



Families in Australia

A GUIDE TO
CONTENT AND PROCEDURES

MARCH 1992-MAY 1992

A map of Australia is depicted, where the landmass is formed by several interlocking puzzle pieces. Each piece is a different shade of gray and contains text related to family support services. The background is black.

employment
support

child
care

accommodation
support

personal
care
home help

education
support

income
support

EMBARGOED UNTIL 11.30 A.M. 31 MARCH 1993

NEW ISSUE

**FAMILIES IN AUSTRALIA
A GUIDE TO CONTENT AND PROCEDURES**

MARCH 1992 — MAY 1992

IAN CASTLES
Australian Statistician

AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS

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INQUIRIES

- for further information about the Survey of Families in Australia and the availability of statistics from it contact Jenny Dean on Canberra (06) 252 7030.
- for information about other ABS statistics and services please refer to the back page of this publication.



PREFACE

This publication contains details about the 1992 Survey of Families in Australia (Family Survey). It is an essential reference for understanding data released from the survey and provides information on the concepts, methodology, uses and limitations of the data.

The Survey of Families in Australia is unique in that it focuses on the ways in which family members support each other within and outside the household. The structure and needs of the family are identified to enable a rich understanding of specific types of support relating to employment, income, housing, child care, personal care/home help, education and transport.

Details of the availability of published and unpublished data services can be found in Chapter 4 of this publication.

IAN CASTLES
Australian Statistician

Australian Bureau of Statistics
Canberra ACT
March 1993

CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

The 1992 Survey of Families in Australia (Family Survey) examines the characteristics of families and the nature of family support. It was undertaken by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) in the period March to May 1992 as part of its Special Supplementary Survey program.

This survey is not a regular ABS collection. While a family survey was conducted in 1982, it addressed a substantially different range of concerns. The present survey has been conducted in response to particular interests in data relating to the family's needs, its responsibilities and ability to cope in the face of changing and often limited resources.

About 21,300 private households and special (non-private) dwelling units were selected at random for inclusion in the 1992 Family Survey. After sample loss (see Section 3.4) this was reduced to an effective sample of approximately 17,800 households, which comprised about 12,400 families and 35,300 persons. The sample design ensured that within each State or Territory each person had an equal chance of selection: in the ACT, the sample was adjusted to allow for a greater release of data at a regional level (see Section 3.1.1). Trained ABS interviewers personally interviewed each member of the selected households who were aged 15 years or more (those aged 15-17 with the consent of a parent or guardian). Basic details about each member of the household aged under 15 were also obtained, and where appropriate, parents/guardians were asked to answer questions about their child(ren). Fully completed questionnaires were obtained from almost 96 per cent of all persons who were asked to respond.

The survey design enables information for all topics to be analysed in relation to other topics in the survey, including demographic and socio-economic characteristics. Where possible, variables have been standardised to allow comparison with other sources of ABS data.

Expansion factors were applied to the data obtained from respondents to provide estimates for the total population within the scope of the survey. Data from the survey are available at person, family and household level (see Section 3.5.3).

The survey was conducted under the authority of the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*. The ABS sought the willing cooperation of households in the survey. The confidentiality of all information provided by respondents was guaranteed. Under its legislation the ABS cannot release identifiable information about households, families or individuals.

1.2 SURVEY DEVELOPMENT

In 1989, several major government institutions approached the ABS with the possibility of conducting a Family Survey as part of its 1991/92 survey program. Subsequent submissions received from both government and non-government bodies indicated strong interest in evaluating the effectiveness of current policy and the development of new policy relating to the social and economic needs of the family. Specifically their interests lay in examining the capacity that family members have, both in and across households, to support one another, and how such support can be supplemented or assisted by government, the community and employers.

An advisory group was established to assist the ABS in the ongoing consultation process and to advise on data requirements. The advisory group comprised representatives from Commonwealth and State departments, research centres and universities. It also comprised representatives from the ABS who were involved in the survey development process, or who were themselves potential users of the data in the production of estimates. The group met formally on five occasions and informally as required.

The advisory group had a major role in assessing the priority of topics for inclusion in the Family Survey. The topics initially requested via submissions for the survey covered a wide range of issues. Not all of these issues could be addressed as part of a single survey of this kind. Topics finally selected for inclusion in the survey were those identified as being of highest priority in relation to one or more of the following criteria:

- importance of the topic as a public concern;
- breadth of user interest in the topic;
- existence of and comparability with other sources of data;
- relevance to other topics included in the survey;
- potential for high quality data output, including overall sensitivity of the topic and possible recall problems experienced by respondents;
- time taken to interview each topic;
- appropriateness for inclusion in an ABS survey questionnaire.

As part of the means to assess the priority of topics for inclusion, and to ensure the effectiveness of sampling and interviewing procedures, several pilot tests of the questionnaire were carried out. Two pilot tests were conducted, the first in Brisbane in November 1990, and the second in Sydney in May 1991. A dress rehearsal was conducted in Adelaide in September 1991.

Emerging from the testing and user consultation process, the following major items were not included in the final questionnaire:

- extra-household family relationships (with the exception of parents and children);
- contact with extra-household family members (including frequency and usual means of contact, physical proximity and reasons for infrequent contact);

- personal support (provision/receipt of comfort in a crisis, advice; identification of someone to turn to in time of need);
- access to, and awareness of, government services.

In addition to the advisory group, the ABS had consultations with a range of other agencies with an interest in the survey and kept them informed of survey development plans and progress. Details of the survey were tabled in parliament, in accordance with section 6(3) of the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975*.

CHAPTER TWO SURVEY CONTENT

2.1 OVERVIEW

All families have certain responsibilities. Family members may be involved in caring for and educating children, providing family members with work opportunities, accommodation or transport requirements or caring for family members who are elderly or have a long-term illness. These and similar responsibilities can be grouped under the heading of *social support*. Social support may be of a continuing nature or short-term and may be utilized by the individual in the event of a need or crisis. The family is a key social support system not only because most family members have certain obligations towards each other, but also because close and enduring relationships have the capacity to develop over a number of years.

Family support does not exist in isolation from the wider social structure. Many social, demographic and economic factors affect the family's capacity to support its members and because of this it must rely on a variety of resources which allow it to function adequately. Factors such as income, education and employment opportunities, access to housing, transport and other amenities are influenced by Commonwealth and State government action and are administered through a range of government and community programs. Policies in social security, taxation, education, employment, health, housing and community services are formulated with implicit assumptions about the needs of different types of families, and have an impact on the nature and level of resources available to families.

The extent to which governments, the community and employers have accepted responsibility for the provision of services and programs to families has fluctuated according to changing social attitudes and economic conditions. Increasingly, the emphasis of social policy has been on equipping families with adequate coping skills and reinforcing their ability to assist their own members. The emphasis on prevention attempts to ensure that high-risk or crisis situations are avoided.

Many of the issues outlined above are addressed in the Survey of Families in Australia. Its objective is to examine the types and levels of support that family members give to each other, and receive from non-family sources, and to analyse the family's resources relative to its support needs, according to selected demographic and socio-economic characteristics.

The extent and adequacy of support among members of a family is measured in the survey using a *transaction* approach. This approach looks at purposeful interactions occurring between 2 or more people over a particular reference period (usually six months). The notion of transactions implies an interdependence between individuals where the actions of one individual directly affect the outcomes (negative or positive) for another. In the Family Survey, a transaction may be one of seven types:

- employment;
- education;
- income;
- transport;
- accommodation;
- personal care/home help;
- child care.

The survey collects information on both the *receipt* and the *provision* of support. In general, providers of support are asked about assistance they have given to family members in or outside the household. Receivers of support are asked about help or assistance they have received from any person or organisation in or outside the household (or in some cases only from family members outside the household). Not all populations are covered for all transactions in the survey; only for those where an identified need exists. Collection of data on the receipt of personal care/home help, for example, is restricted to those who are disabled, chronically ill and/or elderly. The child care items are only relevant to families with children under 12 years of age. The transport items are collected for families with sick, disabled and/or elderly members, families with children attending school or formal child care, and those working outside the home. Receipt of accommodation data are limited to those aged between 15 and 60 years.

As well as examining the provision and the receipt of support, indicators are provided of people's need for assistance, as well as the possible burden of responsibility which exists for providers of support. In the Family Survey, both subjective and objective measures of need are collected, with an emphasis on *felt need*. A *felt need* for assistance is a stated requirement for assistance, whether or not that assistance is actually received. *Burden of*

1 See K. Orth - Gomer and A. Unden, "The measurement of social support in population surveys", *Soc. Sci. Med.*, 24 (1), pp83-94, 1987

2 J. Bradshaw ("The concept of social need", *New Society*, 30, 1972, pp 640-643) defines four categories of need: normative need; felt need; expressed need (or demand); and comparative need. Normative, comparative and expressed need may be seen as objective in that standard measures of need are imposed. Felt need, on the other hand, is need as stated by an individual according to his/her expectation of an outcome based on a subjective assessment of feelings and perceptions. It is acknowledged in the literature (see, for example, J. McKillop, *Needs Analysis*, Sage Publications, Newbury Park, 1987) that both subjective and objective indicators of need are necessary mechanisms in resource allocation. It remains the responsibility of the policy analyst to make adequate decisions about the application of data describing different categories of need in planning and monitoring the effectiveness of services and programs.

responsibility refers to the economic, social, physical and emotional costs of providing support; carer burden in particular is acknowledged in the literature as a key issue for policy makers and service providers.

While it is a purpose of the survey to analyse variation in the amount of a family's resources relative to its support needs, this is not intended to be a balance-sheet accounting of support flows. The survey does not attempt to measure total support flows in and out of households.

An important aspect of the Family Survey is its exploration of ways in which family members who live in different households give and receive support. In this sense, family members may be close relatives or be part of a wider family circle. They may live with each other or live apart, be 'in' household and even beyond national boundaries. The survey examines the role parents play in paying education and accommodation expenses for their children studying full-time, whether family members caring for sick or elderly relatives outside their own household have special requirements, and the extent of child care provided by grandparents and other family members beyond the household boundary. Regular and irregular sources of income support to and by family members are also able to be analysed.

In the construction of output items it has not been assumed that support, needs or resources of families are confined to a single household. However, users should note that sample constraints have confined the collection of data to a household basis. Because of this, characteristics of families and definitions of family relationships (as listed in the *Glossary*) are based on a household family concept.

The Family Survey provides a starting-point for the development of indicators of the well-being of families and individuals, such as those that have been identified in broader-based research on quality of life³. The Family Survey objective also relates directly to the specific family issues which have been outlined in the United Nations program for the International Year of the Family (IYF) on strengthening the family's ability to meet its own needs⁴. The IYF program recommends that research is needed in order to identify emotional, financial and material frameworks of support, and how these types of support affect and are affected by the family structure.

2.2. SUMMARY OF TOPICS

The remainder of this chapter gives a detailed outline of the 1992 Survey of Families in Australia, including the main purposes, uses, data items and populations for each topic. Where applicable, any limitations of the data are also noted and explained.

Topics have been grouped under four broad headings: Family/Household Structure, Family History, Family Needs and Responsibilities and Socio-economic and General Characteristics. Some topics are sub-divided into components to make their explanation more meaningful. The headings, topics and components are listed below:

- Family/Household structure—
 - Family/Household Structure and Composition
 - Intra-Household Relationships
 - Extra-Household Relationships
 - Basic Demographics
- Family history—
 - Marital history
 - Fertility
 - Mobility
 - Changes in Family/Household Composition
- Family needs and responsibilities—
 - Employment support
 - Provision of employment support;
 - Receipt of employment support;
 - Barriers to labour force participation.
 - Payment of education expenses
 - Payment of own education expenses;
 - Payment of education expenses for children;
 - Barriers to education participation.
 - Income support
 - Provision of income support;
 - Receipt of income support.
 - Transport
 - Transport to work;
 - Transport for the sick, disabled and elderly;
 - Transport of children to school and/or child care.
 - Accommodation
 - Provision of accommodation support;
 - Receipt of accommodation support.
 - Personal care/home help
 - Provision of personal care/home help;
 - Receipt of personal care/home help;
 - Balance between work and caring for sick, disabled or elderly family members.
 - Child care
 - Provision of informal child care;
 - Receipt of formal child care;
 - Receipt of informal child care;
 - Balance between work and child care.

