



Australian Government

Department of Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education

Improving Firm Level Data to Strengthen Australian Businesses

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Today

- Context and background
- Whole-of-government co-ordination and data initiatives
- Why we are doing this
- How we are doing this
- What we are doing
- Big issues
- Potential short and long term data improvement projects
- Piloting of a data integration initiative
- Input from members



Context

- National Statistical Service
 - Availability of a larger range of relevant and high quality statistics for informed decision making
- Initiative on statistical data integration involving Commonwealth data
- Essential Statistics for Australia
 - Statistics that are of importance to key national progress measurement or critical for public policy or service delivery
 - Business performance and structure
 - Facilitates efficient use of government resources by identifying areas of duplication and underutilisation



Background

- ‘Improved data collection and coordination across government would ideally provide more information on business conditions and needs, encourage information sharing across government, and provide a more effective evidence base for designing, delivering and evaluating firm policies and programs’



Whole-of-government co-ordination initiatives

- Standard Business Reporting—a whole of government initiative, lead by Treasury, that will reduce business-to-government reporting burden
- Australian Business Register—comprehensive list of businesses with matching keys (e.g. ABN)
- Statistical data integration involving Commonwealth data (cross portfolio data integration)



Related whole-of-government data collection initiatives

- Australian Government energy data forum
- Education data collection initiative
- Sustainability indicator initiative
- Spatial accounting (Budget breakdown of resources committed to each region)



Why we are doing this

- Improve policy and program design
- Improve the evidence base for decision making
 - Is the business program effective/efficient compared with other programs? Is there a business case? Does it reduce red tape?
 - Better sharing of analysis and results across government
- Enhance value for taxpayers' money
 - Better return on investment
 - Enhanced transparency and accountability
 - Better support programs for strengthening businesses (e.g. better productivity)
 - Better informed governments, analysts, policy makers and the community



How we are doing this

- Through harmonising and integrating core economic data items under a data quality framework (relevance, accuracy, timeliness, accessibility, interpretability and coherence)
- Through ensuring better collaboration on integration aspects, such as data sharing, privacy, linking and metadata consistency

This enables collaboration on analysis requirements, techniques and outputs



What we are doing

- Developing the plan (with alternatives)
- Conducting an environmental scan of related initiatives
- We are consulting with
 - Commonwealth agencies (April-June)
 - Other high level bodies such as:
 - Australian Statistics Advisory Council (29 May)
 - Secretaries Board (4 July)
 - Academics (May-Jul—mainly Productivity Roundtable)
 - Businesses and peak bodies (May-June)
- ..



Big issues

- Lack of common standards and definitions inhibiting or preventing effective streamlining, linking or manipulation of different data sets
- Confidentiality and data security issues that restrict data sharing and access
- Inability by businesses to ‘report once—use many’—sometimes linked to the issue of data sharing



Potential short and long term data improvement projects include:

- Validating a core set of data items that could be collected across business assistance programs
- Identifying research and analysis projects that demonstrate value in improving policy outcomes
- Identifying quality gaps in administrative firm-level data
- Geocoding opportunities for data collected on businesses



Input from members

- Endorsement and support for the overall strategic directions of the project
- Continued ABS support for the project
- Input to priorities (in the agenda paper) for the initiative



Contact details

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