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CANBERRA, AUSTRALIA

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SOCIAL STATISTICS : AUSTRALIA  
NO. 3 : DIVORCE, MARCH QUARTER, 1961

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## EXPLANATORY NOTES

This bulletin is the third in a new series "Social Statistics" which will present statistics on education, health, welfare and justice. It replaces series relating to Divorce Statistics previously included in issues of the Australian Demographic Review. The last of these, No. 129 - Divorce, 1960, was issued on 4th July, 1961. Other bulletins issued in this series are No. 1 - Schools, 1960 and No. 2 - Hospitals, 1960.

The tables relating to dissolution of marriage, nullity of marriage and judicial separation have been prepared from statistics compiled by the Statisticians in the various States and from returns received from judicial authorities in the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory. They relate, mainly, to the first quarter of 1961, but figures for earlier periods are shown for purposes of comparison.

In 1959, the Commonwealth Parliament passed the Matrimonial Causes Act 1959, which came into operation on 1st February, 1961. This Act establishes uniform grounds throughout the whole of the Commonwealth for the termination of marriage, and supersedes the matrimonial causes laws of the States and Territories except in so far as the transitional provisions of the Act keep them in force for the purpose of completing pending proceedings.

Until the operation of the Commonwealth Matrimonial Causes Act 1959 (on 1st February, 1961) the grounds for dissolution of marriage varied between each State and Territory. For example: -

- (i) Insanity was not a ground in New South Wales or the Australian Capital Territory;
- (ii) in New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory a suit for dissolution of marriage could forthwith be instituted against a respondent who failed to comply with an order for restitution of conjugal rights;
- (iii) separation for over five years was a ground only in Western Australia;
- (iv) separation for over five years under a decree of judicial separation or an order granting relief from co-habitation was a ground only in South Australia; and
- (v) impotence was a ground for dissolution of marriage in Western Australia, but a ground for nullity of marriage in each other State and Territory.

In addition, some dissolutions granted under previous Commonwealth legislation in a particular State could be on grounds not provided for in that State's legislation.

The grounds on which dissolutions and nullities of marriage and judicial separations were granted in each State and Territory are shown in Table 8. The proportions of marriages dissolved in each State and Territory on these grounds are shown in Table 9.

Of the 2220 petitions lodged (for dissolution) in the three months ended 31st March, 1961, 1175 were under the new legislation. All decrees granted during this period related to petitions lodged under the old legislation.

## I. PETITIONS FILED

TABLE 1. - PETITIONS FILED FOR DISSOLUTION OF MARRIAGE, NULLITY OF MARRIAGE AND JUDICIAL SEPARATION, MARCH QTR., 1961

Petition for -	N.S.W.	Vic.	Q'ld.	S.A.	W.A.	Tas.	N.T.	A.C.T.	Aust.
<b>Dissolution of Marriage -</b>									
Husband Petitioner	478	223	117	101	69	41	7	8	1,044
Wife Petitioner	582	244	110	115	70	42	1	12	1,176
<b>Total (a)</b>	1,060	467	227	216	139	83	8	20	2,220
<b>Nullity of Marriage -</b>									
Husband Petitioner	2	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	3
Wife Petitioner	7	1	2	3	-	-	-	-	13
<b>Total</b>	9	1	3	3	-	-	-	-	16
<b>Judicial Separation -</b>									
Husband Petitioner	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	2
Wife Petitioner	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	2
<b>Total</b>	1	-	-	1	2	-	-	-	4
<b>Total Petitions -</b>									
Husband Petitioner No.	480	223	118	101	71	41	7	8	1,049
Per cent.	45	48	51	46	50	49	88	40	47
Wife Petitioner No.	590	245	112	119	70	42	1	12	1,191
Per cent.	55	52	49	54	50	51	12	60	53
<b>Total</b>	1,070	468	230	220	141	83	8	20	2,240

(a) The number of Petitions lodged during January 1961, i.e. before the operation of the Commonwealth Matrimonial Causes Act 1959, were N.S.W. 518, Vic. 239, Q'ld. 81, S.A. 92, W.A. 91, Tas. 19, N.T. 3, and A.C.T. 2, Total 1,045.

