

Australian Bureau of Statistics
Census of Population and Housing 1986

Census 86 - How Australia Takes a Census

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SECTION 1

Introduction

This document describes the history and various processes involved in the planning and conduct of the 1986 Census of Population and Housing, and the types of output available. Detailed information on specific outputs is contained in *Census 86 -Data Release Plans (2173.0)*.

Since 1961, the Census of Population and Housing has been conducted every five years. It is the largest statistical collection undertaken by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). All persons in Australia are enumerated at the dwelling in which they stayed on census night.

The census is one of the most important sources of statistical information in Australia. It provides a unique source of demographic and social information for a variety of geographic areas. Statistical outputs from sample surveys are generally limited to estimates of large geographic aggregates because of the high level of sampling error associated with smaller figures. Censuses are not affected by errors of this kind (although reporting and other errors remain).

Census statistics provide an essential basis for the preparation of population estimates at the national, State and local government levels as well as a benchmark for numerous surveys conducted by other bodies in the public and private sector.

They are also used:

- for decision-making activities that affect the lives and welfare of all Australians,
- in researching social issues; and
- as a basis for planning by governments, other institutions and the general public.

On 30 June 1986 the ABS also conducted a census of the population of two of the Australian external Territories, Cocos (Keeling) Islands and Christmas Island. This is the first census in which the ABS has completely undertaken all census operations in these Territories, including dissemination of census data.

The population of these external Territories is not included in the total Australia population.

The history of census taking in Australia

The first population counts of Australia were known as musters and were made as early as 1788. The first census in Australia was that of New South Wales, held in November 1828.

Censuses conducted by each colony continued until 1886. On 3 April 1881, the first simultaneous census of the British Empire covering the United Kingdom, India, and the Crown Settlements (including Australia) was taken. This census produced the first set of colony population figures enumerated on the same day.

A Census Conference held in Sydney on 26 February 1900 arranged for the collection and compilation of an Australian census on a uniform basis to be taken on 31 March 1901. Minor differences in the interpretation of definitions arose between the States, and the method of presentation of the results differed considerably. The responses to the census questions were not tabulated in all cases and there was no coordinating authority to bring the results together to form a total for Australia.

To provide greater coordination, the Census and Statistics Act 1905 was passed on 8 December 1905. This Act provided:

- (a) 'that the census shall be taken in the year 1911, and in every tenth year thereafter'; and
- (b) 'the census day shall be a day appointed for that purpose by proclamation'.

On 18 June 1906, the first Statistician of the Commonwealth of Australia was appointed, and it was the duty of that officer to carry out the provisions of the Act. Later in the same year the Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics was formed (re-named Australian Bureau of Statistics in 1975).

Since 1911, therefore, the census has been a centralised activity conducted and controlled by the Australian Statistician under the authority of an Act of Parliament to ensure uniformity in the census methods and data collected from each State, and to protect the confidentiality of information gathered.

Because of the economic depression it was considered ill-advised to conduct the scheduled Census of 1931, and the Census and Statistics Act was amended so that the census could be held at any such time as prescribed. Under the amended Act the next census was held in 1933. No census was held during the period of World War 11 and the first post-war census was taken in 1947 after an interval of 14 years. The year 1954 was chosen for the next census, it being a seven-year interval and equidistant between the 1947 Census and the then proposed 1961 Census. The practice of conducting a census in at least the first year of each decade was thus resumed from 1961 onwards.

In the selection of census day, every endeavour is made to choose a date when there is a minimum displacement of population. In 1911 and 1921, census day was near the beginning of April, but in 1933 and subsequently, census day has been at or near the end of June, because this time has better fulfilled the condition mentioned and is otherwise suitable, being the end of the fiscal year, and of a quarterly period used extensively for statistical purposes.

Following the 1961 Census, Australia has had a census taken every five years, a practice which has now become mandatory with the amendment to the Census and Statistics Act in 1977 requiring that 'The Census shall be taken in the year 1981 and in every fifth year thereafter, and at such other times as prescribed'.

Selection of census topics and question design

Planning for the 1986 Census of Population and Housing commenced in November 1982 after Government approval was received to proceed with the development of the census on the understanding that the content of the census household form be no greater than that of the 1981 Census. Once this approval was obtained, all known 1986 Census. Newspaper advertisements also invited public submissions.

An open assessment users of census data were invited to make submissions on topics to be included in, or excluded from, the of topics submitted by users and the public, supported by objective field tests of topics (in particular for topics likely to be difficult or sensitive), is regarded as the best method of developing a census form most acceptable to the public, and for optimising the value of the statistics produced. Previous experience in Australia and overseas has shown the critical importance of public cooperation.

The Census and Statistics Amendment Act (No 2) 1981, proclaimed on 1 March 1983, removed the requirement of the *Census and Statistics Act 1905* that certain topics be included in the census and others be prescribed by regulation. All future census topics were to be prescribed by regulation.

The 1986 Population Census Ethnicity Committee

During the development of the 1981 Census household form, difficulties were encountered in developing a census question on ethnic origin to meet a strong user demand for data on this topic. Consequently, a small committee of persons with special interest or expertise in the matter was established in December 1982 to advise the Australian Statistician on questions relating to ethnicity.

All topic submissions relating to ethnicity were made available to the committee. The committee issued a press release inviting further submissions from interested persons and organisations. A report from the committee to the Australian Statistician was released by the ABS as an information paper *The Measurement of Ethnicity in the Australian Census of Population and Housing (2172.0)*. The report recommended that a question on ancestry be asked in the 1986 Census and a question was included along lines suggested by the committee.

Evaluation of topics

It is essential that census topics be well justified, due to the high cost of collecting information in a census, and the burden placed on the public who are required to provide the information. For many topics, sample surveys are a more appropriate means of collecting information required by users, as they are less expensive and impose less of a burden on the public. There are, moreover, topics for which information cannot be gathered satisfactorily by the census self-enumeration methodology.

For the 1986 Census, each topic submission was carefully examined to assess the importance of the topic, possible alternative data sources, the uses to be made of the data, and whether the justifications for the topic were adequate. Other factors taken into consideration included: whether the topic was asked in previous censuses; whether data were considered to be required every five years; results of previous tests of the topic; overseas experience (mainly the United Kingdom, Canada, New Zealand and the United States of America); whether the topic was suitable for inclusion of the census; and whether the census was an appropriate method of collecting the data. A number of topics required field testing in order to evaluate their suitability for inclusion in the census form.

Associated with the task of topic selection is the design of questions for the census form. Field testing is an essential aspect of question design. For the 1986 Census, a program of field tests was carried out in 1983 and 1984 to evaluate new topics (including ethnicity) and to improve questions on regular census topics. For each test, an appropriate sample of dwellings was selected with samples varying in size from 250 dwellings to 5,000 dwellings. Census test forms were delivered to households, completed by household members and collected after the reference date. Household members were asked to give information in respect of all persons present in the household on the specified date.

After collection of the completed forms, interviews were held with a sample of respondents. In most cases, dwellings were selected for follow-up interview where responses were of particular value for question re-design. However, where the pilot test was small (up to about 500 dwellings), all respondents were interviewed. The main purpose of these interviews was to examine respondents' understanding of the census questions and, where possible, to determine the accuracy and completeness of responses. Pilot testing also examines other issues including reasons for people not being enumerated, sensitivity to particular topics, form layout, and question wording.

Topic evaluation concluded in late 1984 with the publication of the information paper *Preliminary ABS Views on the Content of the 1986 Census* (2171.0). These views were first discussed with the Australian Statistics Advisory Council (ASAC) and then released for public comment. After assessing comments from the public and ASAC, the Australian Statistician made recommendations to the Government in September 1984 on the content and estimated costs of the 1986 Census. This submission incorporated the recommendations of the Population Census Ethnicity Committee.

Government approval of topics for the 1986 Census was obtained in February 1985. The household form was finalised in March 1985 and the eight million household forms and supporting documents were then printed.

A dress rehearsal based on 24,000 dwellings was held in July 1985 to test field and processing procedures. As well as providing valuable information on operational problems, the dress rehearsal was essential for providing estimates of coding and processing rates for finalising the budget of the Data Transcription Centre.

Final content

The content of the final 1986 Census household form differed from the 1981 Census form in the following significant ways:

- (a) The concepts of household and family heads are no longer recognised by the census. Householders were instructed to complete the household form with the householder or any adult household member as 'Person 1' and the spouse/partner as 'Person 2'. Family structures were created with reference to Persons 1 and 2 and outputs will no longer contain tables with the variables 'household head' and 'family head'.
- (b) A change in question 4 on relationships within a household made it possible to produce statistics on de facto living arrangements and children in blended families. For the purpose of identifying families for coding in the 1986 Census, de facto relationships were treated in exactly the same manner as married relationships, although couples were coded as married or de facto.
- (c) A question seeking details of usual residents temporarily absent was included for the first time in an Australian Census to allow family members temporarily absent on census night to be included in the coding of family structures. This overcomes the problem created by absent spouses in previous censuses, leading to overstatement of the number of lone parent families and understatement of the numbers of families with both parents normally resident in a household.

- (d) The 1981 Census question on attendance at an educational institution was expanded by asking persons attending an institution to indicate from a self-coded list the type of institution being attended.
- (e) Question 15, on ancestry, asked for the first time in an Australian Census, and Question 17, on language other than English spoken at home, were included as recommended by the Population Census Ethnicity Committee. The 1981 Census did not seek languages other than English spoken at home.
- (f) The question on the material of outer walls of the dwelling asked in previous censuses was removed.
- (g) An additional question on a person's occupation seeking information on tasks or duties performed was asked to allow occupations to be coded to the Australian Standard Classification of Occupations. This classification has replaced the Classification and Classified List of Occupations used at the 1981 and earlier censuses.
- (h) To provide a better basis for fertility analysis, the 1986 Census asked persons in what year they were first married. In 1981, married persons were asked the duration of their current marriage.
- (i) Question 14 asked whether each person was an Australian citizen. Only two responses were possible - yes or no. In the 1981 Census, each person was asked to state their country of citizenship and the responses were coded to 21 citizenship categories.

A number of minor changes were also made to some of the questions, which could have some effect on comparability of data between censuses. Users of the data should check the wording of questions carefully when analysing data from the census.

The census field operation

Preparing for the census

The production of accurate maps for use by census collectors is important to the conduct of the census.

The basic unit of collection for the Australian Census is a Collection District (CD). A CD is generally a census workload area that one collector can cover delivering and collecting census forms in a specified period (seven days before and 12 days after census night). A typical urban CD contains between 200 and 300 dwellings, while in rural areas a CD may contain very few dwellings yet cover an extensive area. In output of census data, CDs may be aggregated to form larger geographic areas (for example, statistical local areas (SLAs), legal local government areas (LGAs), Commonwealth electoral divisions).

States are divided into census divisions, whose boundaries generally coincide with Commonwealth electoral division boundaries, and have, on average, a population of about 100,000 persons. Census divisions are divided further into census subdivisions, which contain approximately 10 CDs.

As far as possible, comparability of CD boundaries is maintained between censuses. Where a CD has grown too large to be handled by one census collector it is split into two or more CDs, so that when aggregated they are still comparable with the previous census area. CD boundaries are aligned with LGA and other statistical boundaries and, therefore, vary slightly from previous census CDs where boundary changes to the larger spatial units occur in the intercensal period. In the case of population decline in a CD, the original CD boundary is maintained for comparability.

The production of census collectors' maps was undertaken jointly by the ABS and the Division of National Mapping (Department of Resources and Energy). Each census collector received a detailed map of his/her CD.

Public awareness campaign

An extensive public awareness campaign was conducted prior to and during the collection phase of the 1986 Census. Its aims were:

- (a) to promote public awareness of the census, and the reasons for conducting it;
- (b) to explain the nature and content of the census; and
- (c) to advertise how assistance could be obtained by respondents in completing the census form (eg. telephone inquiry service and telephone interpreter service).

The campaign is an important factor in obtaining cooperation from the public so that high quality data are obtained.

The collection

An efficient field operation is essential to the success of the census. As in previous censuses, the 1986 Census was self-enumerated. Each household was asked to fill in the details required on the census form. Assistance from the collector or the telephone inquiry service / telephone interpreter service could be obtained if necessary. Forms were delivered to each household in the week preceding census day, and collected by the same collectors within 12 days after census night.

A hierarchical structure of field staff was used for the delivery and collection of census forms. Since the 1921 Census, the Australian Electoral Commission has made available its network of regional offices and personnel to help supervise the collection system.

In some States extra supervisory staff were recruited from the general public, along with group leaders (generally controlling about 10 census collectors), and the census collectors themselves.

All field staff were appointed under the Census and Statistics Act 1905 and were subject to the strict confidentiality provisions of that Act.

The group leaders were responsible for training and supervising the work of approximately 10 census collectors to ensure accuracy and completeness of coverage within their areas. Where households had refused to complete a census form, the group leader was required to return to these households and attempt to obtain the required information.

The census collectors were required to deliver forms to every household in their CD in the week prior to census day. If a contact was made on delivery, the collector arranged a time with the householder to collect the form after census night. Collectors were then required to return to each household and collect the completed forms in the 12-day period following census night, checking each form to ensure that it had been adequately completed.

There were 29,632 CDs in Australia for the 1986 Census, and almost as many census collectors.

Special enumeration procedures

Special envelopes were provided on collection for persons who did not wish to have their completed form seen by the census collector. Envelopes were also provided to persons in private dwellings who did not want their responses to be seen by other members of the household, and for persons enumerated in non-private dwellings. Members of the public were informed of the availability of the special envelopes through the public awareness campaign, census brochures and the census form.

