



MEETING OF CULTURAL MINISTERS

STATISTICS WORKING GROUP

Meeting of Cultural Ministers—the Statistical Advisory Group and the Statistics Working Group—a history

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Introduction

The Meeting of Cultural Ministers Statistics Working Group (SWG) manages a national program of cultural data collection, research and analysis, funded collaboratively by the Australian, State and Territory governments. The Statistics Working Group aims to improve policy and decision-making in cultural industries and government by enhancing the quality, range and availability of relevant cultural statistics.

This is a history of SWG, one of the major achievements of the Cultural Ministers Council and its successor, the Meeting of Cultural Ministers.

The Statistical Advisory Group which was to become the Statistics Working Group has been in existence for over 30 years. It has advised arts and culture ministers, their departments and agencies and the Australian Bureau of Statistics on the collection, analysis and publication of arts and culture statistics in Australia. It has produced a body of work highlighting and charting key aspects of this country's arts and cultural landscape and adapted to changes in government administration and the arts and cultural sector.

This history records for the Meeting of Cultural Ministers the evolution of the working group and it is hoped it will be referred to by government policy advisers, academic researchers and students and all those who take an interest in documenting and charting the arts and cultural sector and the broader creative and cultural industries.

The history explains the position that the Statistics Working Group holds and its relationships within the structure of the Meeting of Cultural Ministers, outlines the group's establishment, funding, leadership and administrative support, discusses its relationship with the Australian Bureau of Statistics, highlights its achievements and concludes with an overview of the current direction of the group.

The Meeting of Cultural Ministers/Cultural Ministers Council—starting at the top

The Meeting of Cultural Ministers (MCM) commenced in 2012. It comprises the Commonwealth, State and Territory arts and culture ministers and meets annually when possible. (It is supported by the Meeting of Cultural Ministers Officials, discussed below, which is comprised of the heads or chief executives of various Commonwealth arts departments and agencies and State and Territory arts and culture arts departments and offices and other officials.)

It is successor to the former Cultural Ministers Council (CMC), an intergovernmental forum for ministers responsible for culture and the arts in Australia and New Zealand and invited observers from the Australian Local Government Association, Norfolk Island and Papua New Guinea.

It was one of a number of national Ministerial Councils established by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) on a wide range of portfolio areas. The Ministerial Councils operated under COAG's Broad Protocols and General Principles of Operation for Ministerial Councils.

The CMC was established in 1984–85 by agreement between Australia's Prime Minister and Premiers and the Northern Territory's Chief Minister. The first meeting was held on 19 November 1985 in Brisbane. In 1990 the Australian Capital Territory became a full member following its change to self-government. In 1991 New Zealand became a full member in lieu of its previous observer status.

In 2011 COAG reviewed its Ministerial Councils and reduced their number. COAG noted that matters of cultural mutual interest could be progressed outside the Ministerial Council framework resulting in the CMC holding its final meeting on 12 August 2011 in Sydney. It was agreed at the meeting that the work of CMC would continue through the Meeting of Cultural Ministers (MCM).

Meeting of Cultural Ministers Officials/Cultural Ministers Council Standing Committee—the departmental level

MCM is supported by the Meeting of Cultural Ministers Officials. MCM Officials is comprised of the heads or chief executives of various Commonwealth arts departments and agencies and State and Territory arts and culture arts departments and offices. A representative of the Australian Local Government Association is invited to join meetings.

The main objective of the MCM Officials group is to advise and assist the MCM to improve cooperation and coordination of government activities and policies as they affect cultural activities.

Before the creation of the MCM in 2011, MCM Officials was preceded by the Cultural Ministers Council Standing Committee.

The Standing Committee consisted of a nominee of each member Minister, usually the chief executive or secretary of each jurisdiction's arts or cultural department. Where specific matters fell within the

Council's purview and were the responsibility of more than one portfolio, the Standing Committee could be attended by more than one representative and the Commonwealth was also usually represented by the head of the Australia Council and Screen Australia (formerly the Australian Film Commission). A nominee of the Papua New Guinea Minister and a representative from Australian local government were also invited to join meetings.

The MCM Officials group works at the departmental level to develop and prepare policies and recommendations for the consideration and decision of Ministers coming together as the MCM.

Establishment of the Statistical Advisory Group—how it all began

It is significant that the first meeting of the Cultural Ministers Council in November 1985 noted major deficiencies in culture-leisure statistics in Australia. It was in answer to this scarcity of data that the CMC established the Statistical Advisory Group (SAG).

The aim of SAG was to improve policy making and decision making in the cultural industries and governments by enhancing the range, quality, availability and use of appropriate statistics.