3 See for example A. Szalai and F. Andrews, *The Quality of Life: Comparative Studies*. Sage Publications, London, 1980

4 1994 International Year of the Family, United Nations' Guidelines

- Socio-economic and general characteristics—

Migrant status
Employment
Income
Education
Housing
Health
Location

2.3 FAMILY/HOUSEHOLD STRUCTURE

2.3.1 Family/Household Composition and Structure

Outline The composition and structure of families or households can affect the financial and non-financial resources available to them. For example, parents in a family/household with a number of dependent children living in the household will have a higher call for financial resources than a family with non-dependent children. Identifying the composition of the family or household and the structure of associated networks of support such as accommodation, employment, income and education, will provide information relevant to this area.

Data from this topic will provide input to household estimates and projections, and enable the classification of family and household types. Changes in the family/household structure and composition can assist urban planning in terms of dwelling size, location of infrastructure and other needs of the family/household in the community.

Main data items	Main populations
household type	each household;
number of families in household	each household;
family type	each family;
family blending	each couple family containing at least one UR (usual resident) child;
couple status	each couple family;
family size	each family;
number of dependent children	each family;
number of non-dependent children	each family.

Limitations Not all families and households are sampled in the survey (e.g. retirement villages and health establishments are excluded from the sample). Refer to *Glossary* for details.

2.3.2 Intra-Household Relationships

Outline This topic provides an indication of a person's role within his/her family or household, and establishes the relationship between families in multiple family households. The topic also enables identification of parent-child relationships and step-children. Analysis of the composition of extended families within the household will be possible.

Main data items

- relationship to household reference person;
- relationship to family reference person;
- relationship to female parent;
- relationship to male parent;
- position in family/household.

Main populations All persons.

Limitations (i) Adoptive, foster, and biological relationships are not distinguished. (ii) In-law and step relationships are not separately identifiable from blood relationships for persons other than parents, grandparents, great grandparents, children, grandchildren, great grandchildren or siblings (a limitation of first two data items).

2.3.3 Extra-Household Relationships

Outline This topic specifies parent and child relationships outside the household with the purpose of determining how the wider family network affects support and the demand on family resources.

Main data items

- number of non UR (non usual resident) parents and step-parents;
- number of non UR children or step-children;
- age of each non UR child or step-child;
- sex of each non UR child or step-child;
- relationship to the respondent of each non UR child or step-child.

Main populations (i) *Number of non UR parents and step-parents* is asked of all persons 15 years or over. (ii) All persons aged 15 or over (except those aged 15-17 years who were never married and not currently in a de facto relationship) for remaining data items.

Limitations Information on extra-household relationships are recorded at the person and family levels of the data file. Details at the person level are stored as reported by each respondent; they are not adjusted to mirror a partner's response where a discrepancy exists. Details at the family level are stored as reported by each female partner in a couple, or as reported by each lone parent.

2.3.4 Basic Demographics

Outline Data will be used to present the demographic characteristics of each respondent and information relating to children of a family. Included are basic family level variables identifying different types of families. This will enable cross-classification with other variables. Comparisons between demographic profiles will provide detailed information of specific populations.

Main data items	Main populations
age sex	} all persons;
current registered marital status	all persons aged 15 years or over;
age of youngest UR child	each family containing at least one UR child;
age of eldest UR child	each family containing at least two UR children;
age of second eldest UR child	each family containing at least four UR children;
age of third eldest UR child	each family containing at least four UR children;
age of fourth eldest UR child	each lone parent family;
sex of lone parent	each couple family, each female lone parent, each other family;
age of female lone parent/ female member of couple	each couple family, each male lone parent, each other family;
age of male lone parent/male member of couple	each lone parent family;
marital status of lone parent	each family.
number of UR lone ancestors	

Limitations (i) In answering questions about registered marital status, confusion between legal marital status and living arrangements may have resulted in some separated people being recorded as "married". (ii) Information is recorded for a maximum five children.

2.4 FAMILY HISTORY

2.4.1 Marital History

Outline The topic examines the incidence of partnering and marriage after separation, divorce, and widowhood. Data will assist in assessing the potential call on a family's financial and non-financial resources by ex-spouses. Patterns of co-habitation—pre-marriage and post-marriage (such as divorce)—can also be examined. The degree to which a women's marital history affects trends in child bearing patterns can be analysed, as well as the socio-economic constraints or benefits that relate to a person's marital status.

Trends in family formation and dissolution will provide input to post-censal family and household estimates, currently being developed by the ABS.

Main data items

- Registered marriages:
 - whether married once, twice or not at all; month and year of separation from, or death of, most recent spouse; month and year first began living with current spouse; month and year of commencement of first marriage; month and year of commencement of current marriage; reason last marriage ended.
- De facto marriages:
 - month and year first began living with current spouse.

Main populations Registered marriages: all persons in a current registered or de facto marriage. De facto marriages: all persons in a current de facto marriage.

Limitations (i) In answering questions about registered marital status, confusion between legal marital status and living arrangements may have resulted in some separated people being recorded as "married".

2.4.2 Fertility

Outline This topic examines the history of childbirth for each woman aged 15 years to 60 years; 15 year olds to 17 year olds are not included if categorised as "never married" and not living in a de facto relationship. It includes the enumeration of children born to a woman even if they are no longer living.

Data will assist in the formulation of population projections, and studies of issues such as child related needs in the community, effects of birth spacing on a woman's labour force participation, whether the number of families in a household affects fertility etc.

Main data items

- number of live born children;
- dates of birth of live born children.

Main populations All women aged 15 to 59 years of age. Excluded are women aged 15 to 17 years if "never married" and not currently living in a de facto relationship, and women aged 60 years or older.

Limitations (i) Fertility analysis is only available for a sub-set of women. For example, women aged 60 years and older are not included. (ii) A measure of male fertility is not available. (iii) Due to survey limitations, it is not possible to distinguish UR children born to a woman from those who are adopted or fostered.

2.4.3 Mobility

Outline In the Family Survey, measures of mobility focus on the period from January 1, 1987 to the survey date (approximately five years later). Information on last usual

residence and number of moves enables the identification of highly mobile families.

The topic will determine reasons for adults returning to the parental home and establish other reasons for mobility such as family conflict and housing disadvantage. This will enable analysis of the needs and support networks available to families in this category.

Main data items

- year commenced living at current address;
- postcode of last usual residence;
- main reason for moving from last usual residence;
- number of times changed usual address since 1/1/87.

Main populations All persons aged 15 years or over.

Limitations (i) A respondent could have moved away from the same address on more than one occasion since 1/1/87. The number of changes of usual residence does not necessarily equal the number of different addresses a respondent has lived at since 1/1/87. (ii) Year commenced living at current address is the year the respondent last commenced living at current address. If a respondent has resided at current address on more than one occasion the date commenced living at current address is the date of commencement of last episode of residency rather than date of commencement of first episode of residency. (iii) Reasons for moving from last usual address are listed in order of priority. If a respondent gives more than one main reason for moving home and can not decide which reason was more influential, then the reason highest on the list is coded.

2.4.4 Changes in Family/Household Composition

Outline The aim of this topic is to obtain data for analysis of family/household dynamics. Information will be used to determine the probabilities of transitions of individuals between one type of family/household and another; in such an analysis the individual is the unit of study. This information will be developed to simulate future trends and is directed towards producing estimations and/or projections of families and households. The required information will include identifying all changes in living arrangements between two dates (a year apart) and ascertaining the main reasons these changes occurred.

Main data items

- marital/family status at date of survey;
- marital/family status at date one year prior to survey;
- family/household composition at date of survey;
- family/household composition one year prior to survey (for Australian resident) or family/household composition immediately prior to arriving in Australia (for overseas immigrant);

- reasons for change in family/household composition during the twelve months preceding the survey.

Main populations All persons aged 15 years or over.

Limitations (i) A family/household's composition may have changed more than once throughout the twelve month period. (ii) The data items for this topic are included in the survey for a specific purpose: the construction of estimates and/or projections of families and households. Data for this topic will not be available as part of the *Unit Record File on Magnetic Tape* (4417.0). Data requests for this topic should be directed to Jim Elliot, ABS Canberra, on (06) 252 5580.

2.5 FAMILY NEEDS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

2.5.1 Employment Support

Outline Data from this topic enable users to explore the characteristics of groups subject to labour market disadvantage, and those receiving or potentially in need of particular support structures relating to employment. The data will be used to develop and evaluate labour market and training programs. Employment support can be correlated with variables such as age left school, post-school qualifications, occupation, sex, and family structure.

This topic has three components:

- Provision of employment support
- Receipt of employment support
- Barriers to labour force participation

Component Provision of employment support

This component will be used to analyse the characteristics of persons who help other family members to look for work or get a job both in and across households, and to conduct analyses on the relationship between providers and receivers of support. It will also identify the kinds of families within which employment support occurs.

Main data items

- whether help provided to any family member to look for work or get a job, position, apprenticeship or business over last twelve months;
- relationship of family member receiving most support.

Main populations All persons aged 15 years or over.

Limitations (i) Help provided to an unemployed person to acquire work, or to a person trying to re-enter the labour force, or to an employed person to find another job are not differentiated in the survey (and therefore are not able to be tabulated separately). (ii) Similarly, no separate tabulations can be made on help to find a job as opposed to help to find an apprenticeship or to start a business.

Component Receipt of employment support

This component will be used to determine the kinds of persons who have received, or who have needed but not received, support to look for work or to get a job. Major non-family sources of employment support, such as the Commonwealth Employment Service (CES), are identified in this component.

Main data items

- whether help was received from any person or organisation to look for work over last twelve months;
- provider of most help to look for work;
- whether help was received from any person or organisation to get a job, position, apprenticeship or business over last twelve months;
- provider of most help to get that job, position, apprenticeship or business over last twelve months.

Main populations (i) Persons aged 15 years or over looking for full-time or part-time work and those not looking for work who would like a full-time or a part-time job. (ii) Persons aged 15 years or over who started a new job, position, apprenticeship or business within the last twelve months.

Limitations (i) While populations for the unemployed and those not in the labour force can be separately identified, the population for those who have re-entered the labour force cannot be separately identified. (ii) No separate tabulations can be made on help to find a job as opposed to help to find an apprenticeship or to start a business.

Component Barriers to labour force participation

This component allows those persons who would like to, but cannot, enter the labour force to be identified and analysed. Reasons for not being able to start work, classified under the headings of personal considerations and family responsibilities, are separately identified.

Main data items

- whether, even though not looking for work, wanted a full-time or part-time job;
- main reason for not looking for work;
- if offered a job, whether able to start work within the next week;
- main reason for not being able to start work within the next week.

Main populations (i) Unemployed persons aged 15 years or over. (ii) Persons aged 15 years or over not in the labour force (excluding those permanently unable to work).

2.5.2 Payment of Education Expenses

Outline The topic obtains data on which person or organisation provides most of the financial support for people in higher education or for those in school who are not living at home. It is recognised that in most families the burden of cost lies either with parents or with the students themselves and because of this the difficulty these individuals have in coping with paying education costs is assessed. Analysis of data from this topic will determine the level of dependency that young people in education have on parents. Data can be correlated with employment status and family support variables.