For the enumeration of non-private dwellings (such as hotels and hospitals), special collectors were used to distribute census personal forms (as opposed to household forms) and privacy envelopes to each person spending census night in that dwelling, and to collect the completed forms as soon as possible after census night. In most cases, these special collectors were nominated by the owner/manager of the non-private dwelling.

Similar procedures were adopted for persons in transit on census night. Persons on board ships in or between Australian ports, or on long distance trains or buses were required to complete personal forms. They were then allocated to a special CD designated 'migratory' within the respective State of destination.

Separate collection procedures were also developed for Aboriginals. Special Census Field Officers were appointed to inform Aboriginal communities and organisations about the census and to elicit their support. Where necessary, special enumeration arrangements, involving the employment of approximately 500 Aboriginal census collectors, were established by the Census Field Officers. A special census form to be completed by interviewers was developed for use with the Aboriginal population in remote areas. Support was received from government departments and other organisations, concerned with Aboriginal services.

For the 1986 Census, households in caravans etc. in caravan parks were provided with household forms to enable statistics to be produced on the families living in caravan parks. In previous censuses, each caravan park was enumerated as a non-private dwelling, with each occupant completing a personal form rather than separate households completing a household form.

To ensure that public inquiries concerning the 1986 Census were dealt with speedily, the ABS established a Telephone Inquiry Service Centre in each State and Territory.

As well as providing a mechanism for answering public inquiries concerning census procedures and the completion of the census form, the Telephone Inquiry Service provided feedback to census field staff where further action in the field was required.

The service operated from 23 June 1986 through to Friday 18 July 1986, thus covering the entire delivery and collection phases of the field operation. Evening services were also provided during the week prior to census night, and were extended according to local demand.

A special feature of the Telephone Inquiry Service was the provision of the Census Interpreter Service. This service was established to handle any queries which could not be readily answered in the English language. Where Census Interpreter Services operators could not answer in a particular language, 'on-call' interpreters, operating from their own homes, were contacted.

Input processing

The Data Transcription Centre (DTC)

When all the forms had been collected in the field, they were sent to the census DTC, where the number of persons and dwellings in each CD on the census forms was reconciled with the collector's record book, responses coded, and the coded information transferred onto computer files. No names and addresses were recorded. For the 1986 Census this involved the following steps:

(a) Preliminary check

This process included

- a preliminary check, which was designed to ensure that the number of persons recorded on the forms for each CD was consistent with the number of persons recorded in the collectors' record books for each CD; and
- coding of non-private dwelling type.

(b) Family, internal migration and qualifications coding

This process included coding of family, usual residence (to State/Territory and statistical local area level) on census night, one year earlier and five years earlier; and educational qualifications.

(c) Origins and language coding

This consisted of coding of birthplace of the individual, birthplaces of mother and father, ancestry, religion, and language (other than English) spoken at home.

(d) Occupation coding

This process involved the coding of occupation using the Australian Standard Classification of Occupations (ASCO). An extra question on the main tasks or duties that a person usually performs in his or her job was included to assist in the coding of occupations at the unit group level.

(e) ASCO/CALO link

Previous censuses have coded responses to the occupation question using the Classification and Classified list of Occupations (CALO), but in 1986 occupations were coded to a new classification, the ASCO. To aid comparison between the 1986 Census results and those of the 1981 Census, a link between ASCO and CALO has been produced. This link was derived by coding a five per cent sample of census occupation responses in accordance with both occupation classifications. This link allows users to continue with research and time series analysis even though the classifications have changed. ASCO will be the basis for occupation coding for future censuses.

(f) Industry and place of work coding

This process involved the allocation of codes for the industries in which employed persons work (using the Australian Standard Industrial Classification (ASIC)), for work location of persons in CDs in selected areas (for journey to work studies), and for industry sector of employment (Australian government, State government, local government and private sector).

Industry, industry sector and place of work codes were determined, where possible, by reference to the Industry and Destination Zone index. This index is a pre-determined listing of all establishments in Australia known to the ABS which are involved in various economic activities carried out by companies, partnerships, government departments, etc. It contains, for each establishment, the relevant ASIC code, industry sector code and destination zone code. The index was obtained from an ABS register which was compiled and updated from ABS statistical collections, and other sources.

(g) Data entry

This process involved the direct key entry of all codes from the census form into computer files. Names and addresses were not recorded and were lost when the census forms were destroyed after processing.

(h) Editing and balancing

Editing and balancing comprised computer checking of the coded data and of CD totals to ensure that:

- apparently conflicting data combinations were investigated (eg. a 10-year-old married person); and
- person and dwelling totals for each CD were reconciled with CD totals in collectors' record books.

(i) Creation of the Final Unit Record File (FURF)

The FURF is the final product from census processing. The FURF, which is held in the computer, is a complete sequence of validated records of statistical codes for each person, family and dwelling enumerated in the census.

(j) Destruction of census forms

Once input processing was completed, all census forms were destroyed. The collectors' record books used in the census field operation were also destroyed.

(k) Quality control

For all the DTC processes, quality control functions provided information on data throughput, processing rates, coding/keying error rates and coding/keying error analysis. This information was used to monitor progress and to identify problem areas in coding and data entry.

(l) Post Enumeration Survey

This process matched the responses for the name, age, sex, marital status and birthplace of each person enumerated in the Post Enumeration Survey to the census form on which the person was enumerated at the census. This was done to establish whether the person was counted once, more than once, or not counted at all; and to measure the accuracy of response to the abovementioned questions.

Output processing

Requirements for census data are diverse, ranging from basic Australia-wide counts of persons to detailed cross-classified information on persons, families, households, and dwellings. Since census taking involves no sampling error, data can be provided at many levels of detail and geographic areas. However, there are a number of factors which limit census output. The main limiting factors are cost, confidentiality, and the nature of requests for output.

As each of the State and Territory Final Unit Record Files is completed and validated, output processing commences. Output processing consists of sorting, summing, averaging and cross-tabulating data items from the unit record file to produce the statistics for the many uses to which census data are put. During these processes some new variables are constructed (eg. the derivation of household income by aggregating income ranges reported by individuals).

The ABS's large centralised computer installation, situated in Canberra, enables the census unit record files to be stored in a way which allows direct access by all offices of the ABS.

Confidentiality

The ABS has a long and continuing history of protecting the confidentiality of information collected.

On the 1986 Census household form, respondents were assured that 'it would be an offence for any information relating to an identifiable person or household to be released'. This assurance is embodied in the Census and Statistics Act 1905. Widespread use of computers for processing and storing data and producing statistics has increased the need for measures to avoid the inadvertent release of identifiable information.

At the same time, the number of census characteristics tabulated, and the meeting of requests for greater detail in census releases, inevitably produce tables that contain very small counts. Release of these small counts might allow the identification of persons or organisations, even though information such as names and addresses cannot be retrieved.

Introduced Random Error

It has been necessary for the ABS to randomly adjust small non-zero cells in the tabulations to be released in statistical publications, microfiche and magnetic tape. These adjustments allow the maximum amount of detailed census data to be published, while avoiding the risk of inadvertently releasing information which could identify a particular person, household or organisation. The adjustments also allow for a greater output of detailed data than would be possible if other methods for protecting the confidentiality of census data were used.

The random adjustments slightly change some of the data in a tabulation in an unbiased manner. With very small cells, the data will be insufficiently exact for information relating to an identifiable person, household or organisation to be released, but the value of the tables will not be impaired. In any case, small numbers in the original data maybe significantly affected by such things as respondents omitting to answer particular questions or giving incorrect answers, or by errors in coding or transcribing data in the course of census processing.

Census counts and population estimates

The ABS releases census counts on two different bases: the census count at place of enumeration; and the census count at place of usual residence. It also compiles and publishes estimates of Australia's resident population.

The **census count at place of enumeration** is based on enumeration of persons at their actual location on census night, and includes persons enumerated at their usual place of residence, persons enumerated in an area but usually resident elsewhere in Australia, and overseas visitors temporarily in Australia. This count produces a snapshot or typical situation in any given area on census night. The majority of census output is available on this basis and can be provided for individual CDs, or any geographic area which can be formed by aggregating CDs.

The **census count at place of usual residence** is based on the reported usual residence of all persons enumerated on census night; usual residence addresses are coded to statistical local area (SLA). For this reason census output on this basis is not available for CDs or other areas not able to be defined by SLAs.

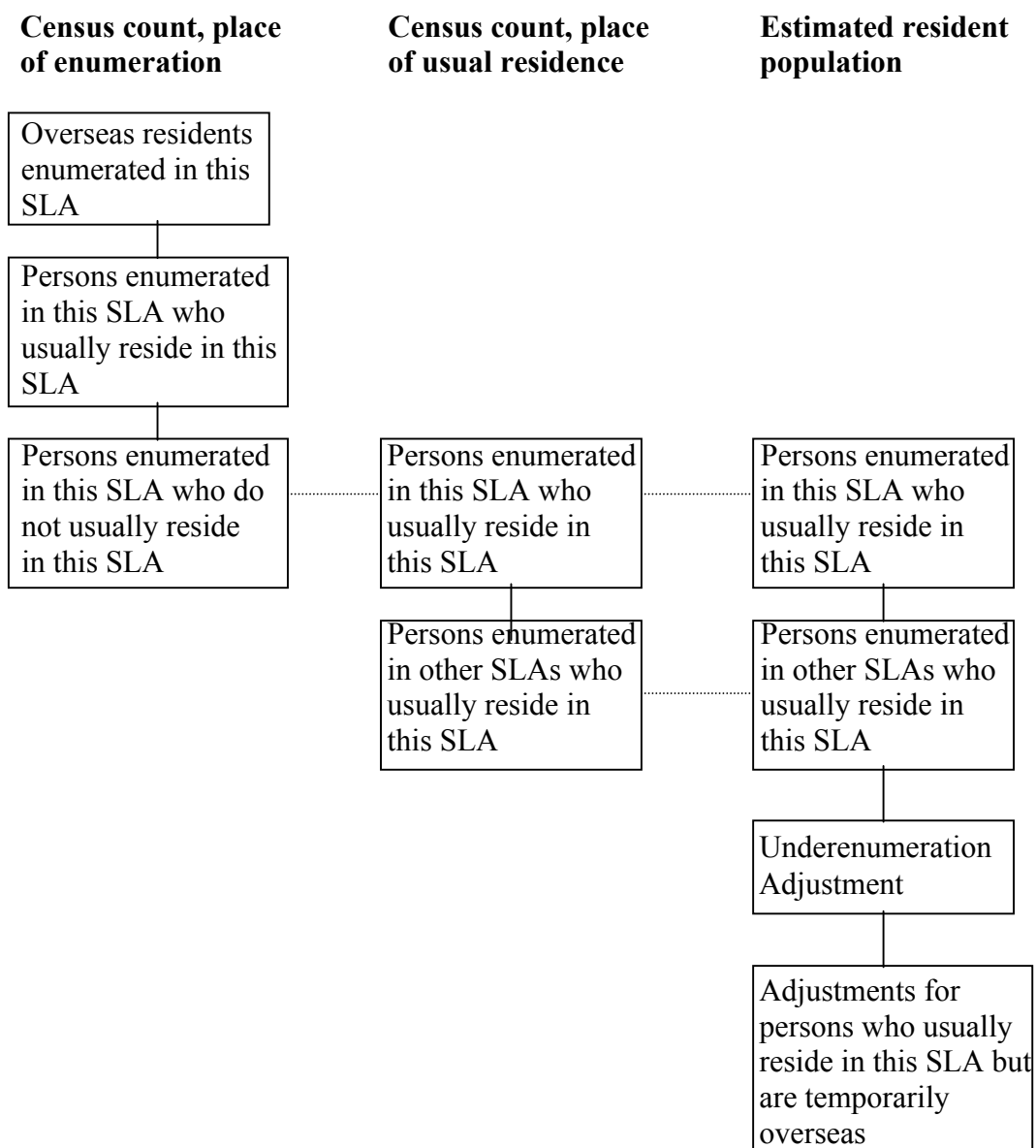
To produce census figures for each State/Territory or SLA on a usual residence basis it is necessary to alter the census count by:

- removing persons usually resident in other States/Territories or SLAs;
- removing persons usually resident overseas; and
- adding persons usually resident in the State/Territory or SLA who were enumerated elsewhere in Australia.

These counts give a better picture of the usual geographic distribution of the population and the composition of the usual resident population by removing the temporary effects of such factors as school holidays or seasonal employment.

The **estimated resident population** is the official ABS population estimate which is derived by making two further adjustments to the census count at place of usual residence. The **first** is an adjustment for census underenumeration as measured by the Post Enumeration Survey. This adjustment is made to counts of males and females, by age, at Australia and State/Territory levels, and to total counts of persons at the SLA level. The **second** adjustment is the addition of Australian residents temporarily overseas at census date. This second adjustment is made down to SLA level, and is obtained by analysis of the passenger cards which all persons arriving in, or departing from, Australia must complete. This produces an accurate estimate of the usual resident population of Australia.

The following diagram indicates the differences between the two different census counts (place of enumeration/place of usual residence) and the estimated resident population for an SLA



Sources of error in the census

In an operation of the type and size of the census there are many possible sources of error. As in other areas of statistics, considerable effort is directed to devising procedures to ensure the highest possible level of accuracy is attained. While it is clearly not possible to eliminate all inaccuracies, and some errors will survive in the final results, it is unlikely that remaining errors will be of any significance in aggregated census data. A series of publications containing further information on data quality will be released from late 1987.