CMC was concerned at the time about the lack of consistent and reliable data and information about the cultural industries which was impeding the development of national cultural strategies and effective planning and evaluation.

The early objectives of SAG included the creation of a cultural industry classification system. Another objective was to encourage the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), as Australia's national statistical agency, to take a greater interest in cultural data.

CMC aimed to convince the ABS that it had a role to collect and report cultural data, to include cultural data along with the statistics of other sectors and industries in Australia's economy and society already collected.

SAG began to meet twice a year and implement its initial inaugural work programs, soon achieving these two objectives.

As SAG evolved and matured there was a need for it to establish an identity and profile within and beyond government so that its work would be better understood. In 1995, following a decision by CMC Standing Committee, SAG became known as the Cultural Industries Statistics Working Group (CISWG) to more fully describe its role. However, the name proved to be cumbersome and the Standing Committee again changed the name in November 1996 to the Cultural Ministers Council Statistics Working Group (CMC SWG or SWG). The new name whilst receiving broader acceptance was also consistent with the titles of other committees created by CMC which were known as Working Groups. The name Statistics Working Group (SWG) remains.

Over the life of the CMC and the MCM, it established many working groups which were to meet and operate for limited time periods, to address specific policy issues or to undertake specific projects. SAG/SWG has remained in existence and as such occupies a unique continuity in the history of CMC/MCM.

The National Culture-Leisure Industry Statistical Framework—the first major achievement

A fundamental issue identified in the early days by SAG was that the ABS industry classifications in use at that time did not comprehensively cover or reflect the breadth or diversity of the cultural industries.

An initial priority for SAG was to address this deficiency and the development of a statistical framework became SAG's first major outcome.

The National Culture-Leisure Industry Statistical Framework was developed jointly by SAG, officers from the Commonwealth Department of Arts, Sport, Environment, Tourism and Territories, Adelaide-based consultants, Corporate Concern, and with assistance from an ABS outposted officer.

The first edition of the Framework was released by CMC in 1989, and was based on the UNESCO Framework for Culture Statistics. An accompanying document was National Culture-Leisure Industry Statistical Framework: Available Data and Sources.

Following national consultation in 1989, the Framework and Available Data and Sources were both revised and became commonly known respectively as the Blue and the Red books. SAG had a direct, hands-on role in the development of these publications. Each SAG member took responsibility for at least one sector and arranged a series of workshops on that sector in their State / Territory / home location, inviting relevant sector representatives. Peter Brokensha, principal consultant with Corporate Concern, and George Carrington, representing the Commonwealth Department, went to all the workshops in every State and Territory to complete the review.

The Framework and Available Data and Sources were presented as a two-dimensional matrix comprising 17 sectors and 4 functions. They were comprehensive documents each running to around 300 pages.

The development of the Framework was a significant step towards improving data availability as it provided a comprehensive framework for all facets of culture-leisure activities. The Framework was a major tool in the development of a set of integrated statistics in the cultural field; and included some activity areas that were not the direct policy responsibility of the jurisdictions of the members of the CMC, but which added to the usefulness and practicality of the framework.

The 17 sectors were:

1. national estate
2. museums
3. literature
4. libraries and archives
5. music
6. performing arts
7. music and performing arts services
8. visual arts
9. art museums
10. film and video
11. radio
12. television
13. community activities
14. education
15. festivals and administration
16. natural environment
17. sport, recreation and fitness (developed separately).

The four functions were:

1. creators
2. products
3. organisations
4. consumers.

The Framework developed into a formal ABS classification system for cultural industries and cultural occupations: Australian Culture and Leisure Classifications (Cat. No. 4902.0), first released in 2001, with the most recent version (3rd edition) being released in 2014. The Framework forms the basis of the cultural industry component of Australian National Accounts, Cultural and Creative Activity Satellite Accounts, Experimental 2008–09, published in 2014.

Another benefit arising from the use of the Framework was that all statistical information in the area of culture was compatible—and SAG, through CMC, urged those involved in developing a statistical project (data gathering, statistical analysis, database development, etc.) to use the Framework as a starting point, particularly to ensure classifications used were consistent with the Framework.

The Australian Cultural Industry, A Summary of 1988 Cultural Statistics—publications for a broad audience

Acknowledging the importance of the Framework and Available Data and Sources as technical documents, SAG was aware that there was now an opportunity to summarise this ground-breaking work into a format suitable for more general public release.

The result was *The Australian Cultural Industry, A Summary of 1988 Cultural Statistics*, a publication which accurately presents itself in the introduction as ‘the first comprehensive statistical study of cultural activity in Australia’.

