



AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS

Supplementary Submission to the Senate Finance
and Public Administration Committee's Inquiry into
the Arrangements for the Marriage Postal Survey

7 September 2017

CONTENTS

1. Overview.....	2
2. Processes	3
2.1 Paperless Options	3
2.2 Information Line	3
2.3 Key Dates.....	4
2.4 Survey Costs to Date.....	4
2.5 Inclusion Strategies.....	5
2.6 Silent Electors	5
3. Communications Campaign	6
3.1 Research	6
3.2 Phase Two	6
3.3 Survey Materials	8
3.4 Web Presence.....	8
4. Integrity	8
4.1 External Observer Arrangements.....	9
4.2 Fraud Control Strategy.....	10
4.3 Risk Management	10
4.4 Privacy	10
4.5 Cyber Security.....	11
5. Methodology	11
6. Publication of Statistics	12
7. Updates to Government	12
Appendix A – Engagement Strategy	14
Appendix B – Inclusion Strategies	16
Appendix C – Silent Elector Procedure	23
Appendix D – Privacy Policy	24

1. OVERVIEW

The following information is a supplementary submission to the Arrangements for the Postal Survey Senate Inquiry. Since the time of the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) submission of 17 August 2017, a number of key milestones have occurred and the Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey (the survey) is moving into an operational phase.

Notably, registration for the Commonwealth Electoral Roll closed on 24 August 2017. The number of eligible Australians on the roll as at 24 August 2017 who will be able to participate in the Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey is just over 16 million, the first time the Electoral Roll has exceeded 16 million people. The *Census and Statistics (Statistical Information) Direction 2017*, as amended, (the Direction) defines who will be eligible to participate in the survey.

The ABS has established key partnerships with a number of government departments and agencies, and has engaged a number of third party providers to assist in the production, postage and processing of survey forms.

The following processes have been finalised and published since the ABS submission of 17 August 2017:

- paperless response options of online and telephony services;
- inclusion strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities;
- inclusion strategy for eligible Australians overseas;
- inclusion strategy for people with a disability;
- inclusion strategy for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds;
- inclusion strategy for people experiencing homelessness; and
- arrangements for silent electors.

In addition, further integrity measures including a privacy plan and a fraud control strategy are being finalised.

The next key milestone is the posting of survey materials to all eligible Australians. The survey materials will be sent in a staggered delivery schedule over almost two weeks from 12 September 2017. All eligible Australians in Australia should have received their survey materials by 25 September 2017.

2. PROCESSES

The ABS regularly updates the survey process on the ABS website which includes information about; who can participate, arrangements for silent electors, special strategies to support participation, mailout of survey form, replacement of survey forms, completion of the survey form, the voluntary nature of the survey, return of survey forms, processing of survey forms, secrecy protections, publishing of statistical information, destruction of materials collected, assurance of integrity and quality arrangements and key dates.

2.1 PAPERLESS OPTIONS

An Online Enquiry Form is now available in addition to the Australian Marriage Law Survey Information Line. Eligible Australians can use this form to request that their survey material be dispatched to a different address or to ask questions about the survey process.

In limited circumstances, a person will be able to respond to the survey online or through a telephony service. These paperless options are only available for eligible Australians who:

- are overseas throughout the collection period;
- have blindness, low vision or other disability that makes the paper form a more difficult option; or
- are in a remote or other location throughout the collection period where they cannot reasonably access a form by post or pick up a form.

Eligible Australians in these categories will be able to obtain a secure access code from the ABS through the Information Line or the ABS website from 25 September 2017 to 20 October 2017. The secure access code can then be used to provide an anonymous survey response through an automated telephony service, a secure online form.

2.2 INFORMATION LINE

A designated Information Line commenced on 14 August 2017 and will run until 25 November 2017. The Information Line is operated through the Department of Human Services (DHS) on behalf of the ABS.

As at 5 September 2017, the Information Line has received over 80,000 calls from the public. Of these around 58,000 calls are answered by a call centre agent and around 22,000 are answered by an Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system that provides basic information that satisfies callers without needing to speak to a call centre agent.

Over 95 per cent of calls are being answered within 120 seconds, with an average speed of answer of 21 seconds.

2.3 KEY DATES

Key dates for the survey are outlined below.

Dates	Event
24 August 2017	Electoral Roll closed for new enrolments or changes to enrolments for the Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey.
12 September 2017 to 25 September 2017	Initial mailout of survey forms.
25 September 2017	Telephone and internet response options are open for people who are unable to complete a paper survey form. Those who have not received a form, or need a replacement, will be able to collect forms in capital city and regional locations.
20 October 2017	Final day for requesting or picking up replacement survey forms, or for requesting access to telephone and internet response options.
27 October 2017	The date by which the ABS is encouraging eligible Australians to lodge their survey response.
7 November (6pm local time)	Survey closes. Responses received after this date will not be counted.
15 November 2017	ABS publishes statistical data on the results of the survey and participation data.

