

AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS ACT 1975: sub-section 6(3)

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BY

AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS

PRISONERS IN AUSTRALIA

In July 2013, the Australian Bureau of Statistics proposes to collect information annually from administrative records held by state and territory corrective services agencies on the number and characteristics of adult prisoners serving custodial sentences.

Information will be collected from administrative records held by corrective services agencies within each state and territory. Data will be submitted to the Australian Bureau of Statistics electronically by secure means.

Information will be collected on adult prisoners in Australia including:

- prisoner characteristics (age, sex, country of birth and other personal characteristics);
- the most serious offence associated with a prisoner; and
- sentence length.

Where available, information about the Indigenous status and characteristics of prisoners serving federal sentences will also be collected.

The principal users of the collection are:

- state and territory corrective services agencies;
- Commonwealth and state and territory Attorney-General's and justice departments
- government crime and justice research institutes (such as the Australian Institute of Criminology); and
- crime and justice research centres within universities across Australia.

Statistics produced from the collection will be used to make meaningful comparisons of the number and characteristics of custodial prisoners across states and territories in Australia.

This will allow policy makers to assess and evaluate crime and justice related policy used throughout the states and territories and facilitate both researchers and policy makers to identify emerging trends in imprisonment and respond accordingly.

Results from the collection are expected to be released on an annual basis from late 2013.

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The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) is the independent statistical agency of the Government of Australia. The ABS provides key statistics on a wide range of economic, population, environmental and social issues, to assist and encourage informed decision making, research and discussion within governments and the community. In 1901, statistics were collected by each state for their individual use. While attempts were made to coordinate collections through an annual Conference of Statisticians, it