This topic has three components:

- Payment of own education expenses
- Payment of education expenses for children
- Barriers to education participation

Component Payment of own education expenses

This component enables the user to compare the characteristics of those persons in full or part-time higher education who are paying for their own education with those who are being supported by other sources, either family or non-family.

Main data items

- whether person has paid most of her/his own education expenses over last six months;
- provider of most expenses for person's education over last six months (if not self);
- current difficulty coping with meeting expenses for education, for those persons paying most of their own expenses.

Main populations (i) Persons aged 15 years or over who are studying full-time or part-time at a technical college, university or other tertiary institution. (ii) Persons aged 25 years or over who are studying full-time or part-time at a school.

Limitations (i) The source not the amount of payment for education expenses is sought for this component. (ii) Only the provider of most education expenses is collected, whether this be self, other family members, or an external source. The data therefore do not give a comprehensive picture of how a student meets their education financial obligations. Only certain key family relationships are collected for the *Provider of most expenses* item. (iii) There is also no attempt to collect information on how a person covers their living expenses when undertaking study, as distinct from the actual outlays for fees, equipment and other expenses which are directly paid for education items. (iv) The survey collects information from persons over 15 years of age. However if persons aged 15-24 have been identified as being in school, they are sequenced past the questions covering this component. The data thus exclude expenses for all schooling except for those over 25 years who have returned to complete their school education.

Component Payment of education expenses for children

This component looks at whether a parent and/or their spouse pays the expenses for the full-time education of a child or children living outside the household. It also gauges the overall difficulty a parent might have in coping with the expenses of all children in and outside the household who are aged between 15 and 24 years. It will be used to examine the kinds of individuals and families who are providing education support to children categorised as dependents.

Main data items

- whether any person has at least one non UR child aged 15-24 who is studying full-time at a school, technical college, university or other educational institution;
- whether one parent or both has paid most of the education expenses for non UR child or children aged 15-24 in full-time education over last six months;
- whether expenses paid by parents for child or children aged 15-24 in full-time education include accommodation expenses;
- current difficulty parent has coping with meeting education expenses of child or children aged 15-24 in full-time education.

Main populations Either parent (usually mother) of non UR persons who are studying full-time at a school, technical college, university or other educational institution.

Limitations (i) As for the previous component, the source, not the amount of payment for education expenses is sought for this component. (ii) A distinction between private and public schooling is not made and thus there is no indication of the extent of the education costs. (iii) This component does not indicate how many children are in full-time education or how many are being supported wholly or in part by their parent or parents. The data are designed to give an aggregate picture only of the cost to parents of their child's or children's education and how difficult it is to meet that cost.

Component Barriers to education participation

Outline The purpose of this topic is to examine the kinds of people who are not able to study at the desired rate of participation because of family responsibilities, financial considerations, or other reasons such as availability of places, disability or ill health. Analysis of the topic will allow researchers to examine the potential level of disadvantage of specific groups in the community.

Main data items

- whether any person aged 15 years or over not currently studying has wanted to study either full-time or part-time over last six months;

- whether any person aged 15 years or over currently studying part-time has wanted to study full-time over last six months;
- reasons person is not studying (full-time) now.

Main populations (i) Persons aged 15 years or over not currently studying. (ii) Persons aged 15 years or over studying part-time.

Limitations The populations for this topic comprise those persons not studying at all, as well as those who are already studying part-time and would like to study full-time. When undertaking analysis users should note that these two population groups have very different profiles.

2.5.3 Income Support

Outline Income support is an integral part of Commonwealth and State government social welfare programs. The survey identifies family members receiving income support and those that give it. Also collected are data on the type of support received/provided. As part of this topic respondents are asked to make an assessment of their capacity to pay specified household expenses.

This topic has two components:

- Provision of income support
- Receipt of income support

Component Provision of income support

This component relates to income support given to both UR and non UR family members.

Main data items

- whether provided any family member with any of a specified list of gifts (see *Glossary*);
- relationship of family member receiving most support;
- type of support provided;
- whether pays child support/maintenance;
- age of each child for whom support/maintenance is paid;
- sex of each child for whom support/maintenance is paid.

Main populations (i) All persons aged 15 years or over. (ii) Items on child support/maintenance are asked of all parents of natural children aged 17 years or under.

Limitations (i) Information on sources of income support is limited to the receiver of most support only. (ii) No attempt is made to index the value of gifts to present-day figures. (iii) The amount of child support/maintenance paid is not collected.

Component Receipt of income support

Unlike the provision of income support component, this component only relates to help received from family members outside the household.

Main data items

- whether received any of a specified list of gifts from any non UR family member over last twelve months (see *Glossary*);
- relationship of family member providing most support;
- type of support received;
- whether received inheritance of \$10,000 or more from any family member over last ten years;
- relationship of family member providing greatest monetary inheritance;
- difficulty coping with paying bills and making loan repayments.

Main populations All persons aged 15 years or over.

Limitations (i) Receipt of income support questions relate only to help provided by relatives living outside the household. (ii) Information on sources of income support is limited to the provider of most support only. (iii) No attempt is made to index the value of gifts to present-day figures.

2.5.4 Transport

Outline The topic examines transport provided to family members. It assesses the transport usage of persons and families who are identified as having particular transport requirements. These requirements may be related to a lack of access to private transportation, heavy or specialised transport usage, or location in rural, outer urban or underserved areas. Families may have specific needs because a disproportionate amount of support falls to one person, or transport resources must be juggled with a range of other factors such as employment, child care requirements, or care for the disabled or elderly. It is envisaged that the data from this topic will be used to plan transport services and to identify target groups subject to specific kinds of disadvantage, such as locational disadvantage.

This topic has three components:

- Transport to work
- Transport for the sick, disabled and elderly
- Transport of children to school and/or child care

Component Transport to work

Data on transport to work may be used to analyse transport usage patterns, particularly in relation to employment issues.

Main data items

- form of regular transport to work over last six months;
- provision of regular transport to work of UR/non UR family members over last six months;
- relationship of family member who was most often driven to work;
- length of time taken to travel to work.

Main populations All persons aged 15 years or over who are employed.

Limitations (i) Only data on journey to work are collected. (ii) Time, not distance (as in the Census) is collected in this survey as it was assumed that this was the most appropriate and most self-contained measure of potential disadvantage. (iii) Data are unlikely to be available at a low level of disaggregation, limiting the use of these items for small area analysis.

Component Transport for the sick, disabled and elderly

Data for this topic are expected to complement data on the provision of personal care/home help. They will be used to assess the burden of care of family members in relation to such variables as barriers to employment and education, child care, age and relationship to the person needing care.

The populations for these data items have been limited to the long-term ill, the disabled and the elderly because these groups are assumed to have a greater need for transport assistance.

Main data items

- provision of regular transport to UR/non UR family members because of their long-term illness, disability or old age (current and over last 6 months);
- relationship of family member receiving most transport;
- difficulty coping with providing that family member with transport.

Main populations All persons aged 17 years and over.

Limitations (i) Data on provision of transport only are collected. No information is available on those needing transport because of their illness, disability or old age, and only limited information on the characteristics of those receiving transport for these reasons. (ii) The purpose of being transported e.g. shopping, medical appointment, is not collected as part of the component.

Component Transport of children to school/child care

Data are collected on a combined basis for all children in a family, using mother as informant or father if mother is not usually resident in the household. The aim of the

topic's inclusion is to assess who within the family is providing most of the transport for children, and how much of a drain this is on the family's resources.

Main data items

- child(ren)'s form of regular transport to school and/or child care over last six months;
- relationship of regular driver/walker of child(ren) to parent of child(ren);
- parent's difficulty in managing transport of child(ren) to school/child care.

Main populations (i) Either parent of at least one UR child in formal child care over the last six months. (ii) Either parent (usually mother) of at least one UR child aged 4-11 years.

Limitations (i) No question on school attendance for those under 15 years of age is included in the survey and for this reason the criterion for inclusion in the population for this topic is whether any UR child in the family is aged 4-11 years. (ii) An additional limitation is that only transport of children of primary school age is included in the survey. (iii) Only aggregate data for the family have been collected, making an assessment of the individual transport needs within the family not possible. (iv) Data on difficulty coping with managing transport to school/child care have only been collected from one person within the family, usually the mother. This factor complicates an analysis of burden of care at the family level.

2.5.5 Accommodation Support

Outline As retention rates for secondary and further education increase, parents are increasingly called upon to provide accommodation for their children beyond the teenage years. Youth unemployment also affects the degree of reliance on parents for free accommodation. The extent to which family members help each other obtain land, homes, other types of residence and home improvements, particularly assistance provided by parents to children, is investigated as part of this topic.

Data on the sources and cost of accommodation, and the provision and receipt of free accommodation, are included under *Housing* (Section 2.6.5).

This topic has two components:

- Provision of accommodation support
- Receipt of accommodation support

Component Provision of accommodation support

Main data items

- whether provided non-usual resident child(ren) any of a specified list of gifts and loans over last ten years (see *Glossary*);
- child who received most help;
- type of support provided.

Main populations All parents of at least one non UR child aged 15 years or over.

Limitations No attempt is made to index the value of accommodation gifts or loans to present-day figures.

Component Receipt of accommodation support

Main data items

- whether received from any family member any of a specified list of gifts and loans over last ten years (see *Glossary*);
- relationship of family member providing most support;
- type of support received;
- whether received inheritance of land, house or other residence over last ten years.

Main populations All persons aged 15-59 years.

Limitations (i) The population for data items on receipt of homes, land, other residences, home improvements and accommodation inheritances is limited to those aged 15-59 years. This is because it is believed to be the age group where gifts of this kind have the greatest benefit to family functioning. (ii) No attempt is made to index the value of accommodation gifts, loans or inheritances to present-day figures.

2.5.6 Personal Care/Home Help

Outline This topic provides data on the characteristics of persons who are receiving care because of a long term health condition, disability or old age. Information is also obtained on those who care for other family members. Care in this context includes help with personal tasks such as the preparation of meals and the administration of drugs, as well as home maintenance tasks such as house cleaning and repairs. The main uses of the data relate to establishing how dependent or how self-sufficient families and individuals are in their caring responsibilities. Data will be correlated with variables including family structure, employment practices, income and age.

The topic has three components:

- Provision of personal care/home help support
- Receipt of personal care/home help support
- Balance between work and caring for sick, disabled or elderly family members

Component Provision of personal care/home help support

This component covers personal care/home help that family members give to other family members, both within and outside households.

Main data items

- whether help with personal care/home help tasks has been given to any UR or non UR family member over last six months;
- whether help was needed because of long-term illness, disability or old age;
- number of family members given personal care/home help from person over last six months;
- relationship to person of family member given most personal care/home help over last six months;
- kind of support provided to family member being given most personal care/home help over last six months;
- whether help still provided to family member being given most personal care/home help over last six months;
- difficulty coping with caring for family member currently given most personal care/home help;
- difficulty coping with caring for family member who was given most personal care/home help over last six months.

Main populations (i) All persons aged 15 years or over. Most items are limited to persons aged 15 years or over who are currently providing personal care/home help to a family member because of their long-term illness, disability or old age, or have done so over the last six months.

Limitations (i) No separate indicator of disability or chronic illness is given in the survey. Those with a chronic illness or a disability are only identified if they are in need of or receive support because of their illness/disability. No distinction is made between support for the disabled, chronically ill or elderly. (ii) The populations for this topic comprise those persons who are currently caring for their sick, disabled or elderly relative, as well as those who have cared for their sick, disabled or elderly relative over the last six months but no longer do so. When undertaking analysis users should note that these two population groups have very different profiles

Component Receipt of personal care/home help

This component gives data on which persons within the family and household need and receive care from a family member or non-family individual or organisation. It will enable users to examine the characteristics of those in need and receipt of care, and the source of care (if care is being given).