2.4 SURVEY COSTS TO DATE

To date the ABS has incurred the following costs although not all have yet been invoiced. This means that the amounts are estimates and could be subject to change. Costs to date include the following:

Item	Cost incurred to 6 September
Media and communications	\$8.0m
Printing and production of letters, survey forms and envelopes	\$5.3m
Taskforce costs	\$0.6m
Paperless response options	\$0.2m
Total	\$14.1m

2.5 INCLUSION STRATEGIES

The ABS has engaged with a wide range of government departments and agencies and external stakeholders to develop appropriate inclusion strategies to cover all eligible Australians and the communication of these strategies to relevant communities. Appendix A provides a list of key stakeholders.

A comprehensive list of inclusion strategies was published on the ABS website on 22 August 2017 covering overseas eligible Australians, eligible Australians who are blind or who have low vision or a disability, eligible Australians in remote areas and people experiencing homelessness.

Since our submission of 17 August 2017, the ABS has finalised its inclusion strategies for:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities;
- eligible Australians overseas;
- people with a disability;
- people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds; and
- people experiencing homelessness.

Details of the inclusion strategies are at Appendix B.

2.6 SILENT ELECTORS

The Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) and the ABS have agreed a set of arrangements to ensure that silent electors are able to participate in the survey. This includes the process for dispatching survey forms to silent electors and how silent electors access information about the survey.

The AEC will generate survey forms, including the non-identifiable barcodes provided by the ABS and dispatch the survey forms from the AEC's contracted mail house which is a different supplier to that being used by the ABS.

The package will include a cover letter that explains why the survey form is being sent by the AEC and advising of how to receive support. This will guarantee that ABS staff will not have access to the address details of silent electors.

The AEC is also responsible for providing information to silent electors. A designated Hotline has been established for this purpose. Where a silent elector contacts the Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey Information Line,

they will be advised to contact the designated Hotline administered by the AEC.

Silent electors will also be able to access an online or telephony option if required, for instance if they are overseas and need to access an electronic option to respond to the survey. Appendix C provides an overview of the process for silent electors.

3. COMMUNICATIONS CAMPAIGN

Given the significant response and engagement of eligible Australians in the process to enrol and update their electoral details, the ABS considers Phase One of the survey to have been successful.

More than 16 million Australians are now enrolled and will be eligible to participate in the survey. The AEC reported that it has processed 765,000 enrolment transactions since the announcement of the survey which included 90,000 additions to the electoral roll.

3.1 RESEARCH

During 18 August 2017 and 27 August 2017, the ABS commissioned independent quantitative research around people's awareness of the survey and whether people were enrolled and if their address on the electoral roll was correct. The sample size was 1,800 eligible Australians.

The research indicated that overall a large majority of eligible Australians (96 per cent) had enrolled to vote prior to the closing of the roll on 24 August 2017. A large majority of eligible Australians (90 per cent) were also aware of the survey.

Over half of eligible Australians had been exposed to advertising about the survey. Television, followed by social media and facebook and then radio and print were all successful mediums for informing eligible Australians of the survey.

The research also indicated that overall the majority of eligible Australians understood how to participate in the survey and that it was a voluntary survey.

3.2 PHASE TWO

Our submission of 17 August 2017 noted that Phase Two of the communications campaign would commence on 3 September 2017. Phase Two will now commence from 10 September 2017. The revised commencement

date will avoid unnecessary advertising costs and will better align advertising with the dispatch of survey materials expected to commence from 12 September 2017.

Phase Two messages will outline how the survey collection process will operate and how eligible Australians can participate in the survey. Copies of actual survey material will be used in advertising so it is easily recognisable when it arrives in the mail. Phase Two will emphasise the simplicity of the survey process and focus on maximising participation and acceptance of the statistical result.

The Phase Two and Three advertising creative concepts were focus group tested in August 2017. Twenty-five group discussions were held in various locations with a representative sample of the Australian population. Overall, Phase Two and Three advertising was found to be extremely strong and effective in achieving the campaign behavioural objectives by focusing audiences on the process of the survey and the simplicity and ease of participating.

Specifically, the research found that Phase Two and Phase Three advertising:

- makes the survey process very clear - everyone knows what they have to do;
- conveys that the survey process is very easy, with simplicity of task highly likely to maximise participation;
- uses visual story telling effectively;
- caused no misinterpretation or distraction among audiences;
- is calm, neutral, impartial and engaging tone and language;
- has the right hierarchy of information, without too much information to confuse or overwhelm audiences; and
- did not raise any concerns about privacy.

Phase Two of the campaign will comprise integrated paid advertising (including insertions designed to be placed in overseas media for Australians overseas), a new customer centric accessible website (currently in production and due to be released around 11 September 2017), media and public relations, social media and online communication, stakeholder communication, special audience advertising and communication (which is translated for culturally and linguistically diverse audiences and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander audiences), and the development and distribution of some information materials.

3.3 SURVEY MATERIALS

Copies of the survey materials including outgoing and incoming envelope design, instruction letter and survey form, will be released on the ABS Website from 11 September 2017 just prior to the mailout.

The ABS has produced guidance for any organisation or individual wishing to use the materials in campaign or promotional communication. Any campaign director can make an application to the ABS to obtain the materials prior to 11 September 2017 provided they are willing to comply with strict guidelines.