TABLE 2. - PETITIONS FILED FOR DISSOLUTION OF MARRIAGE, NULLITY OF MARRIAGE AND JUDICIAL SEPARATION (a) : AUSTRALIA

Petition for -	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959	1960	March Qtr., 1961
<b>Dissolution of Marriage -</b>										
Husband Petitioner	3,774	3,860	3,778	3,662	3,719	3,671	3,833	3,843	3,709	1,044
Wife Petitioner	4,800	4,891	4,552	4,567	4,557	4,228	4,570	4,465	4,385	1,176
<b>Total</b>	8,574	8,751	8,330	8,229	8,276	7,899	8,403	8,308	8,094	2,220
<b>Nullity of Marriage -</b>										
Husband Petitioner	35	31	19	24	28	40	40	22	23	3
Wife Petitioner	52	60	45	47	52	56	35	43	32	13
<b>Total</b>	87	91	64	71	80	96	75	65	55	16
<b>Judicial Separation -</b>										
Husband Petitioner	3	3	3	11	6	6	13	7	7	2
Wife Petitioner	37	37	35	29	41	26	36	24	31	2
<b>Total</b>	40	40	38	40	47	32	49	31	38	4
<b>Total Petitions -</b>										
Husband Petitioner No.	3,812	3,894	3,800	3,697	3,753	3,717	3,886	3,872	3,739	1,049
Per cent.	44	44	45	44	45	46	46	46	46	47
Wife Petitioner No.	4,889	4,988	4,632	4,643	4,650	4,310	4,641	4,532	4,448	1,191
Per cent.	56	56	55	56	55	54	54	54	54	53
<b>Total</b>	8,701	8,882	8,432	8,340	8,403	8,027	8,527	8,404	8,187	2,240

(a) The Queensland component of figures for years prior to 1956 represents petitions heard.

TABLE 3. - GROUNDS ON WHICH PETITIONS WERE FILED FOR DISSOLUTION OF MARRIAGE, NULLITY OF MARRIAGE AND JUDICIAL SEPARATION, MARCH QUARTER, 1961

Grounds	N.S.W.	Vic.	Q'ld.	S.A.	W.A.	Tas.	N.T.	A.C.T.	Aust.
<u>Petitions for Dissolution of Marriage</u>									
<u>Single Grounds -</u>									
Adultery	236	84	43	58	60	22	2	9	514
Cruelty	27	5	1	31	-	-	-	2	66
Desertion	524	268	140	76	49	34	4	8	1,103
Drunkenness	15	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	16
Failure to comply with restitution decree	57	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	57
Failure to pay maintenance	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	3
Frequent convictions	3	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
Imprisonment	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Insanity	13	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	15
Intoxication by drugs	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Presumption of death	-	-	1	-	1	2	-	-	4
Refusal to consummate	3	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	4
Separation	138	69	34	33	24	23	1	-	322
<u>Dual Grounds -</u>									
Adultery and cruelty	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	2
Adultery and desertion	6	18	1	3	-	1	-	-	29
Adultery and drunkenness	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Adultery and separation	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Cruelty and drunkenness	22	-	1	2	-	1	-	-	26
Desertion and cruelty	4	1	-	4	-	-	-	-	9
Desertion and drunkenness	4	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	5
Desertion and failure to pay maintenance	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Desertion and intoxication by drugs	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Desertion and separation	1	14	2	8	-	-	-	-	25
Insanity and separation	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Multiple Grounds (a)	3	3	-	1	-	-	-	-	7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,060</b>	<b>467</b>	<b>227</b>	<b>216</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>2,220</b>
<u>Petitions for Nullity of Marriage</u>									
Bigamy	4	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	6
Incapacity to consummate	4	1	2	2	-	-	-	-	9
Want of consent	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>16</b>
<u>Petitions for Judicial Separation</u>									
Adultery	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Cruelty	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Desertion	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>4</b>

(a) Three grounds or more.

TABLE 4. - PETITIONS FILED FOR DISSOLUTION OF MARRIAGE

Period	N.S.W.	Vic.	Q'ld.	S.A.	W.A.	Tas.	N.T.	A.C.T.	Aust.
Year - 1952	4,225	1,820	(a) 708	805	654	314	12	36	8,574
1953	4,230	1,866	(a) 725	921	615	319	31	44	8,751
1954	4,039	1,777	(a) 714	832	589	316	24	39	8,330
1955	4,092	1,600	(a) 801	825	560	285	40	26	8,229
1956	3,943	1,747	837	754	652	273	26	44	8,276
1957	3,824	1,654	672	767	623	291	19	49	7,899
1958	4,102	1,579	952	791	644	267	31	37	8,403
1959	3,884	1,650	976	789	671	283	12	43	8,308
1960	3,746	1,798	863	781	560	274	26	46	8,094
1961, March Qtr.	1,060	467	227	216	139	83	8	20	2,220

(a) Petitions heard.