Major sources of error in the census

(a) Underenumeration

It is widely recognised that although the census makes every effort to enumerate every person and dwelling (excluding overseas diplomatic personnel) in Australia and the prescribed external Territories on census night, it is inevitable that some will be missed. This can happen for a number of reasons. In some instances where dwellings are difficult to define, a complete dwelling and all its occupants can be missed. A collector may not be able to make contact with the residents of particular dwellings for various reasons, and the dwelling may therefore be misclassified as unoccupied and its residents remain uncontacted. Refusal by householders to complete the census form is not a significant cause of underenumeration and accounts for less than 0.012 per cent of households. In about 70 per cent of these cases the number of occupants was able to be estimated by the collector from information obtained orally from a member of the household or other persons, and this estimate was included in the census count.

The census collection has, since the 1966 Census, been followed by a post-enumeration survey (PES) which attempts to provide a measure of the extent of underenumeration. The 1986 PES consisted of two parts: a dwelling coverage check (an approximately 0.67 per cent sample of private dwellings); and a persons coverage check (of all persons in these private dwellings).

(b) Respondent error

The editing described below cannot detect all errors made by individuals in completing the census form, therefore, some reporting errors survive in final output. If, for example, a respondent states his occupation as a doctor and he is really a clerk, the census coders give the occupation code for doctor. However, if his occupation is stated as a doctor but his age is recorded as four years, this combination is defined by census processing rules as unacceptable and will fail a consistency edit. In this case one or both codes will be amended after checking with the census form to enable a valid response to be coded.

(c) Processing error

Errors created by clerks during the processing of the census are kept below a predetermined acceptable level by means of a quality control system. By sample checking at different stages of the coding and keying operations, and taking corrective action where necessary, quality control ensures that the amount of introduced error is kept to a minimum.

Editing and associated procedures

The aim of editing during census processing is to reduce the number of errors in the data. The kind of errors that editing procedures can detect are limited to responses and/or codes which are inconsistent or invalid. No correction is possible for errors which do not show up in this way. Care is taken, however, to ensure the combinations of data which are merely unlikely, but nevertheless not impossible, are not changed during the edit process.

In the processing of the 1986 Census no corrections were made without reference to the census forms for responses which failed edits.

Two types of edits were applied to census processing:

- (a) balancing edits were employed to ensure that all census forms in each CD were accounted for, and
- (b) consistency edits were designed to detect responses and/or codes which appeared to be inconsistent with other responses on the same form, or in conflict with census definitions, or processing rules.

Apparent inconsistencies in the transcribed coded census form records could result from errors by the respondent in completing the form, or from errors in coding or transcribing the information into the computer. Edits were applied to detect such cases, for example, where a person was shown as aged five years and was also shown as having a marital status other than never married. Although the number of edit failures due to respondent error was small, there were cases when, because of the absence of conclusive information, subsequent adjustment of records was necessarily somewhat arbitrary.

In addition, edits are applied to ensure that codes fall into the permitted ranges. For example, the broken sequence of numbers allocated for occupation codes does not include numbers in the range 1320-1398; any occupation coding in this range would fail the edit and re-coding would be necessary.

Publications

The following information papers have been or are to be released from the 1986 Census.

Census 86 - Data Release Plans (2173.0)

The 1986 Census Dictionary (2174.0)

Catalogue of 1986 Census Tables (2175.0)

Census 86 - Census Products Price List (2177.0)

Census 86 - Census Data for Microcomputer Usage (2180.0)

Census 86 - Special Data Services (2181.0)

Census 86 - Australian Standard Classification of Occupations / Classification and Classified List of Occupations: Link (2182.0)

Census 86 - Maps (2183.0)

Census 86 - Sample Files on Magnetic Tape (2184.0)

Census 86 - Microfiche (2185.0)

Census 86 - Standard Tables on Magnetic Tape (2186.0)

Census 86 - Australian Standard Geographical Classification: Geographic Code List (2188.0)

Current publications produced by the ABS are listed in the *Catalogue of Publications, Australia (1101.0)*.

SECTION 2

Census Characteristics

This section contains a 'look up' list of person, family, dwelling and geographic area characteristics for which 1986 Census statistics are available. Characteristics of persons, families and dwellings were obtained directly from the questions included on the 1986 Census schedule. Also, a number of additional derived characteristics are produced through aggregation (e.g. household income) or cross-referencing of questions (e.g. internal migration).

The order in which characteristics are listed in this section is different from their order in Section 3 where individual characteristics are listed in alphabetical order. In this Section, characteristics are listed by topic groups; the mnemonic given after each characteristic, in the form of three alphabetic characters (e.g. BPL for birthplace of individual), is the abbreviation used in census table descriptions. Clicking on this mnemonic accesses some notes designed to clarify and explain the census characteristics and classifications.

List of Person Characteristics

| <i>Topic Group</i> | <i>Person Characteristic</i> | <i>Mnemonic</i> |
|--------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| ABORIGINAL/TSI | Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Origin | ABL |
| AGE | Age Age left school | AGE ALS |
| ANCESTRY | Ancestry, first response Ancestry, second response Ancestry, combination of ANA and ANB | ANA ANB ANC |
| BIRTHPLACE | Birthplace of father Birthplace of individual Birthplace of mother Birthplace of parents Period of residence in Australia | BPF BPL BPM BPP PER |
| CHILDREN | Dependent family child type Total living issue Total issue (number of children born) | CHT TIL TIS |
| CITIZENSHIP | Whether Australian citizen | CIT |
| EDUCATION | Age left school Highest qualification Full-time/part-time student Type of educational institution attending Year highest qualification obtained | ALS QAL STU TYP YOQ |

| <i>Topic Group</i> | <i>Person Characteristic</i> | <i>Mnemonic</i> |
|--------------------------------|---|-----------------|
| FAMILY | Dependent family child type | CHT |
| | Relationship in household | RLF |
| HOURS WORKED | Hours worked | HRS |
| INCOME | Individual income (annual) | INC |
| INDUSTRY | Industry | IND |
| | Industry sector | GNG |
| INTERNAL MIGRATION | See USUAL RESIDENCE | |
| ISSUE | Total living issue | TIL |
| | Total issue (number of children born) | TIS |
| LABOUR FORCE AND EMPLOYMENT | Hours worked | HRS |
| | Industry of employer | IND |
| | Industry sector of employment (government/other) | GNG |
| | Labour force status (includes employment status and status of worker) | LFS |
| | Method of travel to work | TPT |
| | Occupation | OCC |
| | Work destination | DZA,DZN |
| LANGUAGE | Proficiency in English | ENG |
| | Language used at home | LAN |
| MARRIAGE | Married more than once | MMO |
| | Marital status | MST |
| | Relationship in household/family | RLF |
| | Year first married | YFM |
| OCCUPATION | Occupation | OCC |
| OVERSEAS BORN | Ancestry, first response | ANA,ANC |
| | Ancestry, second response | ANB,ANC |
| | Birthplace of father | BPF |
| | Birthplace of individual | BPL |
| | Birthplace of mother | BPM |
| | Birthplace of parents | BPP |
| | Citizenship | CIT |
| | Period of residence in Australia | PER |
| QUALIFICATION | Highest qualification level and field | QAL |
| | Year highest qualification obtained | YOQ |
| RELIGION | Religion | REL |

| <i>Topic Group</i> | <i>Person Characteristic</i> | <i>Mnemonic</i> |
|--|---|-----------------|
| SCHOOLING | Age left school | ALS |
| | Type of educational institution attending | TYP |
| SEX | Sex | SEX |
| TRAVEL TO WORK | Work destination | DZA,DZN |
| | Method of travel to work | TPT |
| USUAL RESIDENCE | Internal migration indicator | IMI |
| | SLA of usual residence, census night | RLC |
| | SLA of usual residence, one year ago | RLO |
| | SLA of usual residence, five years ago | RLV |
| | State of usual residence, census night | RSC |
| | State of usual residence, one year ago | RSO |
| State of usual residence, five years ago | RSV | |

List of Family Characteristics

Family characteristics from the 1986 Census have been derived from responses given by each member of the dwelling to questions in the individual section of the census schedule. They may reflect aggregation of person characteristics (for example, income) or they may reflect the imputation of particular categories based on individual responses (for example, family composition). For a definition of 'family' used in the 1986 Census, see the characteristic Family composition (FMC) listed below.

| <i>Topic Group</i> | <i>Family Characteristic</i> | <i>Mnemonic</i> |
|---------------------------|---|-----------------------|
| COMPOSITION | Family composition Family number | FMC,FMD FNO |
| DEPENDENT CHILDREN | Dependent children temporarily absent, number of Dependent children enumerated, number of Dependent children, total number of | DPA DPE DPT,FMD |
| INCOME | Family income (annual) | FIN |
| MARRIED SPOUSE/PARTNER | Married/de facto couple Location of spouse/partner | MDC SPL |

List of Dwelling Characteristics

Four questions relating to private dwellings were asked of the householder in the 1986 Census. Another two questions on the back of the census schedule were completed by the collector. Questions asked of the householder related to characteristics of the dwelling, while the collector completed questions relating to dwelling structure. Additional characteristics at the dwelling level (income, household type and Aboriginal dwelling indicator) have been derived from responses to questions relating to the individual, from the main part of the census schedule.

For census purposes, dwellings are divided into two main groups: private dwellings (which may be occupied or unoccupied) and non-private dwellings.

A private dwelling is normally a house or flat, but it can also be a tent, houseboat, or caravan if standing on its own block of land. A tent or caravan is not considered to be a private dwelling if it is occupied by members of a household resident in an adjacent dwelling, i.e. the tent or caravan is considered to be part of that adjacent dwelling.

An occupied private dwelling is defined as the premises occupied by a household on census night. For census purposes, a household is a person or group of persons who live together and eat together as a single domestic unit. It is possible, then, for more than one household to live in one house or structure. For example, a lodger who lives with a family and provides all his food for himself is not a member of the family's household but constitutes a separate household, and therefore completes a separate householder's schedule. Because an occupied dwelling is defined in this way, the number of households and number of occupied dwellings is identical and the number of occupied dwellings in an area, as defined for census purposes, may often be greater than the known number of structures.

An unoccupied private dwelling is a structure built specifically for living purposes and capable of being lived in, but unoccupied at the time of the census. Vacant houses, holiday houses, huts, cabins (other than seasonal worker's quarters) and houseboats are therefore counted as unoccupied dwellings; but vacant tents, garages and caravans (if not normally occupied) are not. Only private dwellings can be classified as unoccupied. Unoccupied dwellings include dwellings vacant because they have been newly completed, dwellings vacant for demolition or repair, holiday homes, dwellings to let and dwellings where the household was absent on census night.

The classification *Reason unoccupied* (RUN) relates only to unoccupied private dwellings, and is based on the observation of the census collector.

Non-private dwellings (NPDs) are hotels, hostels, non-private boarding houses, gaols, religious and charitable institutions, defence establishments and other communal dwellings. Usually, occupants of such dwellings will be using communal facilities such as hotel dining-rooms or mess halls. A caravan in a caravan park (whether permanently or temporarily located) is treated as part of a non-private dwelling, as are self-contained units provided by commercial enterprises such as hotels, motels or guest-houses.

| <i>Topic Group</i> | <i>Dwelling Characteristic</i> | <i>Mnemonic</i> |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| ABORIGINAL DWELLING INDICATOR | | ABD |

| <i>Topic Group</i> | <i>Dwelling Characteristic</i> | <i>Mnemonic</i> |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------|
|--------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------|

| | | |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----|
| HOUSEHOLD | Household income (annual) | HIN |
| | Household type | HST |
| NATURE OF | Mortgage payments, total monthly | ALM |
| OCCUPANCY | Furnished/unfurnished | FUF |
| | Landlord | LLD |
| | Nature of occupancy | NOC |
| | Rent, total weekly | RNT |
| | Reason dwelling unoccupied | RUN |
| NON-PRIVATE DWELLING TYPE | | NPD |
| PRIVATE DWELLING | Bedrooms, number of | BED |
| | Vehicles, number of | VEH |
| | Structure | STR |

List of Geographic Area Characteristics

Census data and tabulations are often cross-classified by geographic area. A list of the most commonly used geographic area characteristics with their mnemonics follows. These characteristics have been created during the processing of census data. For information on the full classifications for these characteristics, refer to *Census 86 - Australian Standard Geographical Classification: Geographic Code List (2188.0)*, and the technical documentation accompanying each 1986 Census data release.

The *Australian Standard Geographical Classification (1216.0)* (ASGC) is a new geographic classification used for the dissemination of 1986 Census data. It incorporates a number of hierarchic structures of geographic areas (also referred to as 'spatial units') and defines the individual structures and the area types of which each structure is composed. Each geographic area in the classification is identified by a unique numeric code.

The ASGC has been adopted as the standard geographic classification for ABS output. This will ensure greater comparability of statistics within the ABS and a standardisation of terminology.

| <i>Geographic area characteristic</i> | <i>Mnemonic</i> |
|--|-----------------|
| Australian Electoral Division | AED |
| Collection District | CLD |
| Collection District - aggregated | CDN |
| Local Government Area | LGA |
| Local Government Area Section | LGS |
| Section of State | SCS |
| Statistical Division | STD |
| Statistical Subdivision / Statistical District | SSD |
| Statistical Local Area | SLA |

SECTION 3

Notes on Person, Family, Dwelling and Geographic Area Characteristics

This section is designed to clarify and explain some census characteristics and classifications listed in Section 2. There are separate parts for person, family, dwelling and geographic area characteristics.