Based on data existing at the time, and conservative estimates where there were gaps, SAG could report that, in 1988, the Australian cultural industries:

- employed over 220,000 people;
- had a turnover of \$13.7 billion in goods and services; and
- directly contributed \$7.6 billion (value add) to the national economy.

The publication compared the cultural industries to other sectors indicating that the cultural industries employed more people than the food, beverages and tobacco industry, the clothing footwear and textiles industry and the mining industry.

This was the first time that such figures were made publicly available. Though only at the national level, the publication included data on the industry as a whole and on individual sectors.

SAG members were enthusiastic to be able finally to make information on the cultural industry widely and publicly accessible. There were 'simultaneous' launches of *The Australian Cultural Industry, A Summary of 1988 Cultural Statistics across Australia*. Each SAG member arranged the public launch in their capital city by their respective State or Territory Minister. The publication also included a list of each SAG member and their official addresses and phone numbers (email was not in use at that time) for anyone seeking additional information on the cultural industry.

The Australian Cultural Industry, A Summary of 1988 Cultural Statistics was available from all Australian Government Bookshops and cost \$7.50.

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Advertisement placed in all major newspapers on 31 January and 2 February 1991 (Courtesy: *The Australian*).

Engaging with the Australian Bureau of Statistics

From its inception SAG lobbied the ABS to expand its collection and reporting of culture and leisure data, and from the first meeting in 1986 the ABS attended SAG meetings in an observer capacity.

The relationship between SAG and the ABS, around expectations and resourcing in particular, often resulted in ‘robust discussion’—

‘Another major problem that I have with the documentation is its overall expectation of the level of ABS commitment to culture-leisure statistics. I believe that the tenor is misleading and will provide SAG members with an impression of ABS involvement which is an overstatement of the current understanding. ... The ABS Corporate Plan makes it clear that our first priority is to service Government statistical needs. Although I appreciate that there is an element of Government need in the culture-leisure area, the documentation indicates that most of the data requirements are industry initiated rather than required by Government for the purposes of informed decision-making and assessment and formulation of policy.’

‘I should also point out that the ABS’s budget allocation is extremely tight and some users have directly funded ABS activity relevant to theirs. This is an option SAG may like to consider also in the longer term.’

Extracts from correspondence from the ABS in March and May 1989 to the Commonwealth Department.

Armed with data on the significance of the cultural industries in terms of economic contribution and employment generation in the Framework, Available Data and Sources and The Australian Cultural Industry, A Summary of 1988 Cultural Statistics, the Chair, on behalf of CMC, directly lobbied the ABS to allocate resources to the cultural industries.

The ABS created the National Culture/Leisure Statistics Unit (NCLSU) in 1991 within the Adelaide office of the ABS. The unit then joined SWG as a full member. (The NCLSU was subsequently renamed the National Culture and Recreation Statistics Unit (NCRSU) in March 1995; and the National Centre for Culture and Recreation Statistics (NCCRS) in July 1997.)

The Unit was initially headed by Barry Haydon as Director. A career statistician, Barry had an extensive knowledge of economic statistics and a comprehensive grounding in how the ABS operated. As cultural data cut across industry and government activity, and also had a social dimension, Barry’s knowledge and internal ABS contacts were fundamental in the success of the Unit/Centre. Initially the core funding provided by the ABS did not include funding of the Director’s position but it quickly became apparent that culture statistics were becoming a key element of the role and other duties less so.

From July 1994 to December 1995, the Director undertook an exchange with his counterpart from Statistics Canada. This was a real coup for all concerned, including SWG. Of significant benefit to SWG was the ability to learn first-hand from Statistics Canada, which had built up an extensive culture statistics program and was regarded at the time as the world’s leading agency working in this area.

Upon his return Barry was able to report that, while he learnt a lot, he had passed on a number of ideas that the Canadians were impressed with (he came away with a number of work related awards). In short Australia’s development of cultural statistics was not as far behind as had been thought.

'... wrangling the group ...'

I started working at the Australian Film Commission (now Screen Australia) in 1988 and attended SAG meetings from that time until I left in 2009.

In the early 1990s I recall having to argue that cinema should be included as a cultural venue (it was excluded from the first version of the ABS attendance report undertaken in 1991). I also recall strong arguments at that time that television should not be regarded as a cultural activity. The Australia Council and many of the states and territories at that time excluded film, TV and video with these artforms funded by other agencies such as the AFC and the State film agencies.

