ABS Transformation

Asia-Pacific Conference: Transforming Official Statistics for Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (Bangkok, Thailand 24-26 August, 2016)

www.abs.gov.au

Components of the national statistical system

- Legal framework – enabling legislation setting out role and authority
- Strategic planning – annual corporate plan and report to government
- Advocacy for the improvement of national statistical systems – legislated role to coordinate and expectation to lead, significant focus in last 5 years
- Coordination among agencies of the NSS – stovepiped (subject area) approaches (bilaterals) no national plans as such
- Engagement between data users and data producers – user engagement ok, work to do still re provider engagement, no user-producer dialogues
- Modernisation of statistical organisation – yes, heavily based around international standards and frameworks
- Quality assurance and dissemination policies – well placed
- Human resources and skills – historic emphasis on technical skills, traditionally workforce stable
- Statistical infrastructure – old and high risk, key driver of transformation
- Data sources - exploding

Drivers of change

- Need for faster decisions
- Reviews of the ABS
- Reviews of the ABS
- New statistical possibilities to solve complex problems and opportunities to use 'big data'
- Growing stakeholder and community expectations
- Ageing systems and manual processes

Capability Review findings

The Capability Review showed a shared ABS culture of:

- Ethical behaviour, respect and civility
- Alignment to mission and vision
- Focus on quality and delivery of outputs

Capability Review suggested a future focus on:

- Engagement with key partners
- Political acumen
- Scalable decision making processes
- Managing underperformance
- Workforce diversity

State of the Service survey results

The 2015 State of the Service survey showed favourable results for the ABS overall but suggested a future focus on:

- High performance culture
- Visibility of senior leaders
- Risk and change management
- Performance management
- Learning and career development
- Communication

Who are we transforming for?

Our community
- Improved data matching
- Informed use of statistics
- Evidence based policy and programs
- Less burden on households and businesses

Our partners
- Greater responsiveness
- Improved collaboration
- Quicker to market
- Less red tape

Our organisation
- Ongoing sustainability
- Greater influence and reach
- More dynamic – able to respond to future challenges

Our people
- Greater flexibility
- More satisfying work
- New skills and opportunities
- More diverse and engaged culture

Australian Bureau of Statistics

Who are our stakeholders?

Lifeline

Assistant Minister to the Treasury

Users

Reserve Bank of Australia, Universities and members of the public

Co-producers

Organisations that we partner with to produce statistics eg. Department of Agriculture and Water Resources and the Australian Institute of Family Studies

Stakeholders

Providers

Households and businesses who give us information

Funders

Organisations that pay us to provide statistics eg. Department of Health and Department of Social Services
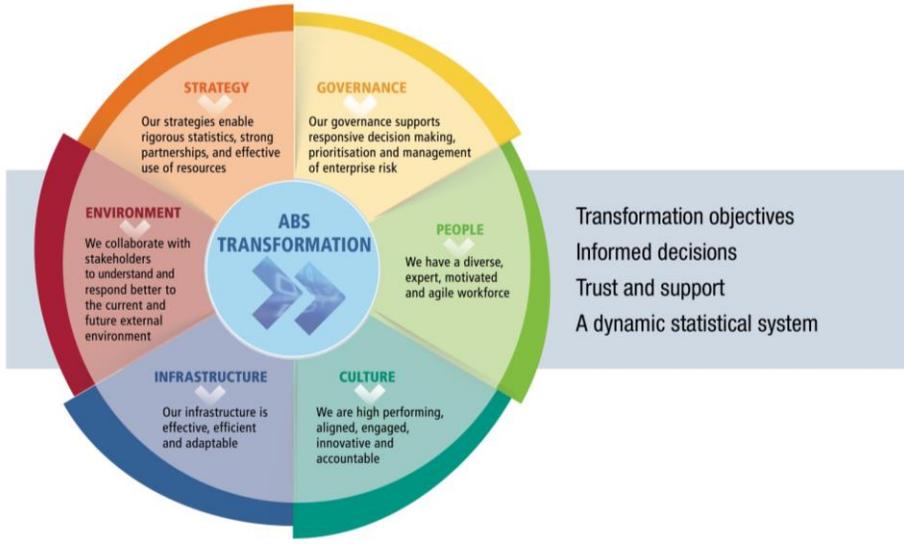

