	Data available for participating communities	Ad-hoc	Provides data on the FHBH program. This program is designed to improve the houses and household conditions in rural and remote Indigenous communities across Australia. The data provides information about the quality and health standards of a community's housing stock.
Substance abuse and its impact on community wellbeing and the safety of children	Statistical - National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey (NATSIHS)	ABS	ABS: <i>National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey (NATSIHS)</i> http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/4715.0Main+Features12004-05?OpenDocument	State/territory and remoteness areas	6-yearly Last conducted 2004-05	For persons over 18 years the NATSIHS provides information on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • smoking • alcohol consumption • substance use (non-remote only) • social and emotional wellbeing. There are also data for children aged over 12 years on diet and exercise, as well as information for children aged 0-17 on health conditions such as Asthma, heart conditions, eyesight, hearing problems, long term health conditions and Injuries. Information on health services used those aged 0-17 are also collected. Breast-feeding questions for children under 3

<p>Statistical - National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS)</p>	<p>ABS</p>	<p>ABS: <i>National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS)</i> http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/mf/4714.0/</p>	<p>State/territory and remoteness areas</p>	<p>6-yearly Last conducted 2002 (2008/09 collection underway)</p>	<p>are asked. For persons over 15 years the NATSISS provides information on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • smoking • alcohol consumption • substance use • social and emotional wellbeing • family stressors • neighbourhood/ community problems • if respondents have been the victim of physical/threatened violence • arrest/imprisonment in the past 5 years. <p>There are also questions about children aged 0-14 about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sleep • child health services • nutrition • life events (social interaction, accommodation in times of stress or crisis etc). <p>Maternal health questions are asked of mothers with children aged 0-3 years. These include questions about smoking, drinking and substance use while pregnant.</p>
<p>Administrative - National minimum data set for alcohol and other drug treatment services</p>	<p>Australian Government and state and territory government health authorities</p>	<p>AIHW: <i>National minimum dataset available for Alcohol and drug treatment</i> http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm/title/10590</p>	<p>Due to data quality issues only aggregate reporting at a national level is reliable. Some lower level reporting is possible in specific states and/or territories</p>	<p>Annual Latest release 2006-07</p>	<p>Provides data on publicly funded alcohol and other drug treatment services and their clients, including information about the types of drugs for which treatment is sought and the types of treatment provided. Indigenous clients can be identified. However, some</p>

					community health areas have low quality or no service use data.
Administrative - Hospital separations data	State and territory health authorities	AIHW: <i>National Hospital Morbidity Database</i> http://www.aihw.gov.au/hospitals/nhm_database.cfm	State/territory	Annual Latest release 2006-07	Provides data on the number of indigenous hospitalisations related to alcohol use. The quality of data varies between states and territories. Some state data cannot be used reliably.
Administrative - State/territory police offence records, state coronial records	State/territory police agencies, coroners	Australian Institute of Criminology: <i>National Homicide Monitoring Program</i> http://www.aic.gov.au/publications/mr/01/	National level for Indigenous data	Annual Latest release 2006-07	Provides information on the number of alcohol and drug influenced homicides.
Administrative - National Child Protection (NCP) data collection	State and territory child protection and support services	AIHW: <i>National Child Protection (NCP) data collection</i> http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm/title/10566	State/territory	Annual Latest release 2006-07	Provides data on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> child protection notifications, investigations and substantiations children on care and protection orders children in out-of-home care. Indigenous status of children can be identified. However, the quality of data on Indigenous child protection varies between states and territories. Some state data cannot be used reliably.
Administrative - National Perinatal Data Collection	State/territory health authorities	AIHW: <i>Australia's mothers and babies</i> http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm/title/10634	State/territory	Annual Latest release 2006	Provides estimates of indigenous smoking rates during pregnancy, for all states/territories except Victoria. There is work in progress to collect consistent data on alcohol and tobacco use during pregnancy.
Administrative - Drug and Alcohol Service Report (DASR) data collections	DoHA	DoHA: <i>Drug and Alcohol Service Report (DASR) data</i>	Applicable to Drug and Alcohol Service Report (DASR) organisation	Annual Latest release 2005-06	Service level data is collected by questionnaire from the 40 Australian