3.4 WEB PRESENCE

A new website at marriagesurvey.abs.gov.au is in development to assist the public with information about the Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey. The website is expected to go live on approximately 11 September 2017.

The website has a range of information including; contact us options, clear information on survey processes, inclusive strategies, communication and advertising campaign materials and privacy information. It will be updated regularly to ensure it is accurate, accessible and effective in meeting public information needs.

4. INTEGRITY

The ABS has implemented a quality assurance program to provide confidence in the integrity of the design, implementation and execution of the survey. The ABS will implement a series of “integrity gates” and other broader assurance activities throughout the survey process, including with third party providers, to ensure that appropriate quality processes are in place.

The ABS has contracted independent auditors and assessors to provide quality assurance of the survey process covering critical aspects of the project including; technology and security, operational logistics, fraud, the handling of personal information and integrity controls.

The assurance program will allow the ABS to assure that:

- everyone who was on the electoral roll was given an opportunity to participate;
- every valid form returned was processed and counted;
- no person was able to participate more than once;
- controls were in place to reduce, detect and remove fraudulent activity;

- appropriate security around the data was in place throughout the survey;
- separation of response and personal information was maintained throughout the survey; and
- all physical and electronic data was destroyed at the end of the survey.

4.1 EXTERNAL OBSERVER ARRANGEMENTS

In undertaking the survey, the ABS is working to ensure that the collection of the statistical information is undertaken with the highest levels of transparency, integrity and assurance in the accuracy of the data. This will be important in maintaining public confidence in the process. Recognising the importance of this, the ABS will allow external observers to witness a key aspect of the process and report back to the Australian Statistician on the integrity of the process.

The role of an observer will be to witness randomly selected sample batches of survey responses of; yes responses, no responses and unclear responses. Observers will be able to specify if they agree or disagree with the survey result that the ABS has recorded.

Observers will be nominated by two cross party committees being formed by the Commonwealth Parliament, representing the yes and no positions. Observers must be over 18 years of age, will be required to undergo a police check and sign a Deed of Confidentiality. The observation process will involve equal numbers of nominees from both Committees.

The observation process will begin 3 October 2017, and continue through to 10 November 2017 (or earlier, should processing finish earlier).

The role of external observers is different to that of an election scrutineer in two key features:

- external observers will not have the ability to view every survey form; and
- external observers will not have the ability to seek an administrative review of the survey form result validity.

Consistent with the normal practice of transparency and quality, the ABS will publish a Statement of Quality Assurance which will include feedback received from the external observers.

4.2 FRAUD CONTROL STRATEGY

Measures are being put in place to ensure that fraudulent survey responses are not accepted. These measures will detect any attempted multiple responses associated with an individual eligible Australian with only the valid response counted.

The ABS is designing processes to identify potential fraudulent behaviour. Any survey response that ABS suspects is fraudulent, or not authentic, will be investigated and can be cancelled. If an eligible Australian reports a form has been stolen or lost, the ABS will mark the original barcode as invalid.

4.3 RISK MANAGEMENT

A dedicated Risk Manager is in place and working closely with the key staff in the Taskforce to identify risks and facilitate risk management strategies in all key areas. Regular discussions and meetings between the Risk Manager and key staff are held to identify updates as required to risks and controls.

The Risk Register is reviewed and updated regularly as new risks emerge or are closed off.

4.4 PRIVACY

The ABS has taken a 'privacy by design' approach to the survey and has imbedded a range of pro-privacy measures to minimise risks around the collection, use, access and disclosure of personal information. Specifically, the ABS is only collecting the minimum amount of personal information required to conduct the Survey, support Australians to participate, and publish resultant statistics. The pro-privacy measures will not inhibit the ability of the ABS to support Australians to participate or control against fraud and other attempts to unduly influence the survey.

An independent privacy expert has been engaged to prepare a privacy assurance statement regarding the adequacy of privacy management in the survey. This statement will consider the survey design, compliance with privacy obligations, privacy impacts and handling of personal information.

In addition, the ABS continues to engage with the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC) regarding the management of personal information and consideration of privacy impacts.

A copy of the ABS Privacy policy is at Appendix D.

4.5 CYBER SECURITY

The ABS is working closely with relevant government agencies to ensure that effective cyber security is maintained.

ABS is working with the Special Advisor to the Prime Minister on Cyber Security, senior officers of the Australian Signals Directorate (ASD) and the Digital Transformation Agency (DTA) to ensure joint assurance of the online form and telephony solutions and a collaborative approach to monitoring and incident response.

5. METHODOLOGY

The methodology used by the ABS for the survey is consistent with standard statistical processes for any collection. The survey includes the following statistical techniques:

- design and testing of collection materials;
- establishment and management of collection against a survey frame;
- classify and code responses;
- quality gates to ensure integrity of processing;
- calculate aggregates for Commonwealth Electoral Division (CED), State/Territory and national level tables;
- reporting of participation by available demographic and geographic variables;
- dissemination of results through ABS website; and
- reporting on data quality.

The survey is effectively a census of Australians who are eligible to vote as at 24 August 2017. Participation is voluntary.

The statistical methodology that will be applied is essentially the same as that used for the Religious Affiliation question asked by the Australian Census of Population and Housing. This question is also voluntary.