The relationship between the NCCRS and the AFC, developed through the SWG connection, was critical to improving the coverage of the film, TV and video industries. Indeed I think that the connection with the ABS was central to the main achievements of the group.

For example, SWG put an enormous effort into tracking cultural funding in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The logic was that at least we could report on funding dispensed through the SAG/SWG members easily. However these initiatives were not successful due to differences in definitions of art forms; different accounting procedures etc. It was the NCCRS who managed to pull together the Cultural Funding data in 1993–94 and onwards.

Also, I think the long suffering Commonwealth secretariat staff did a great job of wrangling the group together over the years.

Rosemary Curtis, Research Manager, Australian Film Commission/Screen Australia, July 2017.

The ABS—through the National Culture/Leisure Statistics Unit/Centre—was able to provide SWG with opportunities to purchase segments of, or take part in, much larger data collection and reporting projects. The monetary contributions that the CMC and MCM made in commissioning the ABS, through SWG, to undertake research and analysis were a relatively small proportion of the total costs of major research projects, and proved much more cost effective than if SWG were to undertake projects on its own.

This arrangement produced the first ABS publication on the cultural industries: Attendance at Selected Cultural Venues, March 1995 (4114.0). Collected through the Labour Force Monthly Population Survey, these first ever national and State and Territory figures on cultural attendance were drawn from a survey of 30,000 households. An earlier survey had been conducted in 1991 but, due to a number of factors, is not included in the ABS catalogue. This survey continues to this day and is providing valuable trend data on cultural attendance and participation.

In addition to the benefits accruing to the cultural sector from new collections and reports, SWG provided value to the ABS. SWG was a respected source of information and advice from the cultural sector to the ABS on priorities and specific issues ranging from definitions and classifications to individual collections.

The link between the MCM Officials group and SWG

SWG is a committee of the MCM, under the guidance of the MCM Officials group. (It previously operated on behalf of CMC under the guidance of Standing Committee.)

SWG, with input from Officials, develops priorities and objectives and annual work programs. The Officials group monitors SWG's progress in implementing the work program and, through the Working Group, provides advice to the ABS and the cultural community on cultural issues.

The Working Group's decisions, recommendations, strategies and workplans are submitted to and subject to the ratification, endorsement, or approval of Officials and MCM.

The membership of SWG comprises the Chair, who is a member of the Officials group (typically the executive or head of one of the State or Territory arts or cultural departments or offices) and officers from Commonwealth, State, and Territory Government departments responsible for the Arts, the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the Australia Council, Screen Australia and the New Zealand Ministry of Culture.

The appointment of a member of MCM Officials as Chair (known as the Convenor in the days of CMC) dates from the mid-1990s and is to ensure, and was in response to concerns at that time, that the priorities of SWG's work program reflect the priorities of MCM Officials.

A further refinement came in 2012, when the Officials group requested that the member of Officials in the jurisdiction in which the SWG meeting is being held also attend the SWG meeting so that at least two Officials members are present.

Both SWG and Officials are critical in the identification of the gaps in statistical collection in the cultural industries and at a jurisdictional level are responsible for improving the appreciation of the value of comprehensive and reliable data and educating the community, industry and government on the collection of data and the use of available data.

Membership of SWG provides State and Territory arts and culture departments and offices, particularly those representing smaller populations, with the opportunity to obtain leverage for research on a national basis that supplements gaps in their own research knowledge and which could not be achieved locally. The breadth of membership ensures that information is shared on research activities being undertaken across the country avoiding duplication or overlap of effort.

By the late 1990s and into the early 2000s SWG was able to point to its practical contribution to the promotion of the value of cultural statistics where the cultural sector had come to recognise the need for and value of statistics in making informed decisions and where cultural statistics helped to lay the foundation for significant national policies and initiatives.

For example, statistical data was crucial to the Major Performing Arts Inquiry in the late 1990s and the Visual Arts and Craft Inquiry in the early 2000s. While not all the statistics used to inform these inquiries and reports emanated from CMC SWG or the ABS NCCRS, they provided a broad context and useful starting point. Detailed attendance, financial and other data provided by the arts organisations themselves formed an integral part of both inquiries which ultimately delivered significant funding to the performing arts and the visual arts and craft sectors.

The funding arrangements for SWG

SWG initially managed a four-year rolling work program, for which it sought in-principle approval of CMC/MCM, followed by annual funding allocations. SWG's budget was directed largely to funding surveys and reports by ABS, often for publication by SWG.