The notes are arranged in alphabetical order by characteristic name within each part. The appropriate mnemonic is given after each heading. The term 'FURF' used in these notes refers to the Full Unit Record File (see Section 1 of this document, on Input Processing).

For additional information, see *The 1986 Census Dictionary (2174.0)*.

Notes on person characteristics

Aboriginal origin

question 9

ABL

This is a FURF variable which classifies each person into Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander, or Other categories.

A question pertaining to this topic has been asked in all Australian censuses since Federation. Prior to 1971, respondents were asked to give their race and, where race was mixed, to specify the proportion of each. In 1971 and 1976, a tick box approach was used, with the categories of European, Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and Other. In 1981 the question was changed to identify persons of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin. The main purpose of the question is to identify the number and distribution of Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders in Australia.

A check is performed during processing that ancestry and birthplace are consistent with the answer given to the question on Aboriginal origin.

The data are used to determine the socio-economic characteristics of Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders and to study their mortality and fertility.

Prior to the 1971 Census Aboriginals were identified so that they could be specifically excluded from the census counts. This was required by Section 127 of the Constitution which stated that '.... in reckoning the number of people of the Commonwealth, or of a State or other part of the Commonwealth, Aboriginal natives shall not be counted.'

Section 127 was repealed following a referendum held on 27 May 1967. In order to meet the statistical requirements of the Commonwealth and State authorities responsible for Aboriginal affairs, the 1971 Census question sought to classify each person as being of European, Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander or other origin. This also occurred in the 1976 Census. In the 1981 and 1986 Censuses, however, the question asked only for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin.

A number of problems are known to exist with Aboriginal data from the 1976 and 1981 Censuses. These problems include coverage and definitions. To obtain more accurate statistics on the Aboriginal population and to help the ABS evaluate coverage of the Aboriginal population in the 1986 Census, an Aboriginal Evaluation Study (AES) was conducted in late July 1986.

Population samples of Aboriginals from areas known to have a high proportion of Aboriginals in Sydney, Melbourne and country towns in New South Wales and Victoria were included in the AES.

The AES provides valuable information regarding the nature of enumeration problems which, in turn, will be of use in improving future enumeration procedures.

Results and analysis of the Survey is contained in the statistical publication *Census 86 – Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders: Australia, States and Territories*.

Age question 3 AGE

This is a FURF variable which classifies each person's age into single year categories from 0 to 109.

Where the respondent failed to state an age, it was imputed using other information on the form and specially constructed random age tables. Data on the incidence of age not stated is available from the ABS.

Age is a basic census item that has been included in all Australian censuses. Because age is a basic determinant of lifestyle, it is very frequently cross-classified with other variables in census outputs.

Age is used during processing as a cross edit with many other census variables. It is also used as a constraint on the applicability of a question to various sub-populations.

Below are some of the major cases where age constraints apply.

- (a) If age is under 5 years, then the State and SLA of usual residence five years ago (RSV, RLV, IMI) are not applicable.
- (b) If age is less than one year, then the State and SLA of usual residence one year ago (RSO, RLO, IMI) are also not applicable.
- (b) If age is under 15 years, then the following items are not applicable: AGE LEFT SCHOOL (ALS); WORK DESTINATION (DZN); INDUSTRY SECTOR (GNG); HOURS WORKED (HRS); INDIVIDUAL INCOME (INC); INDUSTRY (IND); LABOUR FORCE STATUS (LFS); MARRIED MORE THAN ONCE (MMO); MARITAL STATUS (MST); OCCUPATION (OCC); QUALIFICATION (QAL); ISSUE (TIL, TIS); METHOD OF TRAVEL TO WORK (TPT); YEAR HIGHEST QUALIFICATION OBTAINED (YOQ); and YEAR FIRST MARRIED (YFM).
- (d) Age must not be less than PERIOD OF RESIDENCE IN AUSTRALIA (PER).
- (e) Age constraints apply when determining family situations, i.e. family reference person and spouse must both be 15 years of age or over. It is used by coders to distinguish between dependent family children and adult family children.

Age left school question 22 ALS

This is a FURF variable which is applicable to all persons aged 15 years and over. The question on age left school is designed to indicate the highest level of primary or secondary education completed. For persons without post-secondary qualifications (as indicated by Question 23) age left school is a good indicator of the educational level attained. Age left school is asked instead of 'level of schooling' to overcome confusion caused by differences, present and past, between various State and overseas education systems.

ALS is checked by editing against various other items. If a school leaving age has been reported for a person, that person should not state an age less than his/her age of leaving school. Further, a person should not be reported as attending pre-school, primary or secondary school (see EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION ATTENDING, TYPE OF (TYP)) if they state an ALS.

ALS is important for users engaged in the planning of education facilities, estimating the demand for courses and assessing the likely usefulness of extension courses or other educational programs. It is also used as an indicator of disadvantage in that it shows the level of education reached by persons with no post-school qualifications.

Ancestry question 22 ANA, ANB and ANC

A question on ancestry was asked for the first time in the 1986 Census. Each person was asked to state their ancestry.

The answers to this question depended, to some extent, on how a person perceived their ancestry. Some persons may have indicated their origins dating back several generations. Others may have disregarded parentage and considered themselves as Australian only.

In the guide delivered with each census form, people were advised that it was quite acceptable to base responses to this question on their grandparents' ancestry, and that persons of mixed ancestry who did not identify with a single group should answer with their multiple ancestry.

There are two FURF variables which classify each person's ancestry. If one ancestry is reported ANA is used; if two ancestries are reported ANA and ANB are used. If three or more ancestries are reported, only the first two listed are used. ANC is a combination of ANA and ANB, which provides all the common combinations for tabulation purposes.

The 1981 Census of Population and Housing showed that:

41 per cent of Australia's population was either born overseas or had at least one parent born overseas.

23 per cent of the population had at least one parent born in a non-English speaking country.

About 1.6 million persons aged five years and over spoke a language other than English at home.

These facts formed the backdrop to the public debate about future directions in multiculturalism for Australia that occurred prior to the 1986 Census resulting in many demands for better data on the ethnic background of Australia's population.

Birthplace

| | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------|-----|
| Birthplace of father | question 12 | BPF |
| Birthplace of individual | question 10 | BPL |
| Birthplace of mother | question 13 | BPM |
| Birthplace of parents | derived from questions 12,13 | BPP |

The first three variables are FURF variables which contain codes for the country of birth of each person (BPL) and of each person's father (BPF) and mother (BPM). There are 99 categories in each classification.

The birthplace classifications list the current names of countries. If a person uses a former name of a country, then the current name is given. For example, Rhodesia-responses would be coded to Zimbabwe.

In respect of BIRTHPLACE OF INDIVIDUAL (BPL), in all censuses before and including 1976, persons born in Australia were required to record the State or Territory in which they were born. In 1981 and 1986 only 'Australia' as a country was required to be specified for Australian born.

In 1981 the classifications used for birthplace of father (BPF) and birthplace of mother (BPM) contained only 40 categories. In 1986 the BPF and BPM classifications are the same as that of birthplace of individual (BPL).

If birthplace of individual was not stated on the census form, an attempt was made to impute it from other answers or from responses for other family members. If birthplace could not be imputed and a code for 'not stated' was given. If BPL was 'Australia', the PERIOD OF RESIDENCE (PER) was coded as 'not applicable'.

The variable birthplace of parents (BPP) has been constructed from the responses to BPF and BPM, and consists of combinations of different birthplace groupings for both mother and father, represented as single codes.

Data on birthplace of individual are used in the analysis of the immigrant composition of the Australian population. They enable the study of migrant groups, in terms of fertility, mortality rates and socio-economic characteristics, to be carried out.

Data on birthplace of parents are used in studies of the origin and composition of the Australian population. They aid the analysis of the impact of migration flows from particular countries, and of Australian born people with overseas born parents.

Citizenship

question 14

CIT

This is a FURF variable in which persons are classified according to whether or not they are Australian citizens.

A question on nationality was first asked in 1921, in which respondents were required to indicate what nation they were subjects of by means of birthplace, parentage or naturalisation. From 1933 to 1961, 'nationality' was asked. In 1966 and 1971 the term 'nationality' or 'citizenship' was used. Since 1976 the question has used the term 'citizenship'. The major reasons for asking about citizenship are to obtain information on the propensity of different migrant groups to take out citizenship and to measure the size of groups eligible to vote.

In the 1981 Census respondents were required to state their country of citizenship, whereas the 1986 Census question asked only whether the person was an Australian citizen.

Dependent family child type

derived from questions 3,4,19,H4

CHT

This FURF variable classifies dependent family children into one of the following categories:

- natural/adopted child of a primary family;
- stepchild in primary family;
- other child of primary family (including foster children);
- child of secondary family.

CHT is relevant only for dependent family children present in the household on census night.

Visiting children present in the household on census night, who were not members of the family (or related to it) and did not usually reside with the family, were classified as 'other non-family member' by the variable RELATIONSHIP IN HOUSEHOLD (RLF).

Data for children who usually resided in the household but were listed in response to question H4 as temporarily absent on census night, are not available for tabulation.

The following examples may help clarify the concept of dependent family child:

a natural/adopted child of only one partner in a marriage or de facto relationship, within the primary family, was classified as a stepchild of that family - stepchildren were not identified within a secondary family;

nieces, nephews and other children who were related to the family reference person (except for natural/adopted or stepchildren), and present in the household on census night, were classified as 'other child of primary family' (excludes such persons listed in question H4);

a babysitter and baby, unrelated, forming a household on census night, were regarded for census purposes as a group household. Since the baby did not belong to a family unit within the household, CHT was 'not applicable';

a foster child within a primary family unit was classified as 'other child of primary family' or, in the case of a secondary family, a 'child of secondary family'. Any other non-related children usually resident with the family were treated in the same way.

Educational institution attending, type of question 19 TYP

This FURF variable classifies the type of school or other educational institution being attended by each person at census time.

For Censuses between 1911 and 1933, respondents were required to indicate if they were attending a State school, a private school, a technical school, or a university, or if they were receiving tuition at home. In 1947 the question was changed to a more general usual major activity question, with a category for full-time students. This concept was used until 1976, except for the 1966 Census when no question was asked in relation to attendance at an educational institution. In 1976 more detailed information was obtained, with respondents being required to provide the name and address of the institution attended. Using this information the institution was coded in the data transcription centre to a classification of type of educational institution.

In 1981 the question was changed to reduce coding cost, with respondents being required only to indicate whether they were full-time or part-time students. The limited data obtained from the 1981 question were found to be inadequate for the purposes of many users.

Some users requested a return to a question like that used in 1976, but in that census the question incurred a high non-response rate (15%) and in addition, the coding of type of institution was expensive. Pilot testing for the 1986 Census showed that a question which separately listed the various types of educational institutions (into pre-school, primary, secondary, tertiary and other) reduced the non-response rate to satisfactory levels and incurred only minimal coding costs. See STUDENT (STU).

In the 1981 and 1986 Censuses, persons who indicated that they spoke a language at home other than English, were asked to state how well they spoke English. Such persons had a choice of four response categories: very well; well; not well; and not at all.

Testing prior to the 1981 Census compared responses to the question with assessments of language proficiency for a sample of respondents interviewed for the purpose. These results showed that those who responded 'not well' or 'not at all' were correctly identified as prospective 'clients' for English language tuition. However, some who responded 'well' or 'very well' did not rate highly in the interview assessment. Responses to the 1986 Census question therefore may underestimate the number of people who were not proficient in English.

The main problem associated with the data on proficiency in English is the subjective nature of responses to the question, as is inevitable in a situation where each household fills in its own census form, without the help of an interviewer. Part of the problem of subjectivity is different interpretations by respondents. For example, a respondent who can communicate well enough to do the shopping and hence answered 'well' to the second part of the question, in fact may not be able to hold a social conversation.

Hours worked

question 33

HRS

This is a field on the final unit record file in which the number of hours worked in the main job (by employed persons aged 15 years and over) during the week before census night, was recorded.

The 1986 question was the same as in 1981 but provided a larger number of response categories (8) compared with 1981 (5).

A question on the number of hours worked by employed persons has been asked in each census since 1966. The 1966, 1971 and 1976 Censuses required the number of hours usually worked in the job(s) held in the week prior to census night. In 1966 only total hours were sought, while in 1971 and 1976 the answer was broken down into main job and other job(s).

A change of terminology should be noted. The household schedule used in previous censuses is referred to as a household form in the 1986 Census.

Individual income

question 24

INC

This is a FURF variable in which the income level of individuals aged 15 years and over is stored.

Persons were asked to state their usual gross weekly income, which is the income before tax and other deductions are made.

Gross income includes family allowance, pensions, benefits, wages, salary, overtime, dividends, rents received, interest, business or farm income (less operation expenses) superannuation and workers compensation received.

Persons were not asked to state their exact income. Instead, they were asked to indicate with a tick the range into which their income fell.

The classification allowed for coding of a 'no income' response and 13 income ranges, with the highest income range 'over \$50,000'.

This classification differed from 1981 when the highest income range was 'over \$26,000 per year', and the income ranges below \$12,000 were more finely classified.

It should be noted that although the census question was asked in terms of weekly income, results were often tabulated in annual equivalents.

Information on income distribution is critically important in planning public and private sector services such as social welfare and (particularly at the regional level) retail distribution and other commercial services.

A question on income was first asked in the 1933 Census in an attempt to assess the effects of the depression. It was subsequently included in the 1976, 1981 and 1986 Censuses.

See HOUSEHOLD INCOME (HIN) and FAMILY INCOME (FIN).