			<p><i>collections</i> http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/health-oihsih-pubs-dasr-2005-2006</p>	locations		<p>Government funded stand-alone Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander substance use services. The information collected includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • episodes of care provided • service resources • staffing profiles • the broad range of activities undertaken to help prevent and treat substance use covering a twelve month period.
	Statistical - National Drug Strategy Household Survey	AIHW	<p>AIHW: <i>National Drug Strategy Household Survey</i> http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm/title/10674</p>	National level for Indigenous data due to small sample	Last conducted in 2007	<p>Provides information for people living in non-remote areas, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • drug use prevalence • drug-related behaviours and incidents • support for drug-related policy and legislation.
CDEP	Administrative - CDEP	FaHCSIA				Data available on request.
	Statistical - Census of Population and Housing	ABS	<p>ABS: <i>Population Characteristics, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians</i> http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/7E338A84EC8B8D1ECA257418000E41AD?opendocument</p>	Collection district (CD) level	5-yearly Last conducted in 2006	<p>ABS Census data can be used to gain an understanding of the characteristics of CDEP participants as questions are asked about CDEP participation. The actual numbers of participants may be understated but the characteristics of those who did state that they were a CDEP participant will still provide important information.</p>
	Statistical - National Aboriginal and	ABS	<p>ABS: <i>National</i></p>	State/territory and remoteness areas	6-yearly Last conducted in 2002	<p>ABS NATSISS data can be used to gain an</p>

	Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS)		Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS) http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/mf/4714.0/		(2008/09 collection underway)	Understanding of the characteristics of CDEP participants as questions are asked about CDEP participation. The actual numbers of participants may be understated due to the characteristics of those who did state that they were a CDEP participant will still provide important information.
Mental health services	Statistical - National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey (NATSIHS)	ABS	ABS: <i>National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey (NATSIHS)</i> http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/4715.0Main+Features12004-05?OpenDocument	State/territory and remoteness areas	6-yearly Last conducted in 2004-05	Adults over the age of 18 were asked selected questions from the SF-36 and the Kessler Psychological Distress Scale.
	Administrative - Hospital separations data	State/territory health authorities	AIHW: <i>National Hospital Morbidity Database</i> http://www.aihw.gov.au/hospitals/nhm_database.cfm	State/territory	Annual Latest release 2006-07	Can provide data on the number of Indigenous hospitalisations related to mental and behavioural disorders. The quality of data varies between states and territories. Some state data cannot be used reliably.
	Statistical and administrative - various mental health related sources	State/territory health authorities, AIHW, ABS, DoHA	AIHW: <i>National Community Mental Health Care Database</i> http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm/title/10594	Due to data quality issues only aggregate reporting at a national level is reliable. Some lower level reporting is possible in specific states and/or territories	Latest release 2005-06	The Mental Health Care Database provides information on the number of mental health service contacts for Indigenous peoples. However, numbers are understated due to reporting issues. The <i>Mental health services in Australia 2005-06</i> publication contains information about both Indigenous and non-Indigenous mental health services. It uses

						an array of administrative and survey data sources. However, only indigenous status data for New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, Western Australia, South Australia and public hospitals in the Northern Territory have been included due to data quality issues.
Access to education facilities	Statistical - Census of Population and Housing	ABS	ABS: <i>Census of population and housing</i> http://www.abs.gov.au/WEBSITE/DBS/D3310114.nsf/Home/census	Collection district (CD) level	5-yearly Last conducted in 2006	Provides data on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • number of school age children • number of children attending school • number of adults studying
	Statistical - Community Housing and Infrastructure Needs Survey (CHINS)	FaHCSIA (collected by ABS)	ABS: <i>Housing and Infrastructure in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities</i> http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/4710.0Main+Features22006?OpenDocument	Discrete Indigenous communities	Last conducted in 2006	Provides data on access to schools and other educational facilities in the discrete Indigenous communities surveyed.
	Statistical - National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS)	ABS	ABS: <i>National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS)</i> http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/mf/4714.0/	State/territory and remoteness areas	5-yearly Last conducted in 2002 (2008/09 collection underway)	Provides data on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • full time/part time of adults/children • educational participation of Indigenous children • reasons for not attending school, if applicable.
	Administrative - National Schools Statistics Collection	ABS (data provided by state, territory and Australian Government education departments)	ABS: <i>The National Schools Statistics Collection (NSSC)</i> http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/products/10782996EC272F0FCA2572FE001D9184?opendocument	State/territory	Annual Latest release 2007	Provides aggregated data on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • school enrolments • school attendance • school/staffing profile
	Statistical/administrative - National	Department of Education	DEEWR	Information is currently available	Annual Latest release	Provides information on