In designing the survey, the ABS carefully considered the use of a range of statistical techniques – including the use of sampling and adjustment for non-response. The use of a sample would not be consistent with the Government direction that the ABS seek the view of all eligible Australians. The Religious Affiliation question on the Census of Population and Housing is not adjusted for non-response as the ABS is not confident that the characteristics of those who don't respond are the same as those who do respond. For the same

reason, the survey will not adjust for non-response. The survey statistics will tell us the views of those who chose to respond and, through the participation rate data that will also be published, we will also have a picture of the broad characteristics of those who chose not to express a view.

The ABS will provide a statement on the quality of the survey statistics at the same time as the statistics are published. This statement will allow people to make informed use of the statistics.

6. PUBLICATION OF STATISTICS

Following completion of the survey and the processing of survey responses, the ABS will publish statistical information on:

- survey response results in the form of a count of responses by Yes, No, Blank and Unclear by Commonwealth Electoral Division (CED), State/Territory and National;
- the number of eligible Australians who have not participated in each CED, State/Territory and National; and
- participation rates by age and gender for each CED, State/Territory and National.

Participation characteristics will not be available for Silent Electors and some other participants where Electoral Information is not complete, and these will be reported as 'age unavailable' or 'gender unavailable' in the tables. The answer to the survey question is anonymous so the ABS will not be able to provide a count of Yes, No, Blank and Unclear by age or gender.

The statistical information will be published on 15 November 2017 on the ABS website, the exact timing of which is still to be determined.

The report will also include a summary of the survey processes such as collection, processing and coding of responses and information on quality assurance checks undertaken to ensure the integrity of the data and processes.

7. UPDATES TO GOVERNMENT

The Minister for Finance is the Minister responsible for the conduct of the Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey as authorised by the Treasurer on 14 August 2017. The authorisation under section 34AAB of the *Acts*

Interpretation Act 1901, will end upon the collection and publishing of the statistical information covered by the Direction.

The ABS reports to the Minister for Finance in relation to the survey and provides updates where appropriate to the Treasurer and Minister for Small Business.

APPENDIX A – ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

The ABS is working with and consulting with a wide range of stakeholders as part of the Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey and would like to acknowledge and thank them for their assistance and support.

Government Departments and Agencies

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)
Department of Defence (Defence)
Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C)
Australian Federal Police (AFP)
Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP)
Australian Signals Directorate (ASD)
Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC)
Australia Government Solicitor (AGS)
Australian Electoral Commission (AEC)
Department of Human Services (DHS)
National Disability Insurance Agency
Northern Territory Government
Digital Transformation Agency
Australian Signals Directorate
Department of Finance
The Treasury
Austrade
Advance.org
Department of Environment and Energy's Australian Antarctic Division
Australia Post
Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service
Department of Health
Corrections Victoria
Corrective Services NSW
Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development (DIRD)

External Stakeholders

Council of the Ageing
Aged Care Services Australia
Leading Aged Services Australia
Aged Care Guild

Vision Australia
Council to Homeless Persons
Federation of Ethnic Community Councils of Australia
Corrective Services Administrators Council
Woodside Energy Ltd
BHP Billiton
Santos
Blind Citizens Australia
National Association of Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations

APPENDIX B – INCLUSION STRATEGIES

B.1 INCLUSION STRATEGY FOR ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER COMMUNITIES

The ABS recognises that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in remote areas may experience challenges in participating in the Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey. In consultation with a number of stakeholders, communities, state and federal departments and agencies, the ABS has developed an inclusion strategy.

The ABS estimates around 55,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, over the age of 18 years, are in scope of this specific strategy, living in around 300 remote geographical locations in Australia and external territories as defined by the ABS Indigenous Geography. This strategy covers Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities located in remote areas and town camps close to urban centres.

This strategy is designed to address the unique challenges posed in these geographical locations and will support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to:

- receive their survey form in a timely manner;
- have access to a location where they can collect their survey form if required;
- be aware that they can ask someone they trust for assistance with completing their form;
- be able to easily lodge their completed survey form;
- have access to information about the Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey through radio, print media, online and telephony services;
- have access to translated material or local translators where possible;
- be able to request a new survey form if required;
- have access to complete the survey on the phone or online; and
- be able to participate in the survey in a safe environment.

The inclusion strategy includes; postal arrangements, the use of pick-up locations, Department of Human Services (DHS) agents, access points and remote service centres.

Postal Arrangements

The Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey package will be posted to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples registered on the Commonwealth Electoral Roll over a period of almost two weeks.

The packages will be posted to an eligible elector's address within Australia including; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, PO boxes, and nominated identified mailing addresses (shelters, hotels, workers camps, AusPost offices (forwarded mail set up).

In cases where people don't have a street address, mail will be held for collection at their local mail agent in the same way as they collect any other mail. The package will contain; a survey form; reply paid envelope and instructions on how to complete the survey form. Packages will be dispatched by priority post from 12 September 2017. Every eligible Australian should receive their survey materials by 25 September 2017 (people should not contact the ABS until 25 September 2017 for replacement materials).

The Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey will be open from 12 September 2017 to 7 November 2017, allowing people more than sufficient time to receive, complete and return survey forms. Whilst postal service delivery in certain locations is less frequent than in highly populated areas, the fact the ABS will ensure mail with the longest delivery time is mailed first combined with the longer period to lodge responses and priority post, provides sufficient time for material to be delivered and returned from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

The ABS encourages those in remote and regional locations to respond as soon as possible to ensure their completed survey form is received in time. Completed survey forms can be posted using the free reply paid envelope or submitted to an ABS authorised officer at a pick-up/drop off location. See below for further information on pick-up locations.

The ABS can dispatch replacement forms to an alternative address, or to replace lost or spoilt forms, by contacting the Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey Information Line until 20 October 2017. The Information Line 1800 572 113 is open seven days a week 8.00am – 8.00pm (local time) and replacement materials can also be ordered using the online enquiry form (noting identification must be provided to ensure the requestor is authorised to obtain a replacement).

Pick-up/drop off locations

Recognising that postal arrangements will not suit everyone, the ABS will establish several hundred designated pick-up and drop off locations in cities, regional and remote areas for people to collect and submit survey forms. Details of pick-up locations, dates and times will be published on the ABS website.

Promotional activities will be undertaken to ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities are made aware of the locations, dates and times. Pick-up and drop off locations will be staffed with ABS authorised officers with experience in and training in relation to supporting collection of information in remote communities.

Pick-up locations will be able to:

- issue paper survey forms;
- accept completed survey forms;
- provide information on how to complete the form; and
- provide some translated material.

DHS Service Points

Throughout the survey collection period, people living in rural and remote areas who have enquires about the survey or who cannot access their postal form can access the ABS website or call the Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey Information Line.

ABS is partnering with Department of Human Services (DHS) to provide additional opportunities for people in remote locations to contact the ABS. There are over 600 DHS agents, access points and remote service centres across Australia, and each of these locations can provide self-service computers or phones to freely access the survey Information Line and the ABS website via internet or telephony services. These facilities will allow a person to request new materials from the ABS and to participate in the survey using online or telephony options.

Details of DHS service points are available at humanservices.gov.au/findus. Details of DHS service points will also be available on the ABS website. The DHS service points will not be able to issue survey forms or collect completed survey forms. Only ABS pick-up centres will provide this service.

Where possible and practical the ABS also plans to engage with key health and community providers and local councils to maximise the effective implementation of the inclusion strategy.

Online and Telephony Services

If the postal survey or drop off/pick up of postal forms doesn't work for some in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, they also have the option to participate in the survey online and through telephony services where access exists. Respondents can request a secure access code from the ABS through the Information Line or the ABS website from 25 September 2017 to 20 October 2017. The secure access code is then used to provide an anonymous survey response through an automated telephony service, a secure online form or a call centre.

Phase Two of the communications campaign will focus on participation in the survey and provide eligible Australians with information on how to complete the survey form, where to obtain information, and in the case of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, promotional material will explain how the survey forms are being distributed, how to request a survey form and online and telephony services.

The Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey is being advertised through radio, print media, social media and television. Specific materials, such as posters and audio files with easily understood key messages, will be translated into a number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages. This information will be available on the ABS website, at relevant pick-up locations, at DHS service points where possible and distributed via stakeholder networks.

B.2 INCLUSION STRATEGY FOR ELIGIBLE AUSTRALIANS OVERSEAS

There are multiple options for participation in the survey for eligible Australians that are overseas. People who have an overseas postal address on the Electoral Roll will be posted a letter containing a secure access code that allows a response online or by phone. Paper forms will not be posted overseas for this survey.

Australians who are temporarily overseas may be able to complete their survey form before they leave or after they return. Survey forms will be delivered to Australian nominated addresses by 25 September 2017, including for people that have notified the AEC that they will be temporarily overseas.

Eligible Australians that are overseas for this entire period could ask a trusted

person to receive their form on their behalf, open it, complete it based on their instruction and return it to the ABS.

If none of the above options is possible, the eligible Australian overseas will be able to request a secure access code from the ABS through the Information Line or the ABS website from 25 September 2017 to 20 October 2017 and complete the survey online, via the automated telephony service or via a call centre.

The ABS has been working closely with Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) to ensure SmartTraveller website and other DFAT communication channels can promote information about how overseas Australians can participate in the survey. The ABS will also produce specific advertising insertions to be placed in overseas media to support eligible Australians overseas.

B.3 INCLUSION STRATEGY FOR PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY

The ABS has implemented a number of additional strategies for people with a disability who may find completing a postal survey more difficult. These options are described below.

People who are blind or have low vision or other disability and may find completing a postal survey more difficult can authorise another person they trust to assist them with their survey, or to complete the survey form on their behalf.

Where someone completes a survey on someone else's behalf, the ABS expects that the eligible Australian would specifically authorise that trusted person to open their postal survey envelope; and communicate their survey response to that trusted person so this can be accurately marked on the survey form.

A person cannot self-declare themselves to be a trusted person for someone else. It is illegal to open someone else's mail without their permission, and there are potential penalties for providing false or misleading information to the ABS.

In some circumstances, a person will be able to respond to the survey through a paperless method, for example by using the telephone.