Main data items

- whether personal care/home help has been received over last six months;
- whether personal care/home help has been needed over last six months;

- whether personal care/home help was needed because of long-term illness, disability or old age;
- relationship to person of family member providing most personal care/home help over last six months;
- kind of support received from family member providing most personal care/home help over last six months;
- need for more personal care/home help than that currently received;
- source of need for (more) personal care/home help.

Main populations (i) All persons aged 15 years or over. Most items are limited to those respondents who have needed or received personal care/home help because of a long-term illness, disability or old age.

Limitations See *Provision of personal care/home help*, note (i).

Component Balance between work and caring for sick, disabled or elderly family members

The analysis of this component will enable users to gain an understanding of any extra burden of care placed on carers of the sick, disabled and elderly because they are employed.

Main data items

- level of difficulty coping with working and caring for family member currently receiving personal care/home help;
- level of difficulty coping with working and caring for family member who received most personal care/home help over last six months;
- main difficulty being experienced in coping with working and caring for family member currently receiving most personal care/home help;
- main difficulty experienced in coping with working and caring for family member who received most personal care/home help over last six months;

Main populations (i) Employed persons aged 15 years or over who have provided personal care/home help to a family member over the last six months because of a long-term illness, disability or old age. (ii) Employed persons aged 15 years or over who are currently providing personal care/home help to a family member because of a long-term illness, disability or old age.

Limitations See *Provision of personal care/home help*, notes (i) and (ii).

2.5.7 Child Care

Outline Access to child care is the focal point for the smooth functioning of most families with young children.

It plays a vital role in allowing parents access to social and leisure activities, and education and employment opportunities. These opportunities may lead to higher incomes and an improved standard of living. Many families with children are supported by relatives, friends and neighbours. The way in which care is shared among this collective of informal helpers is of interest to researchers and policy makers.

Recognising the importance of learning more about the relationships between child care and other spheres of family life, it was decided that the Family Survey would concentrate on providing a broad level summary of child care use for each family (both formal and informal). Detailed child care data are available from the specialised child care surveys conducted periodically by the ABS (see for example *Child Care, Australia, 1990* (4402.0)).

This topic quantifies the amount of child care received by each family and identifies those which do not receive sufficient child care. Personal characteristics and other details about informal carers are available for this topic.

This topic has four components:

- Provision of informal child care
- Receipt of formal child care
- Receipt of informal child care
- Balance of work and child care

Component Provision of informal child care

Main data items

- whether provided informal child care to non UR 0-11 year old family child(ren) over last six months;
- whether usually provides informal child care to non UR 0-11 year old family child(ren) each week;
- usual number of hours of informal child care provided to family child(ren) per week;
- circumstances of non-weekly (irregular) informal child care provided;
- relationship of family member most looked after.

Main populations All persons aged 15 years or over.

Limitations *Provision of child care* is collected only with respect to non UR 0-11 year-old children.

Component Receipt of formal child care

Main data items

- whether used formal child care at any time over last six months;
- number of children who still attend formal child care;
- usual aggregate number of hours used by family each week;

- whether parent (usually mother) would like their child(ren) attending formal care to attend more often or for longer periods;
- whether parent (usually mother) would like their child(ren) not attending formal care to attend formal child care.

Main populations Either parent (usually mother) of at least one UR 0-11 year old child.

Limitations (i) In families with more than one child attending formal care, individual child information is not available. Data relate to the overall situation of the family only. (ii) Child care attendance is relevant to UR 0-11 year old children only. Formal child care questions were not asked with respect to boarding school children. (iii) The specific type of formal child care centre attended is not known.

Component Receipt of informal child care

Main data items

- whether informal child care received at any time over last six months;
- number of children still receiving informal child care;
- usual aggregate number of hours of informal child care used by family each week;
- circumstances in which non-weekly (irregular) informal child care is received;
- provider of most informal child care to family;
- whether parent (usually mother) would like their child(ren) who is/are cared for informally to be looked after more often or for longer periods by:
 - other UR family members;
 - other non UR family members;
 - neighbours/friends;
 - privately employed persons;
 - any other persons.
- whether parent (usually mother) would like their child(ren) who is/are not cared for informally to be looked after by:
 - other UR family members;
 - other non UR family members;
 - neighbours/friends;
 - privately employed persons;
 - any other persons.

Main populations Either parent (usually mother) of at least one UR 0-11 year old child.

Limitations (i) *Informal child care* provides complete summary data for families with up to 3 children being looked after informally. For families with 4 or more children receiving informal care, data are available for the eldest, youngest and second youngest of these children

only. It is expected families with four or more children will account for less than five per cent of the total number of families receiving informal child care. (ii) *Receipt of informal child care* is relevant to UR 0-11 year old children only. Informal child care questions were not asked with respect to boarding school children. (iii) Information on sources of informal child care is limited to identifying the provider of most care to the family.

Component Balance of work and child care

This component allows the user to investigate the difficulty employed persons have in meeting their work and child care responsibilities (if any).

Main data items

- difficulty coping with going to work and caring for child(ren);
- main difficulty experienced in coping with going to work and caring for child(ren).

Main populations Employed parents aged 15 years or over having at least one 0-11 year-old UR child.

Limitations The difficulty of managing work and the care of specific children in the family is not examined - parents are only asked to outline the difficulty of managing their responsibilities in relation to all their children aged 0-11 as a group.

2.6 SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

In addition to specific support and demographic information, the Family Survey contains data describing key socio-economic and general characteristics of persons and families. These variables can be linked to other data obtained in the survey in order to identify specific population groups. Main data items and the categories likely to be available are listed and explained.

2.6.1 Ethnicity

<i>Main data items</i>	<i>Data item categories</i>
Birthplace Birthplace of mother Birthplace of father	Abbreviated classifications to be used in standard output will be at the major and minor group level; other groupings may be available on request.
Period of residence in Australia	Data stored as year of arrival; groupings of period of residence or year of arrival categories available on request subject to confidentiality restrictions.
English language capacity	interview fully in English interview partly in English interview in language other than English interview obtained by proxy because of language difficulties interview obtained by proxy for other reasons

Main populations All persons aged 15 years or over.

Limitations (i) *English language capacity* is only a proxy measure of language capability, based on the interviewer's perception of the person's competence during the interview process. (ii) Some measures of ethnicity, such as language(s) spoken at home, have not been included in the survey.

2.6.2 Employment

<i>Main data items</i>	<i>Data item categories</i>
Employment status	employed unemployed not in the labour force
Status of worker	for an employer for wages or salary in own business with employees in own business with no employees without pay in a family business other
Main occupation	Coded according to the Australian Standard of Occupations (ASCO); classified to the eight major groups; other groupings may be made available on request subject to confidentiality restrictions.
Hours worked per week	Refers to all jobs; groupings available on request subject to confidentiality restrictions.
Whether works full-time/part-time	Refers to all jobs; classified as full-time if worked 35 hours or more per week.
Whether multiple job holder	has more than one job has one job only
Length of time since last had full-time or part-time job	less than 6 weeks 6 weeks to less than 3 months 3 months to less than 6 months 6 months to less than 1 year 1 year to less than 2 years 2 years to less than 5 years 5 years or longer has never had a job

Main populations (i) *Employment status* is obtained for all persons aged 15 years or over. (ii) *Length of time since last had full-time or part-time job* is asked of all persons aged 15 years or over, who are unemployed or not in the labour force (excluding those permanently unable to work). (iii) All other data items for this topic are limited to employed persons aged 15 years or over only.

Limitations (i) The questions used to determine the above items in the Family Survey do not necessarily conform to Labour Force naming conventions, definitions or reference periods because survey space limitations constrained the collection methodology. Users of data should refer to *Labour Force Statistics, Australia* (6101.0) and the *Glossary* (see Appendix A) in this publication if they wish to compare the differences between standard Labour Force definitions with those used for this survey. (ii) This topic does not cover the concepts of long-term unemployment or re-entry to the labour force.

2.6.3 Income

<i>Main data items</i>	<i>Data item categories</i>
Source(s) of income	wages/salary income from Limited Liability Company family allowance family allowance supplement own business/share in partnership government pensions/benefits rent from investment properties dividends interest child support/maintenance superannuation worker's compensation/accident/sickness insurance other regular sources don't know/not stated no reported sources of income
Total amount of gross weekly income	Dollar amounts as reported by respondents are recorded and will be available as income ranges; aggregated as requested, subject to confidentiality restrictions.
Amounts of gross weekly income	Dollar amounts available for the following sources: wages/salary, including those from own Limited Liability Company own business/share in partnership government pensions/benefits investment sources other sources
Type of government pension/benefit received	Sources recorded are: Age pension Service pension Unemployment benefit/Job search allowance/Newstart Disability support/Invalid pension Sole parent pension Sickness allowance Wife's/Carer's pension Widow's pension (Class B) Special benefits Austudy/Abstudy Disability/War Widow's pension Child disability allowance Overseas pension or benefit Other government pension/benefit

Main populations All persons aged 15 years or over.

Limitations (i) Comparability of Family Survey data with other sources is affected by the collection of current rather than annual amounts of income. This is particularly so for investment sources such as interest. (ii) Data on rental property income was subject to some collection difficulties with respect to the reporting of net losses in rental income.

2.6.4 Education

<i>Main data items</i>	<i>Data item categories</i>
Age left school	never attended school left school aged 13 years or younger left school aged 14 years left school aged 15 years left school aged 16 years left school aged 17 years left school aged 18 years or over
Post school qualifications	bachelor degree or higher trade qualification or apprenticeship certificate or diploma other post-school qualification no post-school qualification
Status of student	studying full-time studying part-time studying by correspondence full-time studying by correspondence part-time
Type of educational institution	school technical college/TAFE university/other tertiary educational institution other educational institution

Main populations

(i) *Age left school* data are obtained for all persons 15 years or over except those currently attending school. (ii) *Post school qualifications* data are obtained for all persons 15 years or over except those currently attending school and those who have never been to school. (iii) *Student status* and *Type of educational institution* data are obtained for all persons who are currently studying. (iv) Persons aged between 6 and 14 years are assumed to be attending school.

Limitations (i) *Post-school qualifications* which have not been accredited in Australia, including overseas qualifications and certificates obtained through completion of hobby courses, may be recorded in some cases. (ii) Some persons aged between 6 and 14 years may not be attending school as is assumed in the survey.

2.6.5 Housing

<i>Main data items</i>	<i>Data item categories</i>
Type of dwelling	separate house semi-detached/row/terrace house (some storeys delineated) flat attached to house other flat/apartment (some storeys delineated) caravan not in caravan park houseboat improvised home/campers out house/flat attached to shop special dwelling (12 types delineated)
Nature of occupancy	owned purchasing renting boarding living rent or board free other

<i>Main data items</i>	<i>Data item categories</i>
Usual amount of loan or mortgage repayment(s) per week	coded as dollar amounts (to be aggregated as necessary)
Amount of rent/board payment per week	coded as dollar amounts (to be aggregated as necessary)
Type of landlord	state housing commission/trust employer mother father parents other relative other person
	} UR and non UR
Provider of free accommodation	employer other mother father parents other relative other person
	} UR and non UR

Main populations (i) *Dwelling type* is obtained for each private and special dwelling. (ii) All couples and each other person aged 15 years or over are the initial population for the remaining *Housing* data items. (iii) Persons living in the same household as their parent(s) and not paying rent/board are assumed to be receiving free accommodation from their parent(s).

Limitations (i) Total housing costs are not collected in this survey; property, water and sewerage rates are excluded. (ii) Persons aged 15 years or over whose parent(s) are usually resident in the same household and who live rent or board free may receive free accommodation from a person or persons other than their parent(s). This information is not collected in the survey.