Industry

question 32

IND

This FURF variable contains the type of industry in which employed persons aged 15 years and over work. Two census questions were used to obtain information for industry coding. One asked the employer's name and address, while the other asked the nature of the industry, business or service carried out by the employer.

The industry classification is based on the Australian Standard Industrial Classification (ASIC).

Information on kind of industry carried out by the employer at the workplace has been gathered in each Australian census since 1911. However, the name of employer and address of workplace have only been asked since the 1954 Census; these questions were introduced to facilitate the coding (as explained later, in this entry) of industry where the information on kind of industry was inadequate.

The allocation of an industry class to an establishment (work location) is a statement about the main kind of economic activity understood to be carried out there. An establishment can be a farm, a factory, a shop, a mine or any other place where some kind of economic activity is performed (i.e. a product produced or a service rendered). Each establishment is classified to a particular industry class according to the main activity of the establishment.

There is not necessarily any relationship between the occupation of an individual and the industry in which he or she worked; for example, a van driver for an establishment designated as in the insurance industry was employed in that industry, not in the transport industry. One establishment may have employed many people in different occupations but they were all coded to the industry of the establishment.

The main index used in determining industry of employment in census processing is the Industry and Destination Zone (IDZ) Index. The IDZ Index is a listing of all known establishments in Australia, at the time of its compilation, which were involved in various economic activities carried out by companies, partnerships, sole proprietors, government departments, etc. It contains, for each establishment, the relevant ASIC code, public/private sector code and Destination Zone code.

The listing was obtained from the ABS Integrated Register. This register is compiled and updated by the ABS from various statistical collections and other sources.

The inclusion of the industry topic in the census provides a source of useful information on the regional distribution and structure of Australian industry, and allows investigation of structural change in industry over time. It also provides information on the characteristics of workers by industry (such as age,

qualification and occupation), which is important for workforce studies, and the identification of migrant and other groups by industry.

The address of the workplace is important in journey to work and traffic flow studies (when linked with place of residence and method of travel to work) and in calculating the daytime working population of areas where large numbers of people are employed, so enabling the planning of public transport and other amenities and services for such areas.

Industry sector

question 31

GNG

This FURF variable contains codes for employed persons aged 15 years and over according to whether employed by the government or non-government (private) sector.

In the 1976 and 1981 Censuses, the categories 'Australian government' and 'State government' were further divided into 'Departments' and 'Other'. The 'Other' category included legislature, courts, marketing boards, statutory authorities and government owned companies. This division into 'department' and 'other' has been found to be inaccurate, and the categories were combined in the 1986 Census.

The 1986 GNG classification has separate categories for Australian, State and local governments, and private sector only.

The codes for this classification were obtained from the Industry and Destination Zone (IDZ) Index.

Internal migration indicator

derived from questions 6,7,8

IMI

This FURF variable embodies all the tick box answers to the questions on place of usual residence on the census form, and contains 'not stated' and 'not applicable' indicators.

The data for 1985 and 1981 place of usual -residence are used mainly in conjunction with the INTERNAL MIGRATION INDICATOR (IMI) for detailed internal migration studies. Such studies must be undertaken carefully; the points illustrated in the following cases should be noted:

- (i) Since the indicators are derived from usual residence at certain dates, only the net effects of any multiple movements between these dates can be derived. For example, in the case of a person who at 30 June 1981 had a usual place of residence in a South Australian rural area, and moved to Melbourne in 1983, but by 30 June 1985 was a usual resident of Adelaide, only the net South Australian country to city movement would be revealed.
- (ii) In the case of 'out and back' movements, in which persons moved away from a place of usual residence to live elsewhere, but then returned before the end of the reference period to the earlier address as a usual resident, no movement would be shown in the internal migration data.

In 1976 and 1981 the internal migration indicators were held only in derived form as the variables with mnemonics RMC, RMO and RMV. Some tick box answers were not carried over to the unit record file, so that some combinations of movement were not available, and various categories of 'not stated' were not separately identifiable.

For 1986, this field identifies any 'not stated' responses to the usual residence questions for census night (question 6), one year ago (question 7) and 5 years ago (question 8). When coding question 6 responses to SLA of USUAL RESIDENCE however, 'not stated' responses were regarded as invalid and the persons were

assumed to have been usual residents at their place of enumeration. See USUAL RESIDENCE for details of the different variables involved.

More detailed information relating to internal migration can be obtained by combining IMI with the place of usual residence variables (i.e. State and SLA of usual residence at each of the three dates). See USUAL RESIDENCE for details of these.

Issue question 25 TIS, TIL

There are two FURF variables associated with Issue, total issue (TIS) and total living issue (TIL).

A question on number of children or babies has been asked in all Australian censuses since Federation, except in 1933 when number of dependent children was asked. Prior to 1981, number of births was only applicable to marriage relationships, i.e. past and present marriages. In 1981, total number of babies was asked of all women aged 15 years and over.

The 1986 Census question asks each female aged 15 years or more how many babies she has ever had. Two responses are required:

- (1) total births excluding still births (TIS); and
- (2) total now living (TIL).

Data on issue are essential for fertility analysis, such as investigation of fertility differentials between various socio-economic groups, and in prediction of future fertility rates for population projections.

Journey to work derived from questions 6,31,34 DZA

Information on journey to work was obtained from responses to three census questions relating to:

- Address of usual residence
- Address of workplace in main job 'last week'
- Method of travel to work on Monday 30 June (census day)

The answers to the question on method of travel to work are particularly useful for some journey to work studies, but because of the differences in coverage and time reference of the questions, such linking must be used with caution. See METHOD OF TRAVEL TO WORK for details of these differences.

A journey to work was imputed for each employed person who lived and worked within a JTW study area and who was enumerated at his/her usual place of residence. Codes were allocated for both the Collection District (CD) in which the residence was located, known as the origin zone (OZ), and the zone in which the place of work was located, which is the destination zone (DZN). Destination zones are generally designed by the local transport authorities. A journey to work was assumed to have been made from place of residence (OZ) to workplace (DZN). It should be noted that although a journey to work was imputed, a person may not have gone to work, but may have been home sick or on leave etc, during the reference week.

The coding of OZ and DZN allows two different kinds of tables to be produced - tables on journey to work, and tables on the daytime working populations of DZNs.

Tables on journey to work relate OZs and DZNs so that flows of people to work in the reference week (the week before census night) can be studied. These tables usually include method of travel but, as noted above, this linking must be used with caution.

Journey to work tabulations refer to employed persons 15 years of age and over who were enumerated at their dwelling of usual residence (in one of the study areas).

Journey to work data have been produced from Australian censuses since 1971. For the 1986 Census there are eleven study areas, represented as codes in the variable DZA. These are:

Sydney/Wollongong/Newcastle
Melbourne/Geelong
Brisbane/Gold/Sunshine Coast
Adelaide
Perth/Mandurah
Southern Tasmania
Northern Tasmania
Canberra/Queanbeyan
Darwin
Latrobe Valley
Bendigo/Ballarat

See also WORK DESTINATION (DZN).

Labour force status

questions 26,27,28

LFS

This is a FURF variable which contains the labour force status of all persons aged 15 years and over. Note that in census output tabulations, the classification entitled LABOUR FORCE STATUS generally includes a sub-classification of employed persons into status of worker categories. In the outputs of some other ABS collections, status of worker is shown as a separate classification.

For 1986 Census purposes, the labour force includes persons aged 15 years and over who;

- (a) worked for payment or profit, or as an unpaid helper in a family business, during the week prior to Census night;
- (b) had a job from which they were on leave or otherwise temporarily absent;
- (c) were on strike or stood down temporarily; and
- (d) did not have a job but were actively looking for work.

A labour force status was given to all persons who fell within the scope of the labour force classification, i.e. to all persons aged 15 or more. The three labour force status categories are:

- (i) **employed persons** (i.e. persons in groups (a), (b) and (c) above) These categories together make up the **labour force**
- (ii) **unemployed persons** (persons in group (d) above)
- (iii) persons not in the labour force (i.e. persons aged 15 or more) NOT in any of the groups (a) to (d) above). This category includes persons who are retired, pensioners, and persons solely engaged in home duties. It also includes bonded trainees (including trainee teachers), and cadets engaged in full-time study at educational institutions even if the institutions at which they studied were run by their employers.

Data on labour force status have been obtained from every Australian census since 1911. The 1986 Census form contained two questions (providing for tick box answers) which determined labour force status for persons in the labour force:

Question 26 - 'LAST WEEK did the person have a full-time or part-time job of any kind?'

Question 27 - 'Did the person actively look for work at any time during the LAST FOUR WEEKS. This question was to be answered by persons who ticked the answer 'other unpaid work' or 'did not have a job', to question 26.

In addition the following question was asked to determine status of worker which, as noted above, is included under the heading of Labour Force Status, for census purposes.

Question 28 - 'In the main job held LAST WEEK, was the person: a wage/salary earner; conducting own business but not employing others; conducting own business and employing others; a helper not receiving wages or salary.'

In previous censuses, if labour force questions were unanswered an attempt was made to derive labour force status from other questions on the census form; where this was not possible, a response was randomly allocated. In 1986 no random allocation was made and such cases were coded to a new category called 'not stated'.

Two further differences between 1986 and earlier censuses should be noted:

- (i) unpaid helpers in a family business who worked less than 15 hours in the reference week (see HOURS WORKED (HRS)) were previously classed as not in the labour force whereas in 1986 they were included in the labour force;
- (ii) persons who actively looked for work during the reference period were classified as either looking for part-time work or looking for full-time work;
- (iii) in previous censuses, persons who reported an occupation of 'housewife', 'full time student', or 'pensioner', were included in the employed labour force in the category 'inadequately described'.

Language

question 17

LAN

This is a FURF variable which contains language other than English spoken at home. The classification contains the languages most likely to be used in Australia. Note that in all standard outputs, persons aged 0-4 years are excluded from language tabulations.

A question on language has been included in five censuses. The 1921 Census question sought ability to read and write and listed a choice of responses, two of which related specifically to foreign languages. The language itself was not required to be stated. In 1933 the question asked persons who could not read and write in English, but were able to read and write in a foreign language, to state the language.

A question on language was not included again until 1976 when persons were asked to state the languages regularly used. In the 1981 language question, all persons were asked if they used a language other than English at home and, if so, how well they spoke English; they were not asked to name the non-English language. In 1986 the same information was sought as for 1981, except that in addition, users of a language other than English were asked to name the language. See ENGLISH, PROFICIENCY IN (ENG).

Information derived from the question enables migrant welfare services to plan and coordinate programs.

Marital status

question 5

MST

A question on marital status has been asked in every Australian census. The 1986 question provides for tick box answers for the following categories:

never married
married
separated
divorced
widowed

The responses are recorded in this FURF variable only for persons aged 15 years and over. Note that the 1986 category of 'married' was called 'now married' in earlier censuses.

Married more than once question 21 MMO

This is a FURF variable which records whether a person has been married more than once. It applies to all persons aged 15 years and over who had ever been married at the time of the census.

A question asking whether a respondent has been married more than once was asked for the first time in 1981. In that census, it was asked of all persons who were married at the time of the census, but responses were only recorded for married females aged 15 years and over. The question enables the data on fertility to be analysed more effectively. In 1986, it was asked of all persons aged 15 years and over who had ever been married, and recorded for both males and females.

Method of travel to work question 34 TPT

This is a FURF variable which contains up to three methods of travel to work for each person aged 15 years and over who was employed during the week before the census.

The question on method of travel allows for multiple answers in all categories except 'walked only' and 'did not go to work'; for example a journey to work by car (as driver), ferry and bus would be recorded as such. Respondents were not asked to state which was the main method.

While statistics gathered with this question give a reasonable indication of the way people travelled to work on Monday 30 June 1986, some problems in practical application of the statistics should be noted when used in conjunction with Destination Zone (DZN) data. The following points should be particularly noted.

- (a) Method of travel to work (TPT) and origin zone to DZN travel involve different time periods. Statistics on method of travel relate to 30 June 1986, while DZN statistics relate to 'the main job held last week', meaning the week before the census. For example, a person who was in Sydney on 30 June 1986 and who travelled to work by train or ferry may have their usual residence and place of work in Canberra, and may have worked at that usual place of work in the week prior to the census.
- (b) DZN statistics relate only to employed persons usually resident in the study zones, while method of travel was sought for all employed persons 15 years of age and over.
- (c) A person who had a job 'last week' may have been unemployed, retired, or on leave on 30 June 1986 and so be included in the method of travel category 'did not go to work'. Alternatively, a person may have been unemployed 'last week' but have a designated method of travel to work on 30 June 1986 because he or she had since become employed; such persons are excluded from both the journey to work and method of travel tables.

Occupation derived from questions 28,29 OCC

Occupation was classified in terms of the Australian Standard Classification of Occupations (ASCO) for the 1986 Census. In previous censuses, the Classification and Classified List of Occupations (CCLO) was used for occupation coding.

Responses to the 1986 Census questions on occupation have been coded to the unit group level of ASCO; at this level there are 337 categories. In ASCO, a job is a set of tasks performed by one individual, and an occupation is defined as a set of jobs which require the performance of some or all of a common set of tasks.

To enable users of census data to make comparisons of occupation data between 1986 and previous censuses, a 5 per cent sample of responses to the occupation questions by persons classified as in the labour force in the 1986 Census has been coded to both ASCO and CCLO. This has allowed for a quantitative link between the two classifications to be established. It is hoped that the ASCO/CCLO link will help to minimize any problems caused by the change in classification.

Occupation was required to be reported for all employed persons aged 15 years and over.