NOTE: The table above excludes petitions filed for nullity of marriage and judicial separation.

## II. DISSOLUTIONS ETC. GRANTED

TABLE 5. - DISSOLUTION OF MARRIAGE (a), NULLITIES OF MARRIAGE AND JUDICIAL SEPARATIONS GRANTED, MARCH QUARTER, 1961

Decree for -	N.S.W.	Vic.	Q'ld.	S.A.	W.A.	Tas.	N.T.	A.C.T.	Aust.
<u>Dissolution of Marriage -</u>									
Husband Petitioner	324	189	92	78	66	24	2	5	780
Wife Petitioner	402	214	109	109	65	37	-	3	939
Petition by Both	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>726</b>	<b>403</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1,720</b>
<u>Nullity of Marriage -</u>									
Husband Petitioner	2	2	-	-	1	-	-	-	5
Wife Petitioner	4	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>10</b>
<u>Judicial Separation -</u>									
Husband Petitioner	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Wife Petitioner	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1</b>
<u>Total Decrees -</u>									
Husband Petitioner No.	326	191	92	78	67	24	2	5	785
Per cent.	44	47	46	42	50	37	100	62	45
Wife Petitioner No.	407	215	109	109	65	39	-	3	945
Per cent.	56	53	54	58	50	61	-	38	55
Petition by Both	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>733</b>	<b>406</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1,731</b>

(a) Decrees absolute.

TABLE 6. - DISSOLUTIONS OF MARRIAGE (a), NULLITIES OF MARRIAGE AND JUDICIAL SEPARATIONS GRANTED : AUSTRALIA

Decree for -	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959	1960	March Qtr., 1961
<u>Dissolution of Marriage -</u>										
Husband Petitioner	3,083	3,527	2,933	3,046	2,942	2,875	3,225	3,291	3,078	780
Wife Petitioner	3,959	4,435	3,524	3,578	3,493	3,423	3,695	4,024	3,555	939
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,042</b>	<b>7,962</b>	<b>6,457</b>	<b>6,724</b>	<b>6,435</b>	<b>6,298</b>	<b>6,920</b>	<b>7,315</b>	<b>6,633</b>	<b>1,720</b>
<u>Nullity of Marriage -</u>										
Husband Petitioner	19	30	18	9	14	24	25	21	26	5
Wife Petitioner	38	41	42	36	32	40	36	32	37	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>10</b>
<u>Judicial Separation -</u>										
Husband Petitioner	-	-	-	4	4	2	2	-	2	-
Wife Petitioner	11	10	11	9	7	10	11	2	11	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>1</b>
<u>Total Decrees -</u>										
Husband Petitioner No.	3,102	3,557	2,951	3,059	2,960	2,901	3,252	3,312	3,106	785
Per cent.	44	44	45	45	46	46	47	45	46	45
Wife Petitioner No.	4,008	4,486	3,577	3,723	3,532	3,473	3,742	4,058	3,603	945
Per cent.	56	56	55	55	54	54	54	55	54	55
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,110</b>	<b>8,043</b>	<b>6,528</b>	<b>6,782</b>	<b>6,492</b>	<b>6,374</b>	<b>6,994</b>	<b>7,370</b>	<b>6,709</b>	<b>1,731</b>

(a) Decree absolute. For years prior to 1957 the Victorian component of figures for dissolutions and nullities of marriage represents decrees nisi. (b) Includes one petition by both.

TABLE 7. - DISSOLUTIONS OF MARRIAGE (a) GRANTED

Period	N.S.W.	Vic.	Q'ld.	S.A.	W.A.	Tas.	N.T.	A.C.T.	Aust.
Year - 1952	3,335	(b) 1,596	705	581	585	217	6	17	7,042
1953	3,725	(b) 2,096	725	628	535	210	12	31	7,962
1954	2,816	(b) 1,519	710	594	530	235	20	33	6,457
1955	2,874	(b) 1,674	801	624	479	233	18	21	6,724
1956	3,125	(b) 1,255	703	567	544	196	25	20	6,435
1957	2,975	1,345	682	529	541	179	18	29	6,298
1958	3,217	1,698	759	483	536	176	15	36	6,920
1959	3,363	1,861	739	503	584	222	14	29	7,315
1960	3,243	1,296	696	610	540	210	5	33	6,633
1961, March Qtr.	726	403	201	188	131	61	2	8	1,720

(a) Decrees absolute.