2.6.6 Health

<i>Main data items</i>	<i>Data item categories</i>
Self-assessed health status	excellent good fair poor

Main populations All persons aged 15 years or over.

Limitations Respondents' self-assessment of health status correlated highly with other health status indicators in the 1989/90 National Health Survey. However, because the number and type of medical conditions have not been identified, the use of this data item in the Family Survey may be limited in its application.

2.6.7 Location

<i>Main data items</i>	<i>Data item categories</i>
Postcode Collection District (CD)	Postcode and CD data will be used to construct variables which cover the following classifications: States, Territories and Australia; capital city/remainder of state, where the capital city is defined as the area covered by the relevant city Statistical Division; Statistical Divisions within each State and Territory; inner city, urban fringe and ex-metropolitan regions.

Main populations All persons aged 15 years or over.

CHAPTER THREE

SURVEY DESIGN AND OPERATION

3.1 SAMPLE DESIGN AND SELECTION PROCEDURES

3.1.1 Sample Design

Decisions on the appropriate sample size, distribution and method of selection are dependent upon a number of considerations. These include the aims of the survey, the topics involved, the level of disaggregation and accuracy at which the survey estimates are required, and the costs and operational constraints of conducting the survey.

For the Family Survey, a sample size approximating one third of one per cent of the total population was chosen. This equals approximately 21,300 private dwelling households and selected special dwelling units throughout all States and Territories of Australia. This sample size and distribution was considered sufficient to provide:

- detailed person-level information for each State, Territory and Australia;
- detailed family-level information for Australia, and relatively detailed family-level information for the more populous states;
- relatively detailed data for capital city/rest of the state areas within each state;
- broad level estimates for regions within the more populous states;
- estimates for those characteristics which are relatively common and sub-populations which are relatively large and spread fairly evenly geographically.

These factors enable an acceptable level of accuracy and reliability after allowing for sample loss through factors such as vacant dwellings inadvertently selected in the sample, non-contacts and persons out of scope or coverage.

As regional estimates required enhanced reliability, the sample base was increased in the ACT by 100 per cent. Costs associated with the collection and input processing of data for the additional sample were met by the ACT government.

3.1.2 Sample Selection

The Family Survey was conducted on a multi-stage area sample of private dwellings (houses, flats, etc) and a list sample of special dwellings (hotels, motels, caravans, etc).

The area-based selection of the private dwelling sample ensured that all sections of the population were represented in the sample. Each State and Territory was divided into a number of areas or 'strata', each consisting of a Statistical Local Area (SLA) or group of SLAs (two SLAs per strata on average). This was determined by recognizing the homogeneity in relation to socio-economic characteristics of households within the stratum.

Each stratum in turn contained a number of Collection Districts (CDs) which were determined from the 1986 Population Census. Each CD contained approximately 250 dwellings. The sample was selected to ensure that each dwelling within the same stratum had an equal probability of selection.

In capital cities and other major urban or high population density areas the sample was selected in three stages:

- a sample of CDs was selected from each stratum with the probability proportional to the number of dwellings in each CD;
- each selected CD was divided into groups of dwellings or blocks of similar size, and one block was selected from each CD, with probability proportional to the number of dwellings on the block;
- within each selected block a list of all private dwellings was prepared and a systematic random sample of dwellings was selected. Dwellings selected were not contiguous, with 8 to 16 dwellings between each one selected.

In areas with low population density, each stratum was divided into units, usually corresponding to towns or SLAs, or a combination of both. One or two units were also selected from each stratum with the probability of selection being proportional to the number of dwellings in each unit. Within the selected units the sample of dwellings was collected in the same manner as outlined for high density population areas. The effect of this approach is that a sample was not necessarily selected from each SLA. Instead those selected represented neighbouring SLAs with similar characteristics.

The sample of special dwellings was selected separately from the sample of private dwellings to ensure they were adequately represented in the sample. Excluded from the sample of special dwellings were: hospitals and homes (general and other hospitals, convalescent homes, homes for the aged, retirement villages, homes for the handicapped, orphanages); boarding schools; and prisons and reformatories (see *Glossary for classifications of special dwellings included in the sample*). Special dwelling strata were formed by combining a list of special dwellings to a level corresponding to Statistical Subdivisions, Divisions or combinations of these. The sample of special dwellings was then selected in two stages:

- a sample was selected from each stratum with probability proportional to the average occupancy of the special dwelling;
- a list of units (rooms, beds, etc) was prepared for each selected special dwelling and a systematic random sample of units was thus selected.

All persons within the selected dwellings/units were included in the survey, subject to scope and coverage provisions. The selection methods described above ensured a known and equal chance of selection for each person within the strata, the exception being the ACT strata which had a proportionately larger sample of dwellings.

3.2 SCOPE AND COVERAGE

3.2.1 Scope of the Survey

The Family Survey covered rural and urban areas across all States and Territories of Australia, and included residents of both private and selected special dwellings (*refer to Glossary*). All households within selected private dwellings were included in the survey as were a random sample of households within selected special dwellings.

The following persons living in Australia, but not usually considered part of the Australian resident population, were excluded from the scope of the survey:

- diplomatic personnel of overseas governments and non-Australian members of their household;
- non-Australian resident service personnel stationed in Australia and their dependents;
- overseas visitors whose usual place of residence is outside Australia.

Temporary residents (other than those above) working in Australia, or in Australia as students or settlers, and their dependents were included in the survey.

3.2.2 Coverage Rules

Coverage rules were designed to ensure that, as far as possible, persons remaining within the scope of the survey (after the above exclusions were applied) had only one chance of being selected.

Usual residents of selected private dwellings were included in the survey if they were staying at, or had stayed at, the selected dwelling for any part of the enumeration period (2 March 1992 to 29 May 1992). Usual residents who were absent from the dwelling for the entire three month period were excluded.

Visitors who usually lived in a private dwelling were included in the survey only if they had not been at their own usual dwelling for any part of the enumeration period.

Persons in special dwellings in the scope of the survey were included if they were living in a special dwelling and would not be at their own private dwelling for any part of the enumeration period.

3.3 DATA COLLECTION

Information was obtained in the Family Survey by trained ABS interviewers, in the main through personal interviews with each adult member (aged 15 years or older) of selected households in scope and coverage of the survey. Aspects of the data collection are discussed below under

the headings of interviews, interviewers and questionnaires.

3.3.1 Interviews

Selected households were initially approached by mail, informing them of their selection in the survey and advising them that an interviewer would call to arrange a suitable time to conduct the survey interview. A brochure, providing some background information to the survey, information concerning the interview process and a guarantee of confidentiality was included in the initial approach letter.

A Household Form was completed at the initial visit with information provided by a responsible adult member of the household. A personal interview was conducted where possible with each adult member of the selected households. Children aged 15 to 17 years were interviewed with their consent and the knowledge and permission of a parent or responsible adult. If permission was not received to allow the child to be interviewed personally, a parent or responsible adult was interviewed on their behalf. Children aged 0 to 14 years were not interviewed; a parent, guardian or close relative was asked to answer questions about their children as appropriate.

In some instances adult respondents were unable to answer for themselves because of old age, illness, intellectual disability or difficulty with the English language. In these cases a person responsible for them was interviewed on their behalf, provided the interviewer was assured that this was acceptable to the subject person. Where there were language difficulties, other persons in the household may have interpreted if this was suggested by the respondent. If not, arrangements were made for the interview to be conducted either by an ABS interviewer fluent in the respondent's language or with an ABS interpreter.

In order to obtain a personal interview with appropriate respondents, interviewers made appointments to call back as necessary to the household. Interviews may have been conducted in private or in the presence of other household members according to the wishes of the respondent.

In total, conduct of the survey averaged 45 minutes per household, including all personal (and/or proxy) interviews.

3.3.2 Interviewers

Interviewers for the Family Survey were primarily recruited from a pool of trained interviewers with previous experience on ABS household surveys. All phases of training emphasized understanding of the survey concepts, definitions and procedures in order to ensure that a standard approach was employed by all interviewers concerned.

Interviewers were allocated a number of dwellings (a workload) at which to conduct interviews. Overall, workloads averaged 25 to 30 dwellings, to be enumerated over a two week period from March 2 to May 29, 1992.

3.3.3 Questionnaires

Two questionnaires were developed for and used in the Family Survey, as outlined below:

Household Form —

This form was used for the private dwelling sample to collect basic demographic data (e.g. sex, age, birthplace) and details of the relationship between individuals in each household. This information was collected from any responsible adult within the household. The form was also used to apply scope and coverage rules (*see Section 3.2*) and to record details of calls by the interviewer to the household and the subsequent response status of the household in the survey (e.g. fully responding, refusal, vacant dwelling etc.). A similar form (the Special Dwelling Form) was used for the special dwellings in the sample in the same way as the household form.

Personal Interview Questionnaire —

The questionnaire was designed to be administered using standard ABS procedures for conducting interview surveys, having regard to the particular aims of the survey and of the individual topics within it, and to obtain valid

and reliable results (*see Section 3.6.3*). Most of the information from the Household Form was transcribed to the personal questionnaire during the interview, or later during office coding. This ensured that each individual in the survey could be cross-referenced to the correct household and family information.

To ensure consistency of approach, interviewers were instructed to ask the interview questions as written in the questionnaire. The questions included those used in association with 'prompt cards'.

The personal interview questionnaire, together with the Household Form and prompt cards, are available in the *Data Reference Package* (4419.0).

3.4 RESPONSE RATES

In total, 21,288 private and special dwelling households were selected in the sample for the Family Survey. As shown in Table 1 below, this was reduced to an effective sample of 17,798 after sample loss.

TABLE ONE: SAMPLE STATUS BY HOUSEHOLD TYPE AND AREA

	Private dwelling households	Special dwelling units	Metropolitan areas	Ex-metropolitan areas	Total	
					Number	Per cent
Total sample	19,560	1,728	12,718	8,570	21,288	100
Sample loss(a)						
Scope/coverage	292	417	334	375	709	3.3
Vacant dwellings	1,291	870	709	1,452	2,161	10.2
Other	581	39	318	302	620	2.9
Total sample loss	2,164	1,326	1,361	2,129	3,490	16.4
Effective sample	17,396	402	11,357	6,441	17,798	83.6

(a) Those households where no questionnaires at all were obtained for reasons other than non-response e.g. all persons in the household were excluded on scope/coverage grounds; dwelling was vacant, demolished or converted to non-dwelling use.

TABLE TWO: RESPONSE RATES, SURVEY OF FAMILIES IN AUSTRALIA

	Number (Persons)	Per cent
Fully completed questionnaires obtained	33,824	95.7
Refusal(a)	800	2.3
Non-contact(a)	688	1.9
Other non-response(b)	22	..
Total	35,334	100.0

(a) Includes full and partial refusal/unavailability to complete questionnaire.

(b) Includes non-response due to death or illness, or inadequate schedule due to language problems.

From the effective sample of households, 35,334 persons were in on scope/coverage of the survey. Fully completed questionnaires were obtained from 12,375 families, with the overall response rate being 95.7 per cent of all persons interviewed (Table 2).

3.5 DATA PROCESSING

A combination of clerical and computer-based systems were used to process data obtained in the survey. These are outlined below.

3.5.1 Clerical Processing

Clerical edits were initially applied by interviewers to ensure the completeness and consistency of the questionnaires before being returned to the ABS. Errors or omissions identified were not referred back to the respondent; rather, the interviewer made note of any such problems and provided additional comment about individual questionnaires to an ABS office for processing.

All questionnaires were again checked on receipt in the ABS office to ensure interviewer workloads were fully accounted for and that forms for each household and respondent were completed. Problem issues identified by interviewers were resolved by office staff, where possible based on other information contained in the schedule, or on the comments provided by interviewers.