Our vision and priorities

UNLEASHING THE
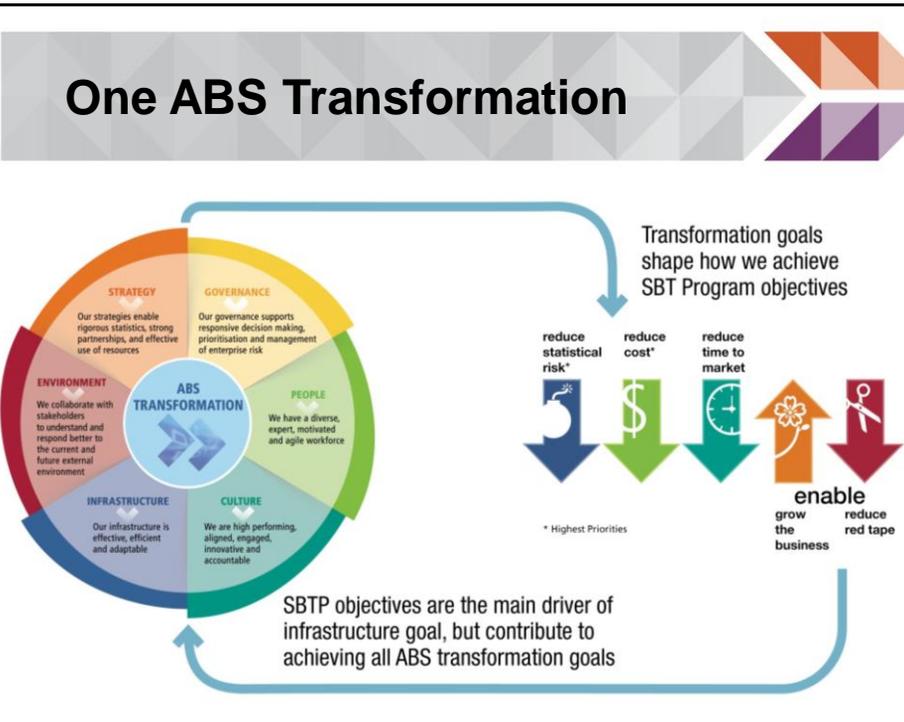**POWER OF STATISTICS**
FOR A BETTER AUSTRALIA

TRANSFORMING FOR THE FUTURE

WHILE CONTINUING TO **DELIVER** HIGH QUALITY OFFICIAL STATISTICS
STRENGTHEN OUR PARTNERSHIPS
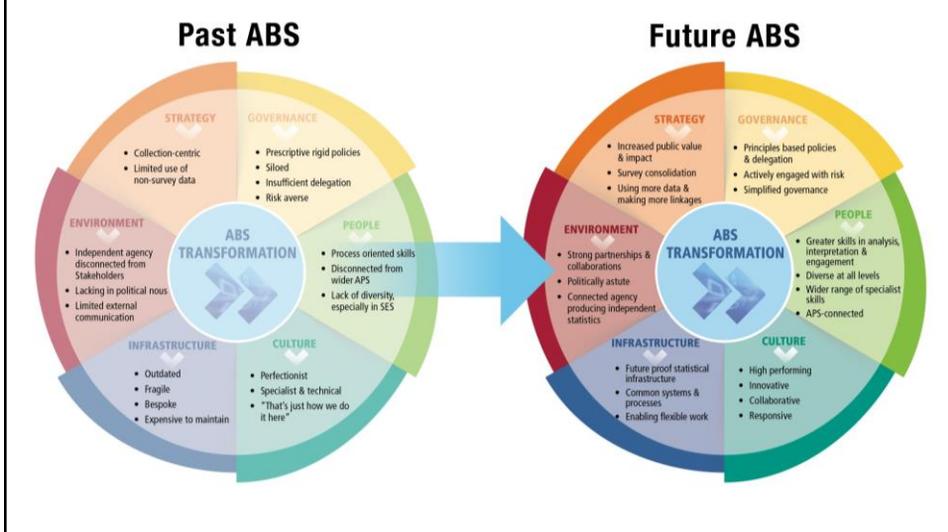**DRIVE** HIGH PERFORMANCE

Our transformation goals

Transformation objectives

Informed decisions

Trust and support

A dynamic statistical system

One ABS Transformation

Transformation - past and future

Past ABS

Future ABS

Environment

We collaborate with stakeholders to understand and respond better to the current and future external environment.