From 25 September to 20 October 2017, people with a disability can request a

secure access code via the Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey online enquiry form on the ABS website or by calling the Information Line. A letter including the secure code will be sent to the person. The code is then used to provide an anonymous survey response through an automated telephony service, a secure online form or via a call centre.

The ABS is working in partnership with the National Relay Service (NRS) which is a 24 hour service to help people who are deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment to complete their form.

All survey material and the ABS website has been designed to maximise accessibility for people with vision, hearing or intellectual disabilities. The Information Line is also available to provide assistance.

B.4 INCLUSION STRATEGY FOR PEOPLE FROM CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS

Eligible Australians from culturally and linguistically diverse communities may complete the survey independently through the postal service, by requesting the assistance of someone they trust or through the support of Translating and Interpreting Services (TIS).

If a person is not able to complete their survey form independently, they can authorise another person they trust to assist them with their survey, or to complete the survey form on their behalf. Where someone completes a survey on someone else's behalf, the ABS expects that the eligible Australian would:

- specifically authorise that trusted person to open their postal survey envelope; and
- communicate their survey response to that trusted person so this can be accurately marked on the survey form.

The trusted person would then seal the form in the reply paid envelope and post it back to the ABS.

A person cannot self-declare themselves to be a trusted person for someone else. It is illegal to open someone else's mail without their permission, and there are potential penalties for providing false or misleading information to the ABS.

A person can also respond to the survey through assistance from someone who speaks their language. There are instructions on the reverse side of the

letter sent with the survey form in 15 languages on how to contact the Translating and Interpreting Services (TIS National).

B.5 INCLUSION STRATEGY FOR PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

People who are experiencing homelessness can participate in the survey by:

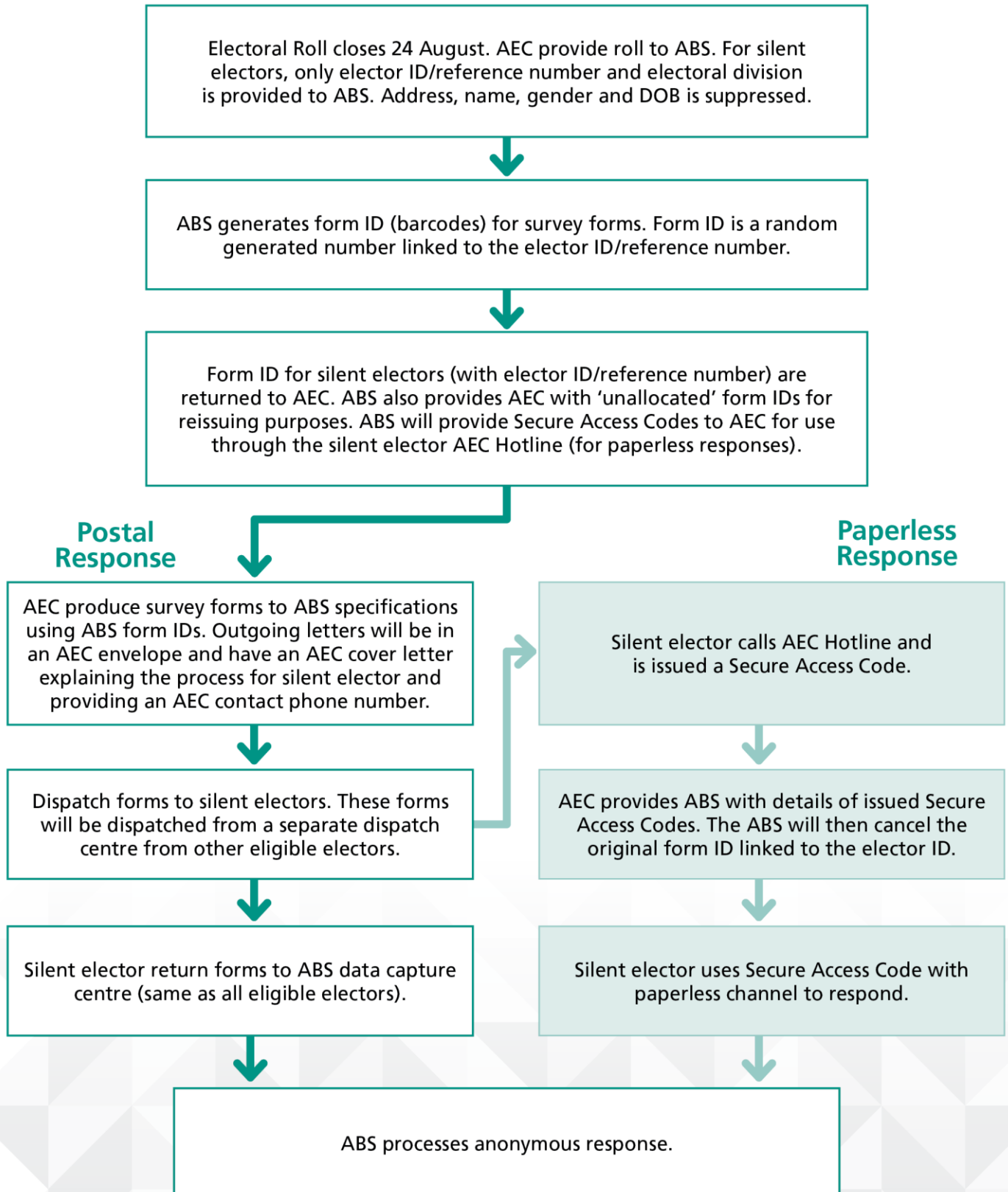
- collecting a survey form from an ABS pickup location;
- requesting a survey form be posted to the address of a trusted person to hold the form for them to collect; and
- contacting the ABS through the Information Line or the ABS website to complete the survey online, via the automated telephony service or via a call centre.

