

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

PROPOSAL NO. 7 OF 2023 BY THE AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS

CRIMINAL COURTS, AUSTRALIA

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) proposes to collect information for the purpose of providing comprehensive statistics on the number and characteristics of defendants finalised in criminal courts in Australia.

The information will be collected:

- from August 2024 on an annual basis; and
- from the administrative records held by State and Territory court agencies.

Information will be collected on a range of characteristics including:

- defendant characteristics (such as age, sex and Indigenous Status);
- the offences associated with defendants; and
- the case outcomes for defendants.

The information collected will be used by the ABS in the compilation of *Criminal Courts, Australia* and the *Federal Defendants, Australia* publications. The ABS may also link this data with other information sources for research and statistical purposes – for example, linking to the Person Level Integrated Data Asset. The principal users of the integrated data are authorised researchers for approved projects.

The ABS expects to make statistical and related information from the collection available from February 2025.

The principal users of the information the ABS produces will be:

- state and Territory court agencies;
- Commonwealth, State and Territory Attorney-General's and Justice departments;
- government crime and justice research institutes;
- crime and justice research centres within universities across Australia; and
- the general public.

Statistics and research produced from the collection will be used to make meaningful comparisons of the number and characteristics of defendants finalised in the criminal courts across states and territories in Australia. This will allow policymakers to assess and evaluate crime and justice related policy used throughout the states and territories and facilitate both researchers and policymakers to identify emerging trends in court activity and respond accordingly.

To assist in determining the feasibility of the collection and to understand and manage respondent burden consistent with the Government's Regulator Performance Framework, the ABS:

- has considered what existing information is available;
- has consulted with the Commissioners and Chief Executive Officers of state and territory criminal justice agencies (Police, Criminal Courts and Corrective Services).

This collection was last conducted in August 2023 and was previously tabled in Parliament as Proposal No. 9 of 2019.

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24 November 2023