Future state
- Mutually beneficial partnerships
- ABS takes a lead role in the data agenda
- Better political awareness
- Targeted external communication about statistics

Achievements
- ABS Engagement Strategy promotes best practice in partnerships
- Relationship Health Check shows improving relationships
- ABS DataLab for microdata being accessed by 50 users
- ABS plays key role in Public Sector Data Management high value projects
- Media management ensures better understanding of labour statistics

31/08/2016

Strategy

Our strategies will enable rigorous statistics, strong partnerships, and effective use of resources.

Future state
- Broader use of non-survey data with greater data integration
- Less intrusive collection – collect once, use many approach
- Deliver maximum public value through robust prioritisation

Achievements
- ABS uses its data linkage capability to link Census and survey data to key government administrative data
- Data Integration projects bring together data sources to create richer solutions for statistical, policy and research purposes
- ABS contributing to whole of government public data management and data integration initiatives
- Transforming Statistics Program – key decisions on survey program

Governance

Our governance will support responsive decision making, prioritisation and management of enterprise risk.

Future state
- Simplified and streamlined structure and governance
- Effective issues and risk engagement – not risk avoidance
- Principles based policies and delegations – decisions being made at the right levels
- A modern legislative framework
- A national statistical system that works collaboratively

Achievements
- Evolving, flexible organisational structure
- Repurposed statistical advisory groups
- New Enterprise Risk Management Framework
- Statistical risk management plans in place for all MEIs and ERP estimates
- Microdata access policy review
- Updated internal policies

7

People

We will have a diverse, expert, motivated and agile workforce.

Future state
- Right people with the right skills
- Shift skill focus to analytical, interpretation and engagement skills
- A more diverse workforce

Achievements
- External appointments to SES bring fresh perspectives
- Analytical skills training program developed and ready for delivery
- Staff exchanges underway with The Treasury, Department of Finance and Australian Taxation Office
- First two day meeting of Youmpla Network for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the ABS
- Female SES increased to 40%

Culture

We will be high performing, aligned, engaged, innovative and accountable.

Future state
- Credible, open and outcome focused leadership
- High performing workforce that is responsive, innovative and engaged with the change program
- Innovation is celebrated
- Organisational level priorities are the focus over local priorities

Achievements
- State of the Service (2015) shows stable employee engagement scores that are higher than the APS average
- ABS Change Network brings together change practitioners across the ABS
- Improved internal communication
- SES commitment to leadership behaviours:
  - Ruthless prioritisation
  - Timely action
  - Empowering staff
  - 'One-ABS' focus

Infrastructure

Our infrastructure will be effective, efficient and adaptable.

Future state
- Infrastructure that is efficient, sustainable, flexible and agile to support responsive statistical solutions and expand digital initiatives
- Streamlined processes, systems and applications across statistical collections
- A modern website that enables flexible access to data and products
- Innovative, flexible accommodation

Achievements
- Three of our seven biggest procurements for foundational infrastructure finalised
- New tools piloted
- New ABS homepage live
- Expanded Activity Based Working arrangements
- NextGen Desktop rollout completed across all ABS offices

International collaborations

- Significant benefits - can we afford not to? (the large costs of going alone)
- Takes time and commitment to succeed
- Concrete progress (GSBPM etc)
- Mixed results – further thinking needed on success enablers (different models, better environment now – more tools available, better technology (services etc)?

Standards based modernisation

- Foundational infrastructure based on international standards
- Business process reeengineering
- Enterprise wide capabilities
- Configuration and on-boarding
- Enabling activities

Key learnings so far

- Needs to be driven from the top down
- Takes longer than expected
- Difficult without appropriate additional resourcing
- Early training of key staff essential
- Importance of knowledge management as staff leave, time passes
- Build in contingency funding or key review points
- Allocate skilled staff
- Commit to de-commissioning legacy systems