Clerical coding was performed on country of birth, occupation, industry of employment and family relationship data. An outline of each of the clerical coding tasks undertaken is provided below.

Country of birth coding:

The survey questionnaire listed the eight most frequently reported countries; interviewers were instructed to mark the appropriate box, or if the reported country was not among those eight to write in the name of the country for subsequent office coding. Country of birth was classified at the commencement of the survey according to the *Australian Standard Classification of Countries for Social Statistics* (1269.0) used in ABS population surveys.

Coding of occupation:

In the Family Survey, occupation relates to the main job held by employed respondents at the time of interview. Occupation was office coded, based on a description of the kind of work performed, as reported by respondents and recorded by interviewers. Occupation was coded to the four digit (unit group) level of the *Australian Standard Classification of Occupations* (1222.0).

Family relationship coding:

All usual residents of each sampled dwelling were grouped into family units and classified according to their position within the family. The broad framework of family type and intra- and extra-household relationships are presented in Section 2.3. Family classification details are available in *Families in Australia: Data Reference Package* (4419.0).

Data transcription:

Following the clerical checks and coding outlined above, information was captured via optical mark reader (OMR).

3.5.2 Computer Processing

An extensive range of computer edits was applied to the file to check that logical sequences had been followed in the questionnaires, necessary items were present, that specific values lay within valid ranges, and that relationships between items were within limits deemed acceptable for the purpose of this survey. The edits were designed to detect errors which may have occurred (e.g. during data transcription, clerical coding or original recording of information by the interviewer or respondent) and to identify cases which although not necessarily errors, were sufficiently unusual or close to specified limits as to warrant examination. Listings of all records involved were produced, which were then compared with the original questionnaires. Amendments were made to records on the computer file as required.

Factors or 'weights' were inserted into each responding person's record to enable the data provided by these persons to be expanded to obtain estimates relating to the whole population within the scope of the survey (see Section 3.7.2 for details of weighting).

Information from the questionnaires was stored on the computer output file in the form of data items. In some cases, items were formed directly from information recorded in individual survey questions; in others, data items have been derived from answers to several questions.

3.5.3 Creation of hierarchical file

In addition to the 'person-level file' discussed above, a file was derived containing data on families and households. Relationship details obtained at interview were used to group individuals into these units and to indicate their relationship to others within the unit.

Having grouped individual persons' records into households and families, various other data items were aggregated to produce data for these units (e.g. composition of unit, unit income and others). Units were weighted according to the mean weights of the individual persons comprising the unit.

3.6 FACTORS AFFECTING DATA QUALITY

Although care has been taken to ensure that the results of this survey are as accurate as possible, there are certain factors which affect the reliability of the results to some extent, and for which no adequate adjustments can be made. These are known as sampling error and non-sampling error.

A number of steps were taken to counter the likelihood of errors occurring in the transcription process including: training and retraining of staff; 100 per cent checking of transcriptions; periodic checks on transcripts using a ten per cent sample of interviewer workloads from each State.

Further clerical checks were performed on tabulated output data to ensure:

- * that the levels and distributions of data were consistent with that which might be expected and with comparable data from previous ABS surveys and other sources that were available;
- * that all unusual or illogical data combinations evident from the tabulations were either checked and verified against the original questionnaire or were amended as appropriate.

3.6.1 Sampling Error

Since the estimates are based on information obtained from a sample of the population, they are subject to sampling error (or sampling variability). Sampling error refers to the difference between the figures obtained from the sampled population compared to the figures obtained if the entire population was enumerated. Factors which affect the magnitude of sampling error include:

- (i) Sample design: the design chosen which is most appropriate for the survey within costs and operational constraints (see Section 3.1);
- (ii) Sample size: the larger the sample on which the estimate is based, the smaller the sampling error will be;
- (iii) Population variability: the extent to which people and families differ on the characteristics being measured.

3.6.2 Standard Error

One measure of sampling variability is the standard error. There are about two chances in three that a sample estimate will differ by less than one standard error from the figure that would have been obtained if all dwellings had been included in the survey, and about nineteen chances in twenty that the difference will be less than two standard errors. The relative standard error is the standard error expressed as a percentage of the estimate to which it relates.

Standard errors of estimates were computed using the split halves method. Details of the methodology used are provided in Appendix B. A table of standard errors will be provided in *Australia's Families* (4118.0).

Very small estimates may be subject to such high relative standard errors as to detract seriously from their value for most reasonable purposes. Only estimates with relative standard errors less than 25 per cent are considered sufficiently reliable for most purposes. However, estimates with relative standard errors between 25 per cent and 50 per cent are included in ABS publications of results from this survey, preceded by the symbol * as a caution to indicate that they are subject to high relative standard errors. Estimates with relative standard errors greater than 50 per cent may not be included in published output, but can be made available on request. Figures for these small components can in some cases be derived from pub-

lished output by subtraction, but they should not be regarded as reliable.

3.6.3 Non-Sampling Error

The imprecision due to sampling variability should not be confused with inaccuracies that may occur for other reasons such as errors in response and reporting. Inaccuracies of this type are referred to as non-sampling error. This type of error is not specific to sample surveys and can occur in a census enumeration. The major sources of non-sampling error are:

- (i) errors related to scope and coverage;
- (ii) response errors such as incorrect interpretation or wording of questions, interviewer bias, etc;
- (iii) non-response bias;
- (iv) processing errors.

(i) Errors Related to Scope and Coverage

Some dwellings may have been inadvertently included or excluded because, for example, the distinctions between private and special dwellings were unclear or lists of special dwellings were not completely current. All efforts were made to overcome such situations by constant updating of lists before the survey.

Some persons may have been inadvertently included or excluded because of difficulties in applying the coverage rules concerning household visitors or scope rules concerning persons excluded from the survey. Particular attention was paid to question design and interviewer training to ensure that such cases were kept to a minimum.

Other errors concerning the application of scope and coverage rules are outlined in Section 3.2.

(ii) Response Errors

In the survey response errors may have arisen from three main sources: deficiencies in questionnaire design and methodology; deficiencies in interviewing technique; and inaccurate reporting by the respondent.

Errors may be caused by ambiguous or misleading questions, inadequate or inconsistent definitions of terminology used, or by poor questionnaire sequence guides causing some questions to be missed. Thorough testing occurred before the questionnaire was finalised to overcome problems in questionnaire content, design and layout.

Lack of uniformity in interviewing also results in non-sampling error. Thorough training programs, regular supervision and checking of interviewers' work were methods employed to achieve and maintain uniform interviewing practices and a high level of accuracy in recording answers on the survey questionnaire (see Section 3.3.2).

A respondent's perception of the personal characteristics of the interviewers themselves is a potential source of error. These include age, sex, appearance, and manner that may influence the answers obtained.

In addition to the response errors described above, inaccurate reporting by the respondent may occur due to misunderstanding of questions, inability to recall the required information and deliberately incorrect answering to protect personal privacy.

Personal interviews in the Family Survey were not necessarily conducted in private. Due to the sensitive nature of much of the information collected, the presence of other household members during the interview may have been a potential source of response error.

The impact of the presence of a third party on a respondent's responses was assessed in Pilot Test 1 of the Family Survey. The dataset was divided into two groups: those respondents interviewed in private and those respondents interviewed in the presence of another person. Hypotheses were then formed about the possible effects of a third person on the data quality.

Valid hypothesis testing is limited by the extent to which the Pilot Test is truly representative. However, results generally indicated very little or no adverse effect on data quality due to the presence of a third party. In some instances the presence of a third person (most likely to be a spouse, parent, sibling or child of the respondent) appeared to make the respondent more likely to give complete answers than if the respondent was interviewed alone. This was particularly the case with questions referring to the receipt of assistance in the accommodation, education and income areas. However, respondents who were interviewed in private were more likely to report receiving varying forms of financial assistance from an extra-household relative than those interviewed in the presence of a third person.

(iii) Non-Response Bias

Non-response may occur when people cannot or will not co-operate, or cannot be contacted.

Non-response can introduce a bias to the results obtained in that non-respondents may have different characteristics and patterns of family support than those persons who responded to the survey. The magnitude of the bias depends upon the differences and the level of non-response.

As it was not possible to quantify accurately the nature and extent of the differences between respondents and non-respondents in the survey, every effort was made to reduce the level of non-response (see Section 3.4).

The estimation procedures used make some adjustments for non-response (see Section 3.7).

(iv) Processing Errors

Processing errors may occur at any stage between initial collection of the data and final compilation of statistics. There are four stages where errors may occur:

- clerical checking and coding — errors may have occurred during the checking of questionnaires for completeness and during coding of various items by office processors;
- data transfer — errors may have occurred during the transfer of data from the original questionnaires to computer files;
- editing — computer editing programs may have failed to detect errors which reasonably could have been corrected;
- manipulation of data — inappropriate edit checks and inaccurate weights in the estimation procedure can also introduce errors to the data (e.g. when deriving new data items from raw survey data).

A number of steps were taken to minimise errors at various stages of processing:

- detailed coding instructions, regular checking, and training of staff;
- computer edits designed to detect reporting errors;
- validation of the data file using tabulations to check the distribution of persons for different characteristics and unusual values.

3.7 ESTIMATION PROCEDURES

Estimates obtained from the survey were derived using a complex ratio estimation procedure. This ensures that survey estimates conform to an independently estimated distribution of the total population by age, sex and area (rather than to the age-sex-area distribution within the sample itself). The survey was conducted over a thirteen week period (2 March to 29 May 1992) and estimates were made to conform to the population distribution of the time frame.

3.7.1 Benchmarks

The age-sex-area (capital city/rest of state) benchmarks used in estimation were based on population estimates, produced monthly by the ABS, for the middle month of each quarter of the survey. Population benchmarks were not adjusted to take into account those population groups out of scope of the survey. Although methodologically such an adjustment was preferable, it was not possible due to the difficulty in obtaining timely and reliable information about these populations for exclusion from the benchmarks. Instead the approach adopted was to include these persons in both sample counts and benchmarks and for weighting purposes to treat them as non-respondents.

3.7.2 Weights

To obtain persons-based estimates, expansion factors or 'weights' were inserted into responding person's records to enable the data provided by these persons to be ex-

panded to provide estimates relating to the whole population within the scope of the survey.

The weights applied were based initially on the probability of selection which varied depending on the State/Territory of enumeration. An adjustment based on age-sex-area benchmarks was then made to these weights to ensure that the estimated population distribution from the survey conformed to the population distribution of the benchmarks. (See Appendix B for a description of the estimation formula used).

When data from person records were combined to form family and household data, the weight of these units was the 'harmonic mean' of the weights of the members of that unit. For income units, the 'harmonic mean' was derived, based on the weights of the head and spouse (where applicable) of the unit.

The estimation procedure was designed to adjust estimates in such a way as to reduce the non-response bias by adjusting the weights of responding persons' records in each age-sex-area cell to compensate for underenumeration in that cell.

CHAPTER FOUR SURVEY OUTPUT AND DISSEMINATION

4.1 DATA AVAILABILITY

Results from the Family Survey will be available in the form of:

- publications and other standard sets of tables;
- unidentifiable unit records, available on magnetic tape;
- tables produced on request to meet specific information requirements from the survey.

This chapter outlines the products and services it is proposed to make available. The program of publications and other releases, and the prices quoted in this publication are subject to change.

Information about the proposed products is also contained in *Catalogue of Publications and Products 1993* (1109.0). Publications and other standard products may be obtained by contacting Information Services at the ABS office in your State.

Consultancy services are also available to undertake statistical analyses of the data collected in the Family Survey.