	Preschool Census	Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR)	<i>The National Preschool Census</i> http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Latestproducts/F38F636C309D757CA2572FE001D61D2?opendocument	at national and state/territory level, Statistical Districts and MCEETYA classification areas of Metropolitan, Provincial and Remote areas	2007	preschool student enrolments, with a focus on Indigenous students. The collection counts enrolled students if they were on the roll during the census week and had attended a preschool education program in the last month.
	Administrative - Higher Education Student Statistics Collection (HESSC)	Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR)	DEEWR: <i>Higher Education Student Statistics Collection (HESSC)</i> http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/higher_education/publications_resources/statistics/higher_education_statistics_collection.htm	State/territory	Annual Latest release 2007	Provides data on student enrolments and student load.
	Administrative - National Vocational Education and Training Provider collection	VET providers	National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER): <i>National Vocational Education and Training Provider collection (NVETPC)</i> http://www.ncver.edu.au/statistic/publications/2019.html	State/territory	Annual Latest release 2007	Provides data on Vocational Education and Training (VET) enrolment rates and attainment rates.
Outstations and small communities	Statistical - Census of Population and Housing	ABS	ABS: <i>Census of population and housing</i> http://www.abs.gov.au/WEBSITEDBS/D3310114.nsf/Home/census	Collection district (CD) level	5-yearly Last conducted in 2006	Provides demographic details about outstations and small communities.
	Statistical - Community Housing and Infrastructure Needs Survey (CHINS)	FaHCSIA (collected by ABS)	ABS: <i>Housing and Infrastructure in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities</i> http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/4710.0Main+Features22006?OpenDocument	Discrete Indigenous communities	Last conducted in 2006	CHINS can provide information for discrete Indigenous communities on: <i>Indigenous Housing Organisations (IHOs)</i> - management, income, expenditure, housing stock, acquisitions and disposals of housing over the past 12 months. <i>Communities</i> - Population,

						needs planning, health and public facilities, water supply, electricity/gas supply, transport, and communication.
Indigenous enterprise and employment	Statistical - Census of Population and Housing	ABS	ABS: <i>Census of population and housing</i> http://www.abs.gov.au/WEBSITEDEBS/D3310114.nsf/Home/census	Collection district (CD) level	6-yearly Last conducted in 2006	Provides information on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> labour force status self-employment industries/occupation of employment hours worked
	Statistical - National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS)	ABS	ABS: <i>National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS)</i> http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/mf/4714.0/	State/territory and remoteness areas	6-yearly Last conducted in 2002 (2008/09 collection underway)	Provides information on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> labour force status (incl. CDEP) duration of unemployment hours usually worked full time/part time status of employment job security employment sector duration on CDEP reasons not looking for work difficulties finding work whether work allows for cultural responsibilities access to employment support services reason did not use employment support services
	Statistical - National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey (NATSIHS)	ABS	ABS: <i>National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey (NATSIHS)</i> http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/4715.0Main+Features12004-05?OpenDocument	State/territory and remoteness areas	6-yearly Last conducted in 2004-05	Provides information on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> labour force status (incl. CDEP) duration of unemployment hours usually worked full time/part time status of employment
	Statistical -	ABS	ABS:	State/territory and	Annual	Provides

	Labour Force Survey		<p><i>Labour Force Characteristics of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, Experimental Estimates from the Labour Force Survey</i></p> <p>http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/allprimarymainfeatures/203A6267794D53EECA2570AB0082C2F0?opendocument</p>	remoteness areas	Latest release 2007	<p>Information about the labour force characteristics of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians using the Monthly Labour Force Survey. The estimates use methodological and definitional differences when compared with other sources of indigenous Labour Force data, such as the five-yearly Census of Population and Housing, the 2002 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS), and the 2004-05 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey (NATSIHS). The differences in the methodologies used affect the comparability of the estimates.</p>
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