The extended period that forms are available for pick up, from 25 September 2017 to 20 October 2017, provides greater access to forms than is possible in the Census where all people experiencing homelessness need to complete a form on Census night.

Like the Census, the ABS will work with Homeless Service Providers and community organisations to provide information to people experiencing homelessness on how they can participate in the survey.

Silent Elector Procedure

APPENDIX C – SILENT ELECTOR PROCEDURE



APPENDIX D – PRIVACY POLICY

Purpose of this Privacy Policy

This privacy policy details how the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) will treat any personal information that it collects as part of the voluntary Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey (the Marriage Survey). As required, it also outlines what personal information we will collect and how we will use it.

Authority and purposes for collecting and using your personal information

Protecting your privacy and confidentiality is critical to the ABS. As an Australian Government agency, we comply with our obligations under the [Privacy Act 1988](#) (Privacy Act) and manage personal information in accordance with the Australian Privacy Principles.

The ABS is undertaking the Marriage Survey in accordance with the [Census and Statistics \(Statistical Information\) Direction 2017](#) (the Direction) issued by the Treasurer on 9 August 2017 (and amended on 17 August 2017), and the [Census and Statistics Act 1905](#) (Census and Statistics Act).

The Marriage Survey is not compulsory

Participation in the Marriage Survey is voluntary. If a person does not wish to participate then no action is required. The Australian Statistician will not make any compulsory requests for individuals to complete the Marriage Survey, and no penalties will apply if individuals decide not to participate in the Marriage Survey.

Personal information that the ABS will collect

In order to conduct the Marriage Survey, the ABS will collect two key sets of personal information:

- Commonwealth Electoral Roll information for all Australians who are ‘electors’ within the meaning of the Direction. Electors within the meaning of the Direction consist of all persons registered on the Commonwealth Electoral Roll as at midnight 24 August 2017 who are aged 18 years or older as at 24 August 2017 and who are not serving a sentence of imprisonment of 3 years or longer, comprising:
 - For registered silent electors, and members of the Australian Defence Force (ADF) and Australian Federal Police (AFP) who are registered with the AEC as deployed overseas - elector

reference number and electoral division (however, these details are not considered to be personal information); and

- For all other electors - elector reference number, name, address, gender, electoral division and date of birth.
- Completed survey responses from eligible Australians who choose to participate, comprising a response to whether or not the law should be changed to allow same sex couples to marry.

Information from the Commonwealth Electoral Roll is provided to the ABS by the AEC in accordance with the [Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918](#). The ABS will collect, use and disclose this information only in accordance with the Privacy Act, the Direction and the Census and Statistics Act.

This information will ensure that every eligible Australian has the opportunity to participate in the Marriage Survey by allowing the survey materials to be addressed to each elector at their address listed on the Commonwealth Electoral Roll, and primarily delivered by mail.

Completed survey responses will be received by the ABS via paper, telephone and online options.

Once processed, information will be stored in two files:

- A file containing only your electoral division and response to whether the law should be changed to allow same sex couples to marry.
- A file containing only the unique codes of survey respondents, which will be used to ensure that only one response is received for each eligible Australian and to calculate the proportion of people who have responded.

Personal details will never be seen or stored alongside the answer to the survey question.

Under certain circumstances, information to confirm your identity may be collected where you seek to access or correct the information the ABS or AEC holds about you, or request a new survey form or access code.

Who else will see my information?

The ABS has contracted certain service providers to support mail-out, collection and call centre operations of the Marriage Survey. The ABS may provide your personal information to these organisations, including name and address, if it is necessary in order for the contracted service provider to complete its work.

Contracted service providers will also receive your anonymous survey response, including via paperless options, and provide it to the ABS. Your personal information will continue to be protected in accordance with the Privacy Act at all times, and the contracted service providers are contractually bound to use this information for a specific purpose only and must destroy the information once the contracted work has been completed. The contracted service providers are also bound by confidentiality obligations to ensure that your personal information remains confidential.

Any organisations engaged by the ABS or the AEC (including any sub-contracted organisations) will be Australian-based only, and at no time will your personal information be disclosed to an overseas recipient.

Confidentiality

The ABS has taken a number of precautions in connection with the Marriage Survey to ensure that your personal information remains confidential. This includes using a unique code to ensure that no one can associate you with your survey response. A unique code will be applied to each survey form and paperless response so that survey responses can be validated by the ABS as being genuine, while also ensuring that each response does not identify a particular person.

As soon as is practicable, the ABS will separate the unique code from your survey response, which cannot be re-identified after that time.