The definition of occupation means that an occupation classification relates basically to the kind of tasks performed. The classification of occupations from responses given on the census form is often difficult, because one kind of work can be described in different ways and, conversely, many different kinds of work can be described by a single name. For this reason, two questions were used in the 1986 Census, one asking for occupation title (in main job) to be stated, the other asking for the main tasks and duties performed in that occupation. This gave coders a better chance of correctly coding an occupation than by coding responses from one question only.

Occupation data are essential for labour market analysis and policy formation. Changes in the occupational composition of the labour force are important for planning at the industry and area levels. They provide valuable inputs to analyses of education and training needs, and as indicators for industry assistance programs. Small area data on occupation are important in regional planning, in examining the occupational mobility of ethnic and other minority groups and in measuring socio-economic status variability between regions.

Period of residence in Australia question 11 PER

This variable gives, for overseas born persons, the length of the period, to the nearest whole year, since the person first arrived in Australia.

PER is derived from the question on year of first arrival. Therefore if for example a person answered 1983 as year of first arrival, the period of residence for that person would be recorded as 3 years. In reality, it could be up to six months either side of exactly 3 years, depending on when in 1983 that person arrived. Information on absences from Australia since first arrival was not obtained.

When cross-classified with other census data, PER is useful for analysing how the characteristics of migrants change with length of time in Australia. A question on year of first arrival of overseas born persons has been included in every Australian census.

A check was made to ensure that age (as stated) was compatible with period of residence. Also, PER was coded to 'not applicable' if the person's birthplace was reported as Australia.

Qualifications question 23 QAL

This FURF variable refers to the highest educational qualification obtained since leaving school. It applies to all persons aged 15 years or over.

An education question in which respondents reported their highest level of achievement (e.g. B.Sc.) was included in the 1911 Census. However, a question directly asking about qualifications was not included until 1966, when respondents were asked to provide details of the qualification name and institution at which it was obtained. In all censuses since, persons aged 15 or over were asked whether they had obtained a qualification and, if so, the qualification name, field of study and name of awarding institution. The 1971 Census also asked whether the person was studying for a qualification and, if so, its name.

As in previous censuses, 1986 Census output for this data item is classified by both level and field of study. The responses on name of awarding institution are used only to assist coding.

Qualifications data are used to assess the skill level of the labour force and potential labour force and are valuable for the planning and implementation of labour force training programs.

The main reference for the coding of qualifications was the Index of Qualifications. The Index contains: the names of all known qualifications currently obtainable in Australia at the time of the census; past qualifications no longer awarded but still reported; and a list of the more commonly encountered overseas qualifications. A number of commonly reported awards not suitable for inclusion in the classification are listed in the index and were allocated, for census purposes, to the category 'no qualifications'.

See also AGE LEFT SCHOOL (ALS), STUDENT (STU) and YEAR HIGHEST QUALIFICATION OBTAINED (YOQ)

Relationship in household

derived from question 4

RLF

This is a FURF variable which records the family or household situation of each person in a private dwelling, or caravan etc in a caravan park (see categories below).

Question 4 on the 1986 Census household form asked for each person's relationship to person 1/person 2. These relationships were used by coders at the data transcription centre to identify family groups, if any, within the household.

A question on relationship has been included in all Australian censuses. Prior to 1981, the question asked about 'relationship to household head'. Public reaction against the concept of 'household head' caused the question to be altered in 1981 to 'relationship to person 1'. In the 1986 Census, relationship to person 1 and/or person 2 was asked in respect of each child. This was necessary to classify stepchildren.

Household and family data are important for demographic and urban planning, and for the analysis of changing family characteristics over time. The latter is especially important for the development of social security and welfare programs.

The categories used in the classification of RLF are listed and described below:

Family reference person/spouse (or partner)

The concept of 'family head' used in previous censuses is no longer valid. See the description of the change from 'family head' to 'family reference person' in FAMILY COMPOSITION (FMC). Note that although reference person and spouse were separately identified in coding, the two categories are usually combined in outputs. A tabulation showing similar characteristics (such as labour force status or hours worked) of the male and female members of a couple can, however, be produced.

Dependent family child

There are different types of dependent family child (see DEPENDENT FAMILY CHILD TYPE (CHT) for details). A dependent family child must have been under 15 years of age, or 16-20 years of age and a full-time student.

Adult family child

An adult family child must have been 15 years of age or older or, if a full-time student, 21 years of age or older. Outside these restrictions he/she could have been any age, but must not have had a spouse or child(ren) present, or usually present but temporarily absent.

Ancestor

This category is only applicable to a primary family and is the category into which a lone parent, grandparent, etc of the reference person or his/her spouse was placed. If there was a grandmother, with grandfather present or usually present but temporarily absent, for example, then a secondary family was formed, and no indication of inter family relationship was recorded. The category 'ancestor' is not applicable in such cases.

Other Adult Family Member

An other adult family member is a blood or marriage relative of the reference person and/or spouse of the primary family. Examples are brother, sister, cousin, brother in law etc.

Adult Boarder

An adult boarder is an adult who stated his/her relationship to person 1 as 'boarder', except when families could be identified amongst boarders, in which case these persons were coded to one or more secondary families. A boarder who was less than 15 years of age, at his/her place of usual residence, and not a member of a secondary family, was coded to 'family child'. If not at his/her place of usual residence, and under 15 years of age, the person was coded to 'other non-family member'.

Other Non-family Member

This is a person (adult or child) who was not identifiable as a family member and could not be allocated any other code. A person under 15 years of age who did not usually reside with the family was coded to this category. In previous censuses this category did not contain children.

Group Household Member

This was a person living in a multiple person household where no families were identified; ie a household containing unrelated persons only. This category was not identified in previous censuses.

Lone Person Households

In the 1981 Census, persons living alone were classified as 'head only families'. In 1986, such persons were classified as 'lone person households' and were not regarded as families.

Relationship in non-private dwelling question 4 personal form RLN

Persons in non-private dwellings (NPDs) were enumerated using personal forms. The relationship question on the personal form took the following format:

'For a person living in a non-private dwelling on census night, write whether hotel guest, patient, prisoner, employee etc'.

From responses to this question each person was then classified into one of three groups:

owner/manager and family;
employee and family;
or inmate, patient, boarder etc.

Religion question 16 REL

A question on religious denomination has been included in all Australian censuses but response has been optional.

The classification in this FURF variable contains 26 categories.

Several changes were made to the religion classification for the 1986 Census:

- (a) virtually all denominations coded to 'Armenian Apostolic' in the 1981 Census were coded to the new category 'Oriental Christian' in 1986;
- (b) the 1981 categories 'Catholic - Roman' and 'Catholic - Not Roman' were combined to form the 1986 category 'Catholic';
- (c) all denominations coded to 'Methodist' in the 1981 Census were coded to 'Uniting Church' in 1986;
- (d) the category 'Hindu' was introduced; and
- (e) a new category 'Non-theistic' was introduced. This category includes such responses as humanist, materialist, rationalist and secularist.

The option not to answer the question on religion is provided for in census legislation; this question is the only one which it was not compulsory for any person to answer. Data on religion are used for such purposes as planning educational facilities, aged persons' care and other social services provided by religion based organisations, the location of church buildings, the assigning of chaplains to hospitals, prisons, armed

services and universities, the allocation of time on public radio and other media, and general sociological research.

Sex question 2 SEX

This is a FURF variable in which the sex of each person is recorded. For most personal characteristics sex is virtually an automatic choice as a cross-classifier. For demographic studies sex differentiation is essential.

The variable SEX is used for cross editing or definitional purposes. For example, if the sex of a person is 'male', then the fields total ISSUE and total living ISSUE are 'not applicable'. A married or de facto couple must be of opposite sexes.

Student question 19 STU

This is a FURF variable in which each person was classified according to whether they were a full-time or part-time student, attending an educational institution.

A question enabling the identification of the student population has been included in all Australian censuses. The 1981 Census was the first to separate the full-time and part-time student populations. The 1986 Census question also asked persons who were full-time or part-time students to state the type of institution they were attending. See EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION ATTENDING, TYPE OF (TYP).

STU and AGE are used to classify dependent family children and adult family children in the field RELATIONSHIP IN HOUSEHOLD (RLF). If a person was recorded as 'not attending', then she/he must have left school, or never attended, as indicated by the field AGE LEFT SCHOOL (ALS).

The information on students recorded by this field, and other education fields, is used for analysis of the participation of various population groups in different levels of education.

Usual residence questions 6,7,8 RSC, RLC
RSO, RLO
RSV, RLV

Usual residence data provide reliable, up-to-date information on the usually resident population of an area, and on the internal migration patterns at the Australia, State, regional and local government levels. The data are also used by the ABS in calculations of the estimated resident population.

The 1986 Census form contained three questions on usual residence.

Question 6 on the census form asked used where each person usually lived and questions 7 and 8 asked for each person's usual residence one and five years ago, respectively.

Usual residence was defined in the notes pertaining to question 6 as '... that address at which a person has lived or intends to live for a total of 6 months or more in 1986'. In the 1981 Census question the period was referred to as '6 months or more in 1981'. The wording was changed so that, say, if a person spent several periods of time, totalling six months or more, at a particular address, rather than a single six month period, that address was given as the person's place of usual residence.

Boarders at school or college were specifically asked to record the school or college as their usual residence. This instruction was not given in earlier census forms, and often these persons incorrectly reported their family home as their place of usual residence.

The questions on usual residence have provision for tick-box answers, which simplify response when two or more of the usual residence addresses (currently, and 1 and 5 years ago) are the same. These tick-box responses are recorded in the FURF variable INTERNAL MIGRATION INDICATOR (IMI).

Use of IMI, in conjunction with the other FURF variables relating to usual residence listed below, makes it possible to identify the pattern of gross movement of persons between the three dates.

Addresses provided in answer to these three questions were coded to Statistical Local Area (SLA).

The following FURF variables, concerning usual residence at particular times, are available.

State/Territory of usual residence, or overseas, in 1986 (RSC);

SLA of usual residence in 1986 (RLC);

State/Territory of usual residence, or overseas, on 30 June 1985 (RSO);

SLA of usual residence on 30 June 1985 (RLO);

State/Territory of usual residence, or overseas, on 30 June 1981 (RSV); and

SLA of usual residence on 30 June 1981 (RLV).

If usual residence was in Australia, respondents were asked to state their residential address, postcode, and the name of the local council. If usual residence was overseas, respondents were asked to indicate this by writing 'OS' in the relevant section of the census form. Names of countries of usual residence were not sought.

Persons who were usual residents of the dwelling in which they were enumerated at the 1986 Census were not required to repeat the address given on the cover of the census form. The State and SLA codes appropriate to the census Collection District (CD) in which persons were enumerated were automatically allocated.

Persons who on census night 1986 were on board vessels in or between Australian ports (or on long distance trains, buses or aircraft), and who gave an address in Australia as their usual residence, were coded to the SLA containing that address. A small number of persons who were on board vessels in or between Australian ports, or on long distance trains, buses or aircraft, who indicated that they were usually resident at the address at which they were enumerated, were allocated a separate usual residence code describing them as 'migratory'. Similar responses to questions 7 and 8 were interpreted, however, as 'not stated' responses.

Most respondents who were enumerated at a place other than their usual residence provided a codable local council name in their usual address. In cases where a local council name was not codable or not given, the suburb name, town, postcode or other locality information (if any) provided in answer to the question was used in referring to the Localities Index. This index includes all suburbs, towns and other locality names, for all States and Territories, and corresponding SLA codes. Some large non-private dwellings are also included in the index to assist in coding when the usual residence was given as a dwelling of this kind. For some localities which are located in two or more SLAs, the index includes an alphabetic directory of street names, indicating to which area they belong.

If the information for children was inadequate for allocating an SLA code of usual residence, they were given the same code as their mother or father. Similarly, spouses were given the code determined for their partner. If no adequate response was given for current usual residence the person was allocated the code

appropriate to their SLA of enumeration. If no adequate response was given for usual residence one or five years ago, a 'not stated' code was allocated..

The code numbers given to SLAs are listed in the *Australian Standard Geographic Classification - Geographic Code List* (2188.0).

Where the question on current usual residence was not answered, this fact is registered in IMI, but for general tabulation purposes it was assumed that the person was enumerated at his/her place of usual residence, so the SLA of usual residence would be the same as the SLA of enumeration. Not stated responses to questions 7 and 8 are reflected in IMI and SLA of usual residence, one and five years ago.

There are, however, some limitations with usual residence statistics. Note that while it is quite appropriate to tabulate persons (and their personal characteristics) at their SLAs of usual residence, it is not possible to tabulate dwelling, household and family characteristics.

Work destination

DZN

Destination zones are geographic areas designed to divide Journey to Work study areas into zones appropriate for research into journey to work patterns. They refer to the 'destinations' of journeys to work, i.e. to people's locations of work. Destination zones are designed by local transport authorities, and can be small in area, such as in inner city areas, or relatively large in outer suburbs. They do not cross Statistical Local Area (SLA) boundaries, but there may be several within one SLA. They do not necessarily correspond to Collection Districts (CDs).

Clerical processing of journey to work information involved allocating a destination zone (DZN) code to each employed person who was enumerated at his or her usual residence in each study area. The majority of DZN codes were obtained by matching business/employer names and locations reported on census forms with entries on an ABS register of such names. The register contains predetermined codes for industry and DZN. Where a work location reported on a census form could not be found in this index, locality and street indexes, and DZN maps were used to determine DZN.

The criteria used to determine destination zones differ between study areas and, in some cases, change between censuses. Comparisons between study areas and between censuses should be undertaken with caution.