(b) Decrees nisi.

NOTE: The table above excludes nullities of marriage and judicial separations.

TABLE 8. - GROUNDS ON WHICH DISSOLUTIONS OF MARRIAGE (a), NULLITIES OF MARRIAGE AND JUDICIAL SEPARATION WERE GRANTED, MARCH QUARTER, 1961

Grounds	Dissolution of Marriage									
	N.S.W.	Vic.	Q'ld.	S.A.	W.A.	Tas.	N.T.	A.C.T.	Aust.	
<b>Single Grounds</b>										
Adultery	214	117	59	64	62	19	1	3	539	
Cruelty	18	6	-	38	-	1	-	-	63	
Desertion	370	261	142	74	40	39	1	5	932	
Drunkenness	10	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	13	
Failure to comply with restitution decree	86	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	86	
Failure to pay maintenance	-	-	-	1	5	-	-	-	6	
Frequent convictions	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	
Imprisonment	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	2	
Insanity	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	3	
Separation	-	-	-	2	22	-	-	-	24	
<b>Dual Grounds</b>										
Adultery coupled with bigamy	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	
Adultery and desertion	-	13	-	-	-	-	-	-	13	
Cruelty and drunkenness	24	-	-	1	1	2	-	-	28	
Desertion and cruelty	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	
Desertion and frequent convictions	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	
Desertion and intoxication by drugs	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	
<b>Multiple Grounds (b)</b>	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	2	
<b>Total</b>	726	403	201	188	131	61	2	8	1,720	
<b>NULLITY OF MARRIAGE</b>										
Bigamy	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	
Incapacity to consummate	6	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	
Unsound mind	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	
<b>Total</b>	6	3	-	-	1	-	-	-	10	
<b>JUDICIAL SEPARATION</b>										
Cruelty	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	

(a) Decreases absolute.

(b) Three grounds and more.

TABLE 9. - PERCENTAGES OF DISSOLUTIONS OF MARRIAGE (a) GRANTED ON VARIOUS GROUNDS, MARCH QUARTER, 1961

Grounds	N.S.W.	Vic.	Q'ld.	S.A.	W.A.	Tas.	N.T.	A.C.T.	Aust.
Adultery (b)	30	30	29	34	48	31	50	37	32
Desertion (c)	63	68	71	40	47	64	50	63	61
Other	7	2	-	26	5	5	-	-	7
<b>TOTAL:</b>	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

(a) Decreases absolute.

(b) Includes adultery coupled with bigamy.

(c) Includes adultery and desertion, separation, and non-compliance with an order for restitution of conjugal rights.

III. AGES OF PARTIES  
TABLE 10. - DISSOLUTIONS OF MARRIAGE : AGES OF PARTIES AT TIME OF MARRIAGE (a)  
AUSTRALIA, MARCH QUARTER, 1961

Age of Husband (Years)	Age of Wife (Years)										Total Husbands	
	Under 20	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55 and over	Not Stated	No.	Per cent.
Under 20	102	24	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	126	7
20-24	336	418	54	6	3	-	-	-	-	-	817	47
25-29	90	214	84	24	1	-	-	-	-	-	413	24
30-34	16	56	55	39	10	3	2	-	-	-	181	11
35-39	4	26	12	19	20	6	1	-	-	-	88	5
40-44	1	6	6	7	7	6	-	-	-	-	33	2
45-49	-	-	3	6	6	2	2	2	-	-	21	1
50-54	-	-	2	3	2	5	3	-	-	-	15	1
55 and over	-	-	1	-	2	2	1	-	2	-	8	1
Not Stated	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	18	18	1
<b>Total (No. Wives (%)</b>	549 32	744 43	217 13	104 6	51 3	24 1	9 1	2 2	2 1	18	1720	- 100

(a) Marriages for which decrees absolute for dissolution were granted.