The personal information that the ABS collects from you is covered by the secrecy provisions of the Census and Statistics Act. These provisions legally bind all ABS staff (including temporary employees) to protect your information. The ABS will not disclose your personal information in a way that will enable you, or any other person, to be identified, except where an organisation providing a contracted service requires the information to provide its service. However, any other organisations, including government departments and direct marketing companies, cannot have access to personal information you provide in the Marriage Survey.

It is an offence for any past or present ABS officer to divulge, either directly or indirectly, any information collected under the Census and Statistics Act. The Act provides for heavy penalties (fines of up to \$25,200 or imprisonment for up to 2 years or both) for anybody convicted of breaching this obligation.

Security, retention and destruction of personal information

All personal information collected by the ABS is collected and stored securely. Electronic and paper records containing your personal information are protected in accordance with the Australian Government Protective Security Policy Framework. The ABS manages your personal information in accordance with the Australian Government records management regime.

All information from the Commonwealth Electoral Roll, survey forms, images of survey forms, unique form codes and other information collected to confirm your identity, will be destroyed as soon as the work it is required for has been completed and will not be used for any other purpose outside of the Marriage Survey. This information will be destroyed no later than 60 days after the scheduled release of the survey results.

An exception to this destruction regime may apply where the information forms a body of evidence that may support the ABS in pursuing penalties against individuals for unlawful activities including, but not limited to, fraud. The ABS will destroy all information in accordance with the [Administrative Functions Disposal Authority](#) and the relevant records authority ([2001/00000540](#)).

The ABS has established rigorous, independent third party assurances in addition to internal assurance processes to establish that all handling of personal information meets the requirements set out in this policy.

How about silent electors and members of the ADF and AFP who are registered with the AEC as deployed overseas?

The AEC and ABS have taken care to protect the privacy of silent electors, and members of the ADF and AFP who are registered with the AEC as deployed overseas.

If you are a silent elector or a registered ADF or AFP member, the AEC will use the information it holds to send you a survey form on the ABS' behalf. Like the forms of other eligible Australians, silent and registered ADF and AFP electors' survey responses will contain a unique code and no personal identification.

The unique code will allow the ABS to validate that it is a legitimate response and associate the response with your electoral division only. At no time will the ABS be provided with the name, address, gender or age of any silent elector or

registered member of the ADF or AFP. For this reason, silent electors and registered ADF and AFP members will be excluded from gender and age statistics produced regarding survey participation rates.

If you are a silent elector, or a member of the ADF or AFP who is registered with the AEC as deployed overseas, and you wish to update your details for the purpose of receiving a survey form, you should contact the AEC Hotline on 02 6271 4441. You may be required to provide information to confirm your identity to access or correct the information that the AEC holds about you.

Consequences for you or your community if personal information is not collected

Information from the Commonwealth Electoral Roll is collected by the ABS to provide all eligible Australians the opportunity to participate in the Marriage Survey. If the information is not collected, the process for inviting Australians to participate could be, or could be perceived to be, inequitable, incomplete or otherwise compromised. This could diminish the robustness of the statistics produced.

Completed survey responses are collected to publish statistics on:

- a count of survey responses ('Yes', 'No' and 'Invalid') nationally as well as for each electoral division, state and territory; and
- a participation rate by age and gender nationally as well as for each electoral division, state and territory.

This information is essential to produce a quality and integrity statement for these published statistics.

Information to confirm your identity provides evidence that you are who you claim to be and is necessary to ensure that survey materials are only provided to the specific eligible Australian. If this information is not provided then the ABS may, at its discretion, decide not to action a request that you have made to us.

How to access personal information we hold about you and seek its correction

In accordance with the Privacy Act, the ABS may permit you to access or correct your personal information, where it is reasonable and practicable for the ABS to do so.

If you wish to update your details for the purpose of receiving a survey, you should contact the Information Line on 1800 572 113. You may be required to provide information to confirm your identity.

To request access to, or correction of, personal information collected in the Marriage Survey, contact the ABS Privacy Officer using the details provided below.

Please note that once the ABS has stored your survey response separate to your unique code, and destroyed the concordance which lists your identity and code, your response will not be identifiable and therefore the ABS will be unable to permit you to access or correct the information you have provided.

ABS websites

For further information about privacy and security of ABS websites and alternatives to our websites, see the [ABS Privacy Policy](#) section of the ABS website.

How to contact us

Our Privacy Officer will deal with your inquiries or complaints regarding privacy and can be contacted:

By email: privacy@abs.gov.au

By phone: 02 6252 7203

By post:

ABS Privacy Officer
Australian Bureau of Statistics
Locked Bag 10
Belconnen ACT 2617

How to make a privacy complaint

If you think we may have breached your privacy rights or our privacy responsibilities, a complaint should first be made to the ABS Privacy Officer using the details provided above. If you are not satisfied with how the ABS Privacy Officer handles your complaint, or the outcome reached, you may refer your complaint to the [Office of the Australian Information Commissioner](#).

Availability of this policy

If you wish to access this policy in an alternative format (e.g. hard copy), please contact the ABS Privacy Officer using the details provided above.

For information about how the ABS holds and uses personal information of employees, see the [ABS Privacy Policy](#).