4.2 PUBLICATIONS AND CATALOGUED RELEASES

Information Paper: Families in Australia, Unit Record File on Magnetic Tape (4416.0)
Expected Release — Mid 1993
Free publication

The paper is an irregular and first release providing technical information and other details of the unit record file, conditions of use, and order details.

Families in Australia: Unit Record File on Magnetic Tape (4417.0)
Expected Release — Mid 1993
Price on application

A hierarchical data file comprising a subset of variables at the person, family and household levels will be stored on the master file. It will provide purchasers with the opportunity to satisfy detailed and extensive data needs. Deletion of some variables and aggregation of categories in other variables ensures confidentiality of individual respondents is maintained.

Australia's Families — Selected Findings from the Survey of Families in Australia (4418.0)
Expected Release — Mid 1993
Price \$10.00

This publication presents a selection of mainly national level data on topical issues relating to family life in Australia. Included are a cross-section of results: types of families by States and Territories; marital history; difficul-

ty coping with work and family responsibilities; accommodation, child care, education, employment, income, personal care/home help and transport support within families; and step- and blended families.

Families in Australia: Data Reference Package (4419.0)
Expected Release — Mid 1993
Price \$10.00

The package contains the questionnaire forms used for the Survey of Families in Australia. It also contains a complete list of output data item specifications available at the person, family and household levels of the data file, and associated documentation to assist users in specifying data requirements.

4.3 FURTHER RELEASES

Social Report on Families
Expected Release — March 1994
Price — \$30.00

In conjunction with the International Year of the Family, a social report will be produced utilising data from the Family Survey as well as other relevant ABS and non-ABS data sources. A selection of statistics and analyses will focus on a number of issues pertaining to families in Australia.

Analytical Publications

A series of analytical publications will be released periodically throughout 1994, with the expected first release in March of that year. Topics will be determined after initial analysis of data has commenced enabling the publications to provide in-depth analysis of issues relevant to families in Australia.

4.4 SPECIAL DATA SERVICES

As well as releasing information in publications and other standard formats, ABS will be making available special tabulations and unidentified unit record data on magnetic tape.

4.4.1 Special tabulations

Special tabulations can be produced on request to meet individual user requirements. These can be provided in printed form or on floppy disk. Subject to confidentiality and sampling variability constraints, tabulations can be produced from the survey incorporating data items, populations and geographic areas selected to meet individual requirements. The availability of the special tabulation service will coincide with the release of the publication *Australia's Families* (4418.0) expected mid 1993.

For users who have an expected on-going need for special tabulations, a software facility will be available which has been designed to assist in table specification. This

facility, called PROTAB, can be run from any IBM compatible microcomputer and has the following features:

- screen-based table facility;
- complete list of data items available from the survey;
- full details of the contents of every data item, including descriptors, weighted counts of each value and percentage distribution of values;
- immediate calculation of table cost and batch cost based on the number of cells requested and selected survey parameters;
- construction of a coded set of specifications to be transmitted to ABS via facsimile, floppy disk or letter.

The use of PROTAB enables the production of concise table specifications which will assist in giving prompt turn-round for table production. PROTAB software for the Family Survey is expected for release mid 1993.

For users who have need of special tabulations but feel that the PROTAB facility would be inappropriate, listings of output data items from the survey at the person, household and family level used for the specification of tables are expected to be released mid 1993.

All requests for special tabulations attract a service charge in addition to charges arising from the table production. For further information and requests for unpublished data,

contact Melanee Short on Canberra (06) 252 6111, or the Director, Social Statistics at the ABS office in your state.

4.4.2 Unit record data

For users who wish to produce their own tabulations and to conduct manipulations of survey data, a computer file on magnetic tape containing unidentified records from the survey can be purchased.

To protect the confidentiality of individual persons and families some data items have been removed from particular records and the level of detail for some items has been reduced.

The unit record file for the survey is expected to be available mid 1993.

An information paper describing the data content of the file and conditions relating to the use of unit record data will be issued in conjunction with the release of the file. Copies of this information paper can be obtained free of charge from any ABS office once the file has been released. Contact Richard Grant on Canberra (06) 252 7880.

4.4.3 Statistical Consultancy Services

For users wishing to have the unit record data analysed according to their own needs, (e.g. model building, hypothesis testing), ABS offers a specialist consultancy service to assist with their work. This consultancy attracts a service charge. For further information, contact the Statistical Consultancy service in the ABS office in your state.

APPENDIX A GLOSSARY

FAMILY STRUCTURE

In this section, the term 'family' refers only to the household family.

A *blended family* is defined as a couple family containing two or more children, of whom at least one is the natural, adopted or foster child of both members of the couple, and at least one is the step child of at least one member of the couple.

A *child* is defined as a family member living with at least one parent in the same household and who does not have a child or partner of their own usually resident in the household.

A *couple* refers to two usual residents, both aged at least 15 years, who are either married to each other or living in a de facto marriage with each other. A homosexual couple is not classified as a couple. Such people would appear as "unrelated individuals" in a family or group household.

A *dependent child* refers to a usual resident aged under 15 years, or aged 15-24 years and studying full-time. He/she must be related to at least one non-dependent usual resident by blood, marriage, adoption or fostering. If aged 15 years or older then he/she must not have a spouse (i.e. marriage or de facto partner) or a child usually resident in the household.

An *empty nest family* is a couple family in which neither member of the couple has a child usually living in the same household but the female member of the couple has borne at least one live child and/or at least one member of the couple has at least one natural, adopted or step child who does not live with him/her. (For the purpose of this definition, the meaning of the word "child" is broadened to include a person who usually lives with a spouse and/or at least one child of his/her own).

Extra-household relationships are defined as the respondent's parents and children who do not live in the respondent's household (includes those living outside Australia).

Family exists where two or more persons live in the same household and are related to each other by blood, marriage (including de facto marriage), fostering or adoption.

Household is a group of people who usually reside together. A household may consist of:

- one person;
- one family;
- one family and unrelated individuals;

- related families with or without unrelated individual(s);
- unrelated families with or without unrelated individual(s);
- unrelated individuals.

An *intact family* is defined as a couple family containing one or more children, not one of whom is the step child of either member of the couple, and at least one of whom is the natural, adopted or foster child of both members of the couple.

A *lone ancestor* is defined as a usually resident parent or grandparent (natural, adopted, step or fostered or in-law) of the sole parent/at least one member of the couple. He/she must not have a spouse (marriage or de facto partner) usually resident in the household. He/she must not have a child usually resident in the household who does not have a usually resident spouse or child. He/she must not have a parent (natural, step, adopted or foster) usually resident in the household.

A *lone parent* is defined as a usual resident aged 15 years or older who does not have a usual resident spouse (i.e. marriage or de facto partner) but has at least one usually resident child (natural, step, adopted, fostered or otherwise related) who does not have a usually resident spouse or child of his/her own.

A *non-dependent child* is defined as a usual resident aged 25 years or older, or aged 15-24 years and not studying full-time. He/she must be the child (natural, step, adopted, or foster) of at least one usual resident. He/she must not have a spouse (i.e. marriage or de facto partner) usually resident in the household. He/she must not have a usually resident child who does not have a usually resident spouse or child.

A *non-usual resident* (non UR) is anyone not listed as a usual resident on the Household Form (see Section 3.3.3).

A *one parent family* comprises a lone parent and that parent's child(ren) plus all other persons in the household related to them, provided those persons do not have a spouse or child of their own.

Other (female/male) relative includes cousins, nephews, nieces, uncles, aunts, etc.

Otherwise related dependent child refers to a dependent child who is not the natural, step, adopted or foster child of the sole parent/either member of the couple.

Otherwise related dependent child(ren) only family exists where a couple family with one or more children, each of

whom is the dependent child of the couple and each of whom is related to each member of the couple other than as natural, adopted, foster or step child.

Other related individual is a related individual who is not the spouse, child, parent or ancestor of any usual resident.

A *parent* is defined as a usual resident aged 15 years or over who has at least one usually resident child (natural, step, adopted, fostered or otherwise related) who does not have a usually resident spouse or child of his/her own.

Partner is defined as either spouse in a de facto or registered marriage between people of the opposite sex usually resident in the same household. Relationships between people of the same sex are excluded.

Related families [and unrelated individual(s)] exists where a household contains at least two families of whom at least two are related.

Related individual refers to a usual resident who is related to at least one other usual resident by blood, marriage (registered or de facto), adoption or fostering. He/she must not have a spouse (i.e. marriage or de facto partner) usually resident in the household. He/she must not have a child (natural, step, adopted or foster) usually resident in the household who does not have a usually resident spouse or child.

Spouse is a non-sex-specific term which means marital or de facto partner.

A *step family* is defined as a couple family containing one or more children, not one of whom is the natural, adopted or foster child of both members of the couple, and at least one of whom is the step child of either member of the couple.

Usual resident (UR) of a private dwelling is that person who has lived in that particular dwelling and regard it as their own or main home. For the purpose of the Family Survey, a person must have been living in that dwelling for at least part of the enumeration period (2 March 1992 to 29 May 1992).

Unrelated families [and unrelated individual(s)] are a household containing at least two families of whom none are related.

FAMILY HISTORY

Live born refers to a child showing signs of life during the birth process and at birth, but has died shortly after birth. This definition does not include miscarriages, stillbirths, etc.

Current registered marital status classifies persons as:

- never married;
- separated;

- divorced;
- widowed;
- married:
 - currently married for the first time;
 - currently married and last marriage ended in divorce;
 - currently married and last marriage ended with death of spouse.

A de facto marriage refers to a relationship where a man and woman live together as husband and wife but are not legally married to each other. A homosexual couple is not classified as a couple. Such people appear as "unrelated individuals" in a family or group household.

English language capability refers to an assessment by the interviewer based on whether the interview was fully or partially conducted in a language other than English.

Fertility relates to the child(ren) a woman has given birth to and does not include step children.

Mobility refers to the movement of an individual or group of individuals from one usual place of residence to another.

Registered marriage is defined as a legal marriage performed by a marriage celebrant, priest, church minister, etc.

EMPLOYMENT

Barriers to employment include those persons identified as not in the labour force and who would like a full-time or part-time job but have not looked for work during the last four weeks. It also refers to those people who are looking for work but if offered a job, could not start within the next week. Specific barriers include:

- Personal Considerations -
 - own ill health or disability;
 - pregnancy;
 - studying;
- Family Responsibilities -
 - caring for children;
 - caring for sick, disabled or elderly family member;
 - looking after spouse and/or home;
 - other reason not specified.

Employed persons are those that reported they currently worked in a job, business or farm (other than unpaid voluntary work).

Employment status classifies persons as employed, unemployed or not in the labour force (NILF).

Full-time employees are defined as those employed persons who usually work 35 hours or more per week in all jobs.

Not in labour force (NILF) describes those individuals who are not employed in any job, business or farm, and have not looked for work during the last four weeks, and those permanently unable to work.

Occupation is coded according to *Australian Standard Classification of Occupations* (ASCO) from the respondent's description of the kind of work they perform.

Part-time employees are defined as those employed persons who usually work less than 35 hours per week in all jobs.

Status of worker classifies employed persons as employees, self-employed persons, wage and salary earners, recipients of payment in kind for services or unpaid voluntary workers.

Unemployed describes an individual who is not currently employed in any job, business or farm, and during the last four weeks has looked for work.

Weekly hours worked includes all hours worked in all jobs and paid and unpaid overtime worked in all jobs.

Work refers to only to paid employment

EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT

Private employment agency refers to any non-government business which specialises in finding people suitable employment.

To get a job, is to engage in activities which result in a job, position, apprenticeship or business being found.

To look for work is to engage in the search for work which has not necessarily resulted in work being found.