TABLE 11. - AGES OF PARTIES AT TIME OF DISSOLUTION OF MARRIAGE (a) :  
AUSTRALIA, MARCH QUARTER, 1961

Age of Husband (Years)	Age of Wife (Years)										Total Husbands	
	Under 20	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55 and over	Not Stated	No.	Per cent.
Under 20	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
20-24	2	32	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	38	2
25-29	1	78	113	16	2	1	-	-	-	-	211	12
30-34	-	17	156	171	35	1	-	-	-	-	380	22
35-39	-	-	42	128	138	25	3	-	-	-	337	20
40-44	-	1	8	32	83	109	17	6	1	-	257	15
45-49	-	-	3	9	23	81	69	10	2	-	197	12
50-54	-	-	-	5	15	20	46	46	7	-	139	8
55 and over	-	-	-	-	5	15	25	36	62	-	143	8
Not Stated	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	18	18	1
<b>Total (No. Wives (%)</b>	3 -	129 8	326 19	361 21	301 17	252 15	160 9	98 6	72 4	18 1	1720	- 100

(a) Decreases absolute.

TABLE 12. - DISSOLUTIONS OF MARRIAGE : AGE (a) OF HUSBAND, AUSTRALIA

Period	Under 25 Years	25-29 Years	30-34 Years	35-39 Years	40-44 Years	45-49 Years	50-54 Years	55 Years and over	Not Stated	Total
Year - 1952	136	1,025	1,675	1,418	1,014	760	457	511	46	7,042
1953	177	1,266	1,598	1,554	1,247	879	592	602	47	7,962
1954	157	1,009	1,380	1,168	990	729	477	490	57	6,457
1955	158	995	1,435	1,189	1,059	793	503	509	83	6,724
1956	122	961	1,434	1,130	1,007	738	447	529	67	6,435
1957	119	866	1,334	1,171	988	737	495	477	111	6,298
1958	110	940	1,528	1,372	1,026	775	545	495	129	6,920
1959	131	929	1,626	1,494	1,075	852	586	550	72	7,315
1960	143	931	1,377	1,324	989	822	473	503	71	6,633
1961 - March Quarter	38	211	380	337	257	197	139	143	18	1,720

(a) At time of decree absolute.

TABLE 13. - DISSOLUTIONS OF MARRIAGE : AGE (a) OF WIFE, AUSTRALIA

Period	Under 25 Years	25-29 Years	30-34 Years	35-39 Years	40-44 Years	45-49 Years	50-54 Years	55 Years and over	Not Stated	Total
Year - 1952	518	1,526	1,564	1,292	968	581	289	258	46	7,042
1953	655	1,692	1,743	1,465	1,033	634	379	311	50	7,962
1954	557	1,420	1,336	1,130	837	516	289	267	55	6,457
1955	571	1,433	1,410	1,139	844	608	272	268	79	6,724
1956	482	1,378	1,379	1,112	892	567	284	288	63	6,435
1957	475	1,263	1,371	1,082	874	601	290	234	108	6,298
1958	492	1,401	1,556	1,239	875	634	318	279	126	6,920
1959	539	1,425	1,679	1,322	986	678	345	72	7	7,315
1960	532	1,261	1,439	1,210	865	652	300	253	71	6,633
1961 - March Qtr.	182	326	361	301	252	160	98	72	18	1,720

(a) At time of decrees absolute.

## IV. DURATION OF MARRIAGE AND NUMBER AND AGE OF CHILDREN

TABLE 14. - DISSOLUTIONS OF MARRIAGE (a) : DURATION OF MARRIAGE, AUSTRALIA

Period	Number of Marriages Dissolved whose Duration was -							Total Marriages Dissolved	
	Under 5 Years	5-9 Years	10-14 Years	15-19 Years	20-24 Years	25-29 Years	30 Years and over		
Year - 1952	575	2,265	1,827	1,006	651	388	326	4	7,042
1953	676	2,594	1,993	1,139	694	447	419	-	7,962
1954	576	2,129	1,557	941	582	363	306	3	6,457
1955	556	2,282	1,572	968	602	424	311	9	6,724
1956	466	2,202	1,523	989	564	339	323	9	6,435
1957	452	2,098	1,503	1,044	589	328	279	5	6,298
1958	475	2,207	1,830	1,125	621	357	303	2	6,920
1959	489	2,275	1,978	1,236	667	384	283	3	7,315
1960	533	2,016	1,804	991	682	354	252	1	6,633
1961 - March Qtr.	122	498	450	268	215	91	76	-	1,720

(a) Decrees absolute.