Destination zone coding makes it possible to produce daytime working populations and, in conjunction with address of usual residence, to provide information on journey to work. See also METHOD OF TRAVEL TO WORK (TPT).

Year first married

question 20

YFM

The 1986 Census question asked all persons who had ever been married to state the year in which they were first married. Tabulations produced for both males and females provide information for family and demographic studies.

In 1981 a related question was asked to obtain length of current marriage of all married persons, but was coded and processed only for females.

The main use of these data, which are sought from all persons aged 15 years and over who have ever been married, is for the analysis of family formation, including marriage and fertility. The question on year first married asked in 1986 reflects this use, as it was designed to be an indicator of the timing of family formation and the period of time for which a woman is of childbearing age.

This FURF variable records the year in which the highest qualification since leaving school was obtained.

YOQ is cross-edited with QUALIFICATION (QAL) and AGE to ensure that it is only applied to persons who report a qualification, and that persons are not shown as having obtained a qualification before they were 15 years of age.

Notes on family characteristics

Dependent children, number of derived from questions 3,4,19,H4 DPA, DPT, DPE

Three variables provide counts of dependent family children.

(a) Dependent children enumerated (DPE):

This is a count of DEPENDENT FAMILY CHILDREN who were enumerated in the household on census night. This count ranges from 0 to 8 or more.

(b) Dependent children temporarily absent (DPA):

This is a count of dependent children (with provision for a maximum of 3 persons) who were listed as being usual household members temporarily absent on census night; i.e. who were listed in response to question H4.

(c) Total Dependent children (DPT):

This is the total number of dependent children (i.e. DPA + DPE). This count ranges from 0 to 8 or more.

These variables are not applicable to persons in non private dwellings.

A dependent family child is:

- (i) under 15 years of age; or
- (ii) aged 15-20 years and a full-time student.

Dependent family children must have been present, or usually present but temporarily absent on census night. Those who were temporarily absent on census night should have been included in question H4 on the household form.

In previous censuses, an issue child or dependant was a person under 16 years of age, or 16-20 years of age and a full-time student.

Family composition derived from questions 3,4,5,19,H4 FMC

This FURF variable classifies each family as follows:

parent and dependent child(ren);
couple;
couple and dependent child(ren)
related adults;
parent, dependent child(ren) and adult family members;
couple, dependent child(ren) and adult family members; or
couple and adult family members

FMC is derived from persons enumerated in the household (excluding boarders and other non-family members) on census night, as well as spouses and dependent children usually present but temporarily absent. (See the Census family definitions in variable FNO).

FMC is the principal family variable used in family tabulations. When cross-classified with other variables, such as LOCATION OF SPOUSE/PARTNER (SPL), NATURE OF OCCUPANCY (NOC), STRUCTURE OF DWELLING (STR), DEPENDENT CHILDREN, NUMBER OF, FAMILY NUMBER (FNO) and FAMILY INCOME (FIN), demographic characteristics of the different family compositions can be established.

In the 1981 Census, FMC was called 'Family Type'. The classification was a combination of the 1986 variables DPE and FMC, and included a breakdown of the age of family head.

The 1981 FMC classification also provided for 'head only' households to be categorised as a family type. For the 1986 'head only' households of only one person will be 'lone person households'; others (i.e. those comprised entirely of unrelated persons) will be group households. 'Head only' households are no longer recorded as a type of family..

For the 1986 Census, FMC relates only to the basic composition of the family. Other characteristics are derived by cross-classification.

For census purposes a family is defined on the basis of blood, marriage or de facto relationships. Family relationships were derived from two questions on the household form. Question 4 asked each person his/her relationship to person 1/person 2. Question H4 asked for usual household members who were temporarily absent on census night, their relationship to person 1. An important note here is that persons listed in question H4 were considered in family coding only. These persons were not included in the census count at their place of usual residence as such, since they should have been enumerated elsewhere in Australia on census night (e.g. in a motel).

For the first time in an Australian census, persons enumerated in caravans etc in caravan parks were included in family coding.

On the basis of responses given to these two questions, coders at the data transcription centre (DTC) determined the usual family structure(s) existing within a household, and allocated the appropriate codes.

In previous censuses, a question on usual household members temporarily absent was not asked, and family classifications were derived solely from persons enumerated in a household.

For the 1986 Census, a household may consist of;

- one person living alone;
- a primary family unit, with or without non family members;
- a primary family unit, with or without non family members, and up to three secondary family units;
- two or more unrelated persons (ie a group household).

Most families consist of either a couple, with or without a dependent child or children, or a lone parent with a dependent child or children. A primary family may contain related family members as well or just consist of two or more related adults.

The variable FAMILY COMPOSITION (FMC) contains the classification for each family. FAMILY NUMBER (FNO) is also needed in tabulation of multi-family households. These variables relate to the usual family situation (i.e. absent usual residents reported in response to question H4 were considered).

The variable RELATIONSHIP IN HOUSEHOLD (RLF) contains the classification for each person's relationship, or status, within a family, where applicable and of non-family members, lone persons and

group household members. Non family members were classified as 'boarders' or 'other non family members'. This variable relates only to persons enumerated in each household.

In the process of defining a family, coders selected a reference person around whom a family could be formed. A family reference person had to be 15 years of age or over and had to be present in the household on census night. (In previous censuses this person was called the family head, a term no longer used.) The reference person for the primary family was usually person 1 on the household form.

Prior to the 1981 Census, the instruction on the census form was to 'Enter the household head as person 1', and in the relationship question, 'Relationship to household head' was asked. Where the household head was not an appropriate person to build a family around, another person was selected by coders, giving preference to employed, middle-aged males.

In the 1981 Census the instruction was modified to 'Enter the household head or any adult household member as Person 1', and the relationship question asked 'What is each person's relationship to person 1?'. Where person 1 was not an appropriate person to build a family around then same selection procedure for previous census (see above) was used.

For the 1986 Census the instruction was again changed; this time to 'Enter the householder or any adult household member as 'person 1' and, if present, the spouse/partner as 'Person 2'. The relationship question asked 'What is each person's relationship to Person 1/Person 2?'. Where person 1 was not an appropriate person to build a family around, in the case of a couple (with or without children), either person had the same probability of being chosen to be the family reference person (a new term for 1986).

For 1986 Census outputs, couples are identified as 'male' and 'female', not 'reference person' and 'spouse'.

Once a suitable reference person was established for a family, all persons identified within the family unit were allocated family relationship codes.

With respect to persons listed in answer to question H4, only spouse(s) and dependent family children were used in coding family type. It was thus possible, for example, to form a family unit from a reference person who was the only person present in the household on census night, and a spouse and/or dependent family children listed in response to question H4.

In previous censuses, a person living alone on census night was categorised as a head only family. Such persons were classified as lone person households in the 1986 Census only if no spouse or dependent child was listed in response to question H4.

If relationships were not adequately stated by respondents, where possible the family structure was imputed during processing from other responses such as name, usual residence and marital status.

A problem associated with attempting to code usual family structure was that families consisting of a couple with one or more dependent family children may have been split on census night. For example, father may have been at home, and mother and child may have been visiting the mother's parents. In this case the father should have listed the mother and child in response to question H4 on the household form. This action would have ensured that the family was correctly classified at their home address. The mother and child, however, would have been enumerated in the main body of the census form with the mother's parents, and would have been classified as a secondary family consisting of mother and child only. There was no way of knowing whether the mother and child were a lone parent family, or part of a family enumerated elsewhere. For the count of families, therefore, the mother and child would be represented in the family identified at the usual home address and as a lone parent and child family in the household in which they were enumerated. The number of such cases is, however, expected to be quite small.

Note that in cases where all members of a household present on census night were related, and under 15 years of age, the household was classified as a group household. If temporarily absent family members were enumerated in a non-private dwelling, they were not included in family coding.

Family income derived from question 24 FIN

This FURF variable is derived by summing the midpoints of the ranges of INDIVIDUAL INCOME (INC) of the family reference person, his/her spouse and dependent family children aged 15-20 years.

The income received by dependent family children aged 15-20 years was included in FIN so that the same conceptual base is used for deriving family income in the census and in the ABS household surveys. In the 1981 and earlier censuses, family income was derived by adding the incomes of family reference person and spouse only (i.e. the income of dependent children aged 15-20 years was excluded).

If one or more contributors did not state their individual incomes, then family income was coded to 'not stated', unless the sum of the midpoints of the income ranges of those persons whose income was stated was greater than \$50,000. In this case, FIN was coded to 'over \$50,000'.

Usual family members temporarily absent on census night, who were recorded in response to question H4 could not be included in FIN as their income was not asked.

A family which had the spouse of reference person temporarily absent on census night was coded to the FIN category 'spouse temporarily absent' unless the combined income of the family members present on census night was greater than \$50,000.

Family income is not applicable to group houses, lone person households, or persons in non-private dwellings.

When comparing family income data with previous censuses, note that persons in caravans etc in caravan parks were classified as households for the first time in the 1986 Census. They were not therefore included in family income in previous censuses.

Family number FNO

This variable indicates to which family, if any, identified within a household, each household member belonged. Single family households, group households and lone person households were also covered by the classification. FNO applies only to persons in private dwellings and caravans etc in caravan parks.

Household members temporarily absent question H4 SPL, DPA

Some household members may not have been at the place where they usually live on census night. A new section on the household form allowed for three such persons to be reported at their place of usual residence. This information was used only to identify usual family relationships for family coding, but only when the reported temporary absentees were spouses or dependent children.

Householders who sought advice about whether to include in Question 4 persons who would not have listed the address of the household as their place of usual residence, were advised not to include them. This would have been most relevant to full time students in boarding schools. Users should note that the above instructions were not given to most respondents and, as a result, there may be many cases where dependent children at boarding schools were included in responses to question H4.

Location of spouse/partner derived from questions 4,H4 SPL

This is a FURF variable which is associated with family data. It indicates whether the spouse/partner of the family reference person was present in the household on Census night or was listed in question H4 as usually present but temporarily absent. The major reason for including this variable was to facilitate the production of tables which are comparable to the 1981 Census.

Married/de facto couple

derived from questions 4,5

MDC

This FURF variable records the relationship of each couple as married or de facto.

The topic submission scheme for the 1986 Census produced some requests for the separate identification of de facto relationships. The problem with adding a separate identification of de facto relationships to the marital status question is that such a question would then contain a mixture of legal and social concepts which may not be mutually exclusive. For example, a person may be both divorced and living in a de facto relationship. Or the marital status of the members of a couple may be reported as 'married' and 'separated' while one or other is living in a de facto relationship.

In the 1986 Census the relationship question (question 4) provided person 2 with the tick box option 'de facto partner of person 1'. This is the primary source of data for MDC, and usually refers to the spouse/partner in a primary family. However, where possible from reported information, MDC is also coded for secondary families and for families where the spouse/partner is temporarily absent.

If the family does not contain a couple - as indicated by the field FAMILY COMPOSITION (FMC) - or lives in a non-private dwelling (NPD), then MDC is not applicable. MDC is only applicable to family situations, not to group houses or lone person households (as indicated by FAMILY NUMBER (FNO)). Note that the household type category 'group house' is a residual category. If a couple (de facto or married) is identified then the household is classified as a family household, not a group house. Homosexual couples are not included in the census family analysis. Such couples are classified as non family members or members of a group house.

Notes on dwelling characteristics

Aboriginal dwelling indicator derived from questions 4,5,6,9,H4 ABD

This is a FURF variable which is derived from ABORIGINAL ORIGIN (ABL), FAMILY NUMBER (FNO), RELATIONSHIP IN HOUSEHOLD (RLF) and LOCATION OF SPOUSE/PARTNER (SPL). It identifies private dwellings in which one or more Aboriginals or Torres Strait Islanders (TSI) were enumerated. It further classifies such dwellings according to whether the reference person or spouse/partner of a primary family unit, or other person(s), was Aboriginal or TSI. This field applies only to occupied private dwellings, and caravans etc in caravan parks.

The classification has changed since 1981 in several ways. In 1981 it only identified those private dwellings where the reference person and/or spouse of a primary family unit was reported as Aboriginal or TSI. It also separately identified Aboriginals and TSIs, whereas in 1986 no such distinction is made.

The data item allows easy study of the characteristics of households containing Aboriginals or TSIs. Enumeration of Aboriginal communities, particularly in remote areas, requires special field procedures. Isolation, dispersion and language all pose problems warranting special consideration. Comprehensive field maps, special Aboriginal enumerators, as well as assistance in completing forms, are part of the special procedures used to ensure that as complete a coverage as possible of the Aboriginal population is obtained.

Bedrooms in private dwelling, numbers of question H1 BED

This is a FURF variable which provides a count of the number of bedrooms in each occupied private dwelling.

The number of bedrooms in an occupied private dwelling is derived from question H1 on the census form.

The data provided by BED allow the calculation of occupancy ratios (number of persons per bedroom). When using occupancy ratios it must be remembered that they are based on persons present in households on census night, not persons usually resident.

This characteristic is not applicable to caravans etc in caravan parks, unoccupied and non-private dwellings.

Furnished/unfurnished question H3 FUF

This is a FURF variable which indicates whether rented occupied private dwellings were furnished or unfurnished.

The classification was a part of the variable 'nature of occupancy' in 1981 but in 1986 is a separate field. The data assist in interpreting rent levels.

Household income derived from question 24 HIN

Household income relates to households in occupied private dwellings and caravans etc in caravan parks (including group households), and was calculated from the sum of the midpoints of the ranges of INDIVIDUAL INCOME (INC) of all persons aged 15 years and over in the household on census night. The income question was not asked of persons under 15 years of age, or of usual household members temporarily absent on census night.