EDUCATION

Barriers to education refers to reasons persons not currently studying but, at some time over the last six months have wanted to, give for not studying full-time or part-time. Included are reasons persons currently studying part-time but who have wanted to study full-time at some time over the last six months, give for not studying full-time. Reasons include:

- Financial Considerations —
 - not being able to afford to stop working;
 - can't afford the education costs;
- Family Responsibilities —
 - caring for children;
 - caring for sick, disabled or elderly family member;
 - other domestic responsibilities;

• Personal Considerations —

- own ill health or disability;
- business or work hours;
- education facilities/courses/places not available;
- completed studies in the last six months;
- lack of time.

Education by correspondence occurs when education through a recognised educational institution is undertaken by written and/or verbal communication of the course content with minimum attendance at the institution.

An *educational institution* is any institution whose primary role is education. Included are schools, higher education establishments, colleges of technical and further education, public and private colleges, etc.

Full-time education is education classified by an educational institution as being full-time.

A *full-time student* is a student classified by an educational institution as being full-time.

Part-time education is education classified by an educational institution as being part-time.

A *part-time student* is a student classified by an educational institution as being part-time.

Post-school qualifications are the highest completed qualification attained at any time since leaving school and include bachelor degree or higher, trade qualification/apprenticeship, certificate, or other.

A *school* refers to any recognised primary, secondary school or secondary college. These include formal classes, correspondence classes, and home tuition. The definition does not include school subjects taken at tertiary institutions.

Status of student is whether a student undertakes study full-time, part-time or by correspondence.

PAYMENT OF EDUCATION EXPENSES

Education expenses include administration fees, Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS), tuition fees, text books, stationary and other related equipment items. They exclude accommodation costs or associated living expenses.

Employer paying expenses include employment-sponsored awards and cadetships even if the respondent has not yet started working for that organisation.

Government/private scholarship includes money for education and living expenses covered by an educational institution, a government organisation, or other organisation.

Most (in this support area) refers to the greatest monetary contribution from a single source.

INCOME

Earned income refers to income that is received from work in a job, business or farm but excludes investment income, and government cash benefits and pensions.

Investment income includes rent from investment property, dividends and interest.

Main income recipient refers to the person who contributed the largest amount to the combined total income.

Main source of income refers to the source of income which contributed the largest amount to total income.

Maintenance or child support payments refers to the income a parent receives from their ex-partners for the support of their child(ren).

Regular income includes all shift allowances, penalty rates, tips and other benefits if received on a regular basis. It does not include leave loading.

Superannuation/annuities includes any fund, association, scheme or organisation set up for the purpose of providing financial cover for members when they retire.

Total gross weekly income refers to the regular income from all sources including wages and salary (including regular over time, penalties, etc.), government pensions or cash benefits (includes payments from Veteran's Affairs), income from a business or partnership (in reference to 1990/91 financial year), investments and other sources (superannuation, retirement schemes, excludes payments from the Department of Veteran's Affairs).

Type of government pension or benefit received includes Age pension, Unemployment benefits, Disability support/Invalid pension, Sole Parent pension, Sickness allowance, Wife's/Carer's pension, Special benefit, Ausstudy/Abstudy, Disability/War Widow's pension, Child Disability allowance, Overseas pension or benefit and others.

INCOME SUPPORT

A *gift* includes any sum of money or property in excess of \$200 except any inheritance a respondent might normally have received on a family member's death. Gifts in the survey comprise:

- gift of large sum of money (over \$200);
- gift of household item (over \$200);
- gift of motor vehicle;
- gift of food or clothing (over \$200);
- gift of shares, stocks or money in trust;
- regular financial assistance (over \$30 per week);
- payment of bills, rental or loan repayment.

Monetary inheritance is a legal inheritance through a will or through a court awarding an estate (or part of an es-

tate). In the survey, it includes bequests of \$10,000 or more.

TRANSPORT

The *main form of transport* is the form used the greatest number of times over the six month period. If a respondent stated they used different modes equally or in combination, interviewers were instructed to record the mode taking the greatest amount of time.

A *private bus* refers to a bus servicing a specific group, such as a company bus for employees, or a bus for the handicapped or elderly.

Public transport refers to buses, trains, trams and ferries that are accessible to the general public for the purpose of transportation. It does not necessarily mean public ownership; a privately-owned bus which services a designated route is included.

Regular transport relates to each respondent's self-definition.

ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation inheritance refers to gifts and loans including:

- a loan of money for a home, land, home deposit, mortgage, or large home improvement;
- a gift of money for a home, land, home deposit, mortgage, or large home improvement;
- a gift of land, home, other residence, or large home improvement.

A *loan* is defined as the money given with expectation of repayment with or without interest.

PERSONAL CARE/HOME HELP

Help from any *government or voluntary service* includes paid or unpaid assistance from a government body, such as Home and Community Care, and any other non-profit organisation such as Red Cross.

Help needed, received or provided because of a family member's *long term illness, disability or old age* is defined according to the respondent or family's own definition.

Personal care/home help refers to either informal or formal help received or provided in the following areas:

- meals (preparing, cooking, feeding);
- housework (vacuuming, washing, ironing, cleaning floors/bathrooms);
- house repairs/maintenance;
- personal care (washing, bathing, dressing, toileting);
- general nursing care (help to administer drugs, continuous supervision).

CHILD CARE

Any other person includes unpaid baby-sitters, baby-sitting clubs, or another parent at occasional care or pre-school.

Formal child care refers to regulated care away from the child's home which includes:

- * before and after school care;
- * pre-school and kindergarten centres;
- * long day care centres;
- * family day care;
- * occasional care centres;
- * adjunct care centres.

Informal child care refers to non-regulated care in either the child's home or elsewhere. Care could be charged for or provided free of charge by the carer.

It includes care provided by:

- * usually resident family members and relatives (other than (step-)mothers and (step-) fathers);
- * non-usually resident relatives;
- * neighbours and friends;
- * privately employed persons;
- * any other person.

Occasional periods of extended care refers to situations where a child is sometimes looked after for periods of a full day or more. An overnight period of care would be extended care also.

Privately employed person for child care is a private employee paid by the respondent to look after children e.g. a nanny or a baby-sitter. It also includes people who look after children in their own homes.

Usual refers to circumstances that are considered routine to a respondent.

HOUSING

A dwelling is a building or structure in which people live. This can be a house, a block of flats, a caravan or tent.

A landlord refers to the person or organisation owning the dwelling in which the respondent lives and to whom the respondent is bound to pay rent. Included are:

- * state housing commission;
- * family members/persons in or not in the same household;
- * employer;
- * other.

Nature of occupancy describes the status of tenure of the usual resident.

Provider of free accommodation refers to a person providing accommodation for no charge to the respondent (a family member/person in or not in the same household, employer and other).

Special dwellings are establishments which comprise a number of dwelling units; frequently involve group or community living arrangements; may provide common eating facilities; provide accommodation for specific groups of people; are designed for a particular purpose; are not private dwellings. These include:

- * hostels for the homeless, night shelters and refuges;
- * licensed hotels and motels;
- * religious and educational institutions (convents, monasteries, college and university residences);
- * boarding houses and others (guest houses, private hotels, hostels, staff quarters, large construction camps);
- * Aboriginal settlements;
- * caravan parks and camping grounds.

HEALTH

Self-assessed health status refers to the individual's self-perception of their level of health as being excellent, good, fair and poor.

GENERAL

A transaction is a purposeful interaction occurring between two or more people over a particular reference period (usually six months). It implies an interdependence between individuals where the actions of one individual directly affect the outcomes (negative or positive) for another individual.

Social support is defined as continuing or intermittent help or assistance which may be utilized by the individual in the event of a need or crisis.

APPENDIX B

ESTIMATION FORMULA

Estimates at State and national levels.

State and national estimates were formed by producing estimates at part-of-State level (metropolitan/non-metropolitan) and then adding to the State or national levels accordingly.

Weights used for this type of bench mark were derived from population benchmarks (N) showing number of persons in each part-of-State, cross-classified by age and sex. The weight w for a responding individual of age a , sex s , in stratum h of part-of-State z was determined using the following formula:

$$w_{has} = \frac{N_{zas}}{f_h} / \sum_{hes} \frac{n_{has}}{f_h}$$

where

N_{zas} = the number of persons in part-of-State z , age group and sex s .

n_{has} = the number of respondents in stratum h , age group a and sex s .

f_h = the sampling fraction of stratum h .

The total part-of-State estimate for the variable x could then be obtained by:

$$x'_z = \sum_{hes} w_{has} \sum_i x_{hrai}$$

where x_{hrai} = the value of x for the i^{th} individual respondent in stratum h , age a and sex s .

State and national estimates were then obtained by adding the appropriate part-of-State estimates.

APPENDIX C

STANDARD ERRORS

Calculation of standard errors

The standard errors of all estimates were derived by the split-halves method. In strata where three stages of selection were used (see Section 3.1), selected census collection districts were alternately allocated to one of two groups known as variance groups. In the other areas, primary sampling units were allocated to variance groups. The estimates of sampling variance (the square of the standard error) were then derived by the use of the split-halves variance expression

$$v(x') = \sum_z \sum_{h \in z} (x'_{h1} - x'_{h2})^2 - \sum_{a,s} \frac{x'_{zas} (n_{h1as} - n_{h2as})^2}{f_h \left(\sum_h \frac{1}{f_h} n_{has} \right)}$$

where h_1, h_2 denote the two variance groups within stratum h , and

n_{hjas} = the number of respondents in variance group j of stratum h , age group a , sex s and $j = 1$ or 2

$x'_{hj} = \sum_{a,s} w_{has} x'_{hjas}$ and $j = 1$ or 2

$x'_{hjas} = \sum_i x'_{hjas_i}$ and $j = 1$ or 2

other expressions are as indicated in Appendix B.

Standard errors were 'smoothed' using models of the form :

$$\log(RSE\%) = A + B \log(\text{estimate}) + C \log(\text{estimate})^2$$

where $RSE\%$ (Relative Standard Error) equals the standard error of the estimate divided by the estimate expressed as a percentage, while A, B and C were estimated by ordinary least squares regression. Separate models were fitted for each region, for each State and Territory.

Table of standard errors

A table of standard errors for general application in using annual State and national estimates will be provided. These figures will not give a precise measure of the standard error of a particular estimate but they will provide an indication of its magnitude.

Standard errors of rates and percentages

The standard error of an estimated percentage or rate computed by using sample data for both numerator and denominator, depends upon both the size of the numerator and the size of the denominator. However, the relative standard error of the estimated percentage or rate will generally be lower than the relative standard error of the estimate of the numerator.

Approximate standard errors of the rates or percentages may be derived by first obtaining the relative standard error of the number of persons corresponding to the numerator of this rate or percentage and then applying this figure to the estimated rate or percentage.

Standard errors of differences between survey estimates

The difference between two survey estimates is itself an estimate and is therefore subject to sampling variability. The standard error of the difference of two survey estimates depends on the standard errors of the original estimates and on the relationship (correlation) between the two original estimates. An approximate standard error of the difference between two estimates (x-y) may be calculated by the following formula:

$$\text{Standard error (x - y)} = \sqrt{[\text{Standard error (x)}]^2 + [\text{Standard error (y)}]^2}$$

While this formula will only be exact for differences between separate and uncorrelated (unrelated) characteristics or sub-populations, it is expected to provide a good approximation for all differences likely to be of interest.

Standard errors of more complex derived statistics

Approximate standard errors of more complex derived statistics (i.e. other than rates, percentages and differences) may be obtained by applying appropriate adjustment factors to the relative standard errors of the estimates of the numbers of persons who contribute to those derived statistics. Full details of adjustment factors and methods for obtaining approximate standard errors of the more complex derived statistics are presented in the technical notes of the publications containing the statistics concerned.



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