TABLE 15. - DISSOLUTIONS OF MARRIAGE (a) CLASSIFIED ACCORDING TO DURATION OF MARRIAGE AND NUMBER OF CHILDREN (b), AUSTRALIA, MARCH QTR., 1961

Duration of Marriage (Years)	Dissolutions of Marriage with -							Total Marriages Dissolved		Total Number of Children (b)
	No Child-ren	1 Child	2 Child-ren	3 Child-ren	4 Child-ren	5 Child-ren	6 Child-ren & over	No.	Per cent.	
Under 5	94	22	5	1	-	-	-	122	7	35
5 - 9	222	167	79	23	6	1	-	498	29	423
10 - 14	132	140	110	46	15	6	1	450	26	594
15 - 19	55	58	77	53	14	7	4	268	16	488
20 - 24	54	51	58	32	13	3	4	215	13	359
25 - 29	45	23	16	5	2	-	-	91	5	78
30 and over	64	6	4	1	1	-	-	76	4	21
Total (No. Dissolved %)	666	467	349	161	51	17	9	1720	-	-
Total Number of Children (b)	-	467	698	483	204	85	61	-	-	1,998

(a) Decrees absolute.

(b) The term "children" used in the Commonwealth legislation refers to living "children of the marriage" under 21 years. However, as the dissolutions in this period were granted to petitions lodged under old legislation, it has not been possible to make the data in the table above conform exactly to this definition. For instance, New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland and Western Australia included children whether living or dead; and only Queensland included adopted children.

TABLE 16. - DISSOLUTIONS OF MARRIAGE (a) CLASSIFIED ACCORDING TO NUMBER OF CHILDREN (b) : AUSTRALIA

Period	Dissolutions of Marriage with -							Total Marriages Dissolved	Total Number of Children (b)	
	No Child-ren	1 Child	2 Child-ren	3 Child-ren	4 Child-ren	5 Child-ren	6 Child-ren and over			
Year - 1952	2,383	2,132	1,459	599	259	114	96	-	7,042	9,145
1953	2,730	2,404	1,581	701	302	116	128	-	7,962	10,353
1954	2,246	1,885	1,353	563	239	95	76	-	6,457	8,239
1955	2,239	1,957	1,451	600	250	110	115	2	6,724	8,995
1956	2,286	1,773	1,381	556	248	97	89	5	6,435	8,306
1957	2,195	1,737	1,391	584	232	77	78	4	6,298	8,127
1958	2,387	1,882	1,477	687	291	107	88	1	6,920	9,197
1959	2,510	1,927	1,627	741	330	92	88	-	7,315	9,797
1960	2,213	1,733	1,452	719	291	120	105	-	6,633	9,302
1961 - March Qtr.	666	467	349	161	51	17	9	-	1,720	1,998

(a) Decrees absolute. (b) The figures shown for periods until 1960 inclusive are based on the definition of children set down in the legislation of the various States. For March Quarter, 1961, a more uniform definition of children has been used. See note (b) to Table 15.

TABLE 17. - CHILDREN OF DISSOLVED MARRIAGES (a) CLASSIFIED ACCORDING TO AGE : AUSTRALIA, MARCH QUARTER, 1961

Petitioner	Age of Children at Time of Petition -															Total Number of Children			
	Under 12 mths.	1 yr.	2 yrs.	3 yrs.	4 yrs.	5 yrs.	6 yrs.	7 yrs.	8 yrs.	9 yrs.	10 yrs.	11 yrs.	12 yrs.	13 yrs.	14 yrs.		15 yrs.	16-20 yrs.	Not Stated
Husband	2	8	15	32	30	57	48	71	51	63	68	54	38	40	38	38	131	19	803
Wife	5	16	25	50	79	81	86	87	75	83	76	82	70	76	64	56	156	26	1,193
Both	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	2
Total	7	24	40	82	109	138	135	158	126	146	144	136	108	117	102	94	287	45	1,998

(a) This table refers to children under 21 years of marriages for which decrees absolute for dissolution have been granted in the March Quarter, 1961.

K.M. ARCHER  
ACTING COMMONWEALTH STATISTICIAN

COMMONWEALTH BUREAU OF CENSUS AND STATISTICS  
CANBERRA, A.C.T. 6TH FEBRUARY, 1962