If one or more income recipients did not state their individual incomes, then household income was coded to 'not stated', unless the sum of the incomes which were stated was greater than the largest income category (over \$50,000). In this case, the household income would have been recorded in that category.

Households which had one or more spouses (remembering that a household may contain more than one family) temporarily absent on census night were separately identified in the classification (category 16), unless the combined income of the household members present on census night was greater than the largest income category (over \$50,000). In this case, the household income would have been recorded in that category.

When comparing household income with previous censuses, note that persons in caravans etc in caravan parks were classed as households for the first time in the 1986 Census. They had not been included in household income data in previous censuses.

Household type derived from questions 4,H4 HST

This is a FURF variable which identifies whether an occupied private dwelling or caravan etc in caravan park contained one or more families, was a group household or a lone person household.

A family household (as opposed to a group household or lone person household) must contain a primary family, and can also contain up to three secondary families. The number of families in a household is indicated by the variable HOUSEHOLD TYPE (HST), which replaces the 1981 Census mnemonic NOF. The actual family to which a person was coded is indicated by the variable FAMILY NUMBER (FNO).

This is a new classification which incorporates the 1981 classification of families in household. It differs in that the 1981 categories 'group house' and 'lone person household' were not identified as such, and both would have been included as primary families. Changes to family coding, because of the addition of usual residents temporarily absent, will also affect comparability of this item between censuses.

See the variable FAMILY COMPOSITION (FMC) for a description of the definition of a family used in the 1986 Census.

Landlord question H3 LLD

This field records responses to question H3 as to whether the landlord of a rented private dwelling is a State Housing Commission, other government agency or private (derived from response 'Other') landlord. It applies to all households who were renting the dwelling in which they were enumerated. See also NATURE OF OCCUPANCY (NOC) and FURNISHED/UNFURNISHED (FUF)

This variable allows data to be produced for studies of the socio-economic characteristics of tenants of public authority housing, and for comparisons with tenants in privately owned accommodation to be made.

Mortgage payments, total monthly question H3 ALM

This is a FURF variable which records the monthly loan repayments (in dollars) by households for the purpose of purchasing the dwelling in which they were enumerated.

The 1976 Census included a question on source of mortgages. This information was not sought in the 1981 or 1986 Census.

For the 1986 Census, monthly loan repayments are classified in single dollars from \$0 up to \$799, and one category for \$800 or more. The highest monthly mortgage category used in the 1981 Census was '\$398 and over'.

The data are important in analysis of home ownership and for providing benchmark data for evaluating housing needs, housing finance and housing demand.

See also NATURE OF OCCUPANCY (NOC) and RENT PAYMENTS WEEKLY (RNT).

Motor vehicles, number of question H2 VEH

This is a FURF variable which records the number of registered motor vehicles which are owned or used by members of a HOUSEHOLD and were garaged or parked near the occupied private dwelling, or caravan etc in caravan park on census night.

This classification includes company owned vehicles kept at home, but excludes motor bikes, scooters and tractors.

The data are used to help determine transport policies and priorities, e.g. car parking requirements, traffic planning, traffic management and public transport provision. VEH is also in demand for analysing and predicting car ownership patterns; indicating the availability of sources of transport other than public transport; providing a socio-economic profile of the population as well as the mobility of segments of the population; and studying journey to work data.

Nature of occupancy question H3 NOC

This is a FURF variable which indicates whether households were renting, purchasing or owned the dwelling in which they were enumerated. This only applies to private dwellings and excludes caravans etc in caravan parks and non-private dwellings.

NOC is not coded for caravans etc in caravan parks on census night, as the nature of the question is not suitable. For example, a household may own a caravan while also paying for a permit to occupy a caravan site. Nature of occupancy in this situation would be ambiguous.

Furthermore, a significant number of persons enumerated in caravans etc in caravan parks would be people on holiday who would probably be buying or renting their usual dwelling (such as a house or flat) and may have mistakenly answered question H3 in respect of that dwelling.

Copies of the decision table used to determine the NOC codes are available to interested users from the nearest ABS office.

In 1981, the NOC category 'rented' was further subdivided according to type of landlord and whether the dwelling was furnished or unfurnished. In 1986, this information is held as two separate variables, LANDLORD (LLD) and FURNISHED/UNFURNISHED (FUF). NOC, LLD and FUF can be cross-classified to obtain data comparable to 1981 data. NOC can also be cross-classified with RENT PAYMENTS (RNT) or MORTGAGE PAYMENTS (ALM) in tabulations.

Census to census comparison of the data recorded by NOC provides an indicator of change in owner-occupancy rates (both owner and purchaser). The information can be useful for determining housing priorities and policies at national, State and regional level.

Non-private dwelling NPD

This FURF item is the variable for the classification of non-private dwellings.

A non-private dwelling is a hospital, home for the aged, motel, etc which had communal eating facilities. These were mostly listed prior to the census from the following sources: information from the 1981 census; lists supplied by the Departments of Social Security and Health; and other ABS collections.

A list was provided to census collectors to ensure where possible that previously identified and classified NPDs were correctly enumerated. Other NPDs were found during the collection phase of the census and each was classified in accordance with responses provided by the owner/staff of the NPD.

Occupants of NPDs received personal forms rather than household forms. This means that family relationships of persons within an NPD were not sought and no family data can therefore be obtained.

Caravan parks and hotels/motels usually contain a large number of families and, in recognition of this, the ABS has changed census collection procedures for caravan parks. For the 1986 Census, caravan parks were not classified as non-private dwellings. Caravans etc in caravan parks were given individual household forms. Relationship data was therefore collected, and family data obtained. There are still problems in achieving this objective for hotels and motels, which continued to be classified as NPDs for the 1986 Census.

Special collectors were recruited to enumerate NPDs which were expected to contain more than 30 people on census night.

Reason dwelling unoccupied

question C2

RUN

This is a FURF variable in which unoccupied private dwellings are classified according to the reason unoccupied. The census collector determined the reason a dwelling was unoccupied by observation or contacting neighbours.

Dwellings may have been unoccupied for a variety of reasons e.g. they may have been for sale, to let, holiday homes, awaiting demolition or the usual resident(s) may have been temporarily absent.

Particulars of dwellings under construction were not required for census purposes. Collectors were required to check, however, if any of the rooms of these dwellings were occupied, or if garages, tents, sheds or caravans were present and occupied. Collectors also had to determine whether a structure was still under construction, or was completed and awaiting occupancy. In the absence of direct information such as 'to let' signs or neighbours' reports, indirect evidence (electricity connections, builder having left site, the presence or absence of house numbers, etc) had to be used in making the decision.

If the dwelling was considered to be awaiting occupancy the back page (i.e. the questions on structure and reason unoccupied) of a household form was completed by the collector and the dwelling was classified, for census purposes, as unoccupied.

The classification is the same as 1981, except that, due to a computer programming error, in the 1981 Census the categories 'not stated' and 'usual resident temporarily absent' were combined.

The data are important for assessing occupancy rates and determining housing demand and supply in different geographic areas. They also provide benchmark data for checking the reliability of other statistical collections, and for determining trends and dwelling types in available housing accommodation.

If RUN indicates that a private dwelling was unoccupied, then all dwelling items except STRUCTURE OF DWELLING (STR) are given the code 'not applicable'.

Unoccupied non-private dwellings and unoccupied caravans etc in caravan parks are not counted in population censuses.

Rent payments weekly

question H3

RNT

This variable provides information on rent payments on a weekly basis in dollar values for those households which were renting rather than purchasing, as recorded in question H3. The highest single dollar value represented is \$199 per week. Values of rent of \$200 and over have been aggregated. See also NATURE OF OCCUPANCY (NOC) and MORTGAGE PAYMENTS (ALM).

Structure of dwelling

question C1

STR

This FURF variable records the type of dwelling structure of all private dwellings, and caravans etc in caravan parks.

This variable is the same as that used in 1981 except that 'caravan etc in a caravan park' has been added. Previously, each caravan park was included as a non-private dwelling, for which structure was not collected. This change will affect comparisons between censuses of some dwelling, family and person items.

The data are used to monitor changes in housing characteristics, to help formulate housing policies and to review existing housing stock.

Definitions of categories

(a) Separate house

A separate house is a single structure, usually separated by open space from others. However, included in this category are granny flats, either attached to the house or in a converted garage.

(b) Semi-detached house

A semi-detached house is one of two houses joined together, single or multi-storey, usually separated by open space from other dwellings. This category is for the older style of semi-detached house.

(c) Row or terrace house

A row or terrace house is one of three or more houses joined together in a row (single or multi-storey). This category is for the older style of row or terrace house.

(d) Medium density housing

This category includes all medium density housing developments - villa homes, town houses, blocks of flats or home units up to and including three storeys high. Also includes any separate houses, semi-detached houses and row or terrace houses converted into two or more flats.

(e) Flats over three storeys

These are flats or home units in a block over three storeys high.

(f) Caravan, tent etc in a caravan park

This category comprises occupied caravans, tents etc in caravan parks and occupied small craft in marinas.

(g) Other caravan, houseboat, etc

This category comprises: mobile units occupied on a permanent or semi-permanent basis and not in caravan parks; and houseboats and other occupied small craft not in marinas.

(h) Improvised home

This category includes sheds, tents etc occupied on a permanent or semi-permanent basis and not in caravan parks.

(i) House or flat attached to a shop, office, etc

A house or flat attached to a shop, office, factory or any other non-residential structure is included in this category.

Notes on geographic area characteristics

Australian Electoral Division

AED

Electoral boundaries are reviewed and changed periodically, and Census data is available in accordance with the latest boundaries. The boundaries used in the 1986 Census were based on the September 1984 redistribution. The Australian Electoral Division classification does not form part of the Australian Standard Geographic Classification (ASGC).

Collection District

CLD, CDN

The Collection District (CD) is the smallest geographical area used in the Australian Standard Geographical Classification. It has been designed for use in the Census of Population and Housing as the basic collection, coding, processing, tabulation and publication unit. A CD is an area containing approximately 350 dwellings in urban areas and fewer in rural areas. CD's can be aggregated to form other geographic levels, such as Statistical Divisions. For the 1986 Census 29,632 CDs were delimited throughout Australia. The mnemonic CLD refers to Collection District, and the mnemonic CDN refers to aggregated Collection Districts.

Legal Local Government Area

LGA

In previous censuses the Census Local Government Area (LGA) was the principal tabulation unit used in the publication of Census data. With the introduction of the Australian Standard Geographic Classification (ASGC), Census LGAs have now become Statistical Local Areas (SLAs). However, 1986 Census data is still available at the Legal Local Government Area level (for which the census mnemonic is now LGA). A Legal Local Government Area (LGA) consists of one or more Statistical Local Areas (SLA).

The Legal Local Government Area is a geographic area under the responsibility of an incorporated local government council. There are over 830 Legal LGAs in Australia which collectively cover only part of Australia. (The major areas not covered by Legal LGAs are the large northern parts of South Australia, almost all of the Northern Territory and all of the Australian Capital Territory). The number of Legal LGAs and their boundaries may change over time. Their creation and delimitation is the responsibility of the respective State Governments and is governed by the provisions of State Local Government Acts.

Section of State

SCS

This identifies geographic areas which are aggregations of CD's on a basis which ignores legal boundaries. Section of State boundaries are drawn for statistical purposes only. Five sections of State are recognised

- a) Major urban - urban centres with a population over 100,000
- b) Other urban - urban centres with a population of 1,000 to 99,999
- c) Bounded rural locality - population clusters of 200 - 999 population
- d) Rural balance
- e) Migratory.

Persons enumerated on board vessels in and between Australian ports, or on board long distance trains, buses or aircraft are classified as migratory. Such persons are not included in the population of specific LGA's, but are shown as a balancing item in the population of a State or Territory. By definition, there is no migratory population in the Australian Capital Territory.

Statistical Division

STD

Statistical Divisions are designed to be relatively homogeneous regions characterised by identifiable social and economic links between the inhabitants and between the economic units within the region, under the unifying influence of one or more major towns or cities. A Capital City Division is predominantly urban in character and the boundaries are delineated to contain the anticipated urban development of the city (and associated urban centres) for a period of at least twenty years.

Statistical Subdivision / Statistical District

SSD

Statistical Subdivisions are delineated in most States on the same basis as Statistical Divisions but as a portion of the latter. In New South Wales, Statistical Subdivisions are delineated mainly by reference to other criteria.

Statistical Districts have been delineated in respect of urban centres with a population of 25,000 or more outside State Capital City Statistical Divisions, using concepts and criteria similar to those of Capital City Divisions. They usually consist of one or more Statistical Subdivisions. These fixed boundaries delimit areas which, for general statistical purposes, are free from the problems imposed by the moving boundaries of urban centres.

Because of their nature, Statistical Districts can, and in some cases, do straddle statistical division and State/Territory boundaries. An example is the 'Gold Coast – Tweed' statistical district which encompasses an urban area which lies partly in the State of Queensland and partly in the State of New South Wales.

In selected cases, especially in Victoria and South Australia, Statistical Districts were delineated around urban centres with less than 25,000 population, where there was a demand for intercensal population estimates for the area and where existing SLA boundaries were obviously inadequate for this purpose.

Statistical Local Area

SLA

Statistical Local Areas consist of one or more CDs and are local government area (i.e. legal LGA) based or equivalent geographic areas. They cover, in aggregate, the whole of Australia without gaps or overlaps. From 1986, the Statistical Local Area replaces the Census Local Government Area in census data output. The SLA is one of the major geographic levels at which census data can be obtained.