In 1999, the CMC approved funding to the ABS based on a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to cover a three-year period to allow better forward planning for SWG's program. Triennial agreements lasted until 2013–14 and initially comprised a figure to the ABS to support its cultural statistics activities and up to \$100,000 for priority projects aimed at addressing gaps in data identified by CMC/MCM and individual jurisdictions as important to informing policy and decision making.

Priority projects and subject areas examined, in some cases resulting in publications by SAG/SWG and the ABS, included:

- cultural tourism in regional areas
- multipliers for the culture-related industries
- children's participation in culture and leisure activities
- film, television and digital games
- music and performing arts statistical overviews
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander involvement in arts and culture
- disability, ageing and carers participation in culture
- cultural indicators for Australia.

In 2009, the Standing Committee in considering the review of SWG undertaken by Haydon Consulting, recommended the cessation of the arrangement that up to \$100,000 be allocated for priority projects, and instead requested that SWG provide Standing Committee with papers on additional priority projects to be approved and funded (or otherwise) on a case-by-case basis. This was agreed to by CMC in 2009.

Administrative support for SWG

The Australian Government provided a Secretariat for the administrative support of the CMC, through the Commonwealth arts department. As a CMC working group, SWG was also supported and enhanced by the Secretariat. The Secretariat had oversight of priority projects, organised biannual meetings, managed the budget, implemented the communication strategy, and drafted contracts and memoranda of understanding entered into by SWG.

This support concluded when the MCM succeeded CMC. The Secretariat of SWG and its resourcing then became the responsibility of the SWG Chair's jurisdiction. It is the Chair's responsibility to ensure effective communication with Officials and the MCM, to drive the agreed work plan of SWG, and for project management to ensure that outcomes and deadlines are met.



When cultural statistics were young
Statistical Advisory Group (SAG) meeting, Hobart, 17–18 February 1994

L to R: Barry Haydon (Australian Bureau of Statistics), Gianfranco Cresciani (New South Wales), Bernie Stewart (Victoria), Mike Coley, Acting Convenor (Commonwealth), Rosemary Curtis (Australian Film Commission), George Carrington (Commonwealth), Jane O'Brien (Queensland), Warren Woodward (Australia Council for the Arts), Christopher McDermott (Arts Tasmania), Ian Short (South Australia).

The closure of the NCCRS—end of an era

On 16 June 2014, the ABS wrote to the Australian Government Ministry for the Arts informing that, due to significant budget reductions, the ABS would be discontinuing a number of programs including the ABS-funded component of culture, sport and recreation statistics. This resulted in the termination of the existing MoU (for 2012–13 to 2014–15) effective 1 July 2014, as the NCCRS would not be able to meet the obligations for cultural data services.

Under the MoU, the annual contribution by MCM towards the ABS cultural data program was \$329,650 for the 2014–15 period. The MCM funding contribution was directed primarily towards the work program of the NCCRS with ABS 'matched' funding directed towards the survey collection activities and operational support.

Extensive negotiation with the ABS followed, led by Western Australia as chair of SWG at the time. The ABS released its 2014–2018 forward work plan in August 2014. The work plan confirmed that arts and sport data was to be omitted from the ABS-funded component of culture, sport and recreation statistics collection as part of overall agency ongoing expenditure reductions.

This included the disbanding of the National Centre for Culture and Recreation Statistics.

Achievements

The establishment of SAG, and the subsequent creation of the NCCRS, put Australia at the forefront internationally in the development of cultural statistics.

The publication, *The Australian Cultural Industry, A Summary of 1988 Cultural Statistics*, and some of its key data available at that time, was the first comprehensive statistical study of cultural activity in Australia.

Twenty years later the SWG publication, *Arts and culture in Australian life: A statistical snapshot 2008*, provided the following key data:

In 2008, SWG could now report the following key data about Australia's culture:

- 3.5 million Australians work in the culture and leisure sector
- 85 percent of Australians attend at least one cultural venue or event in a year
- Australia exported over \$534 million in the previous financial year.

By 2014, the amount of data available to the ABS had grown to such an extent that it was in a position to publish *Arts and culture in Australia: a statistical overview*, as a comprehensive compendium or road map of available culture and leisure data and individual reports, covering the economy, population and people, industry and the environment.

The third edition of the Australian Culture and Leisure Classification was published in 2014, another milestone of SWG and ABS collaboration and community consultation.

Since 1985, SWG has generated a substantial body of work which has served to better define the cultural industries for policy and program development. SWG has also developed a detailed knowledge and understanding of issues related to the collection of cultural statistics which benefit member agencies in the development of their own research programs, and serve as a mechanism for the coordination of effort in broader research undertaken in the cultural sphere. This has included the development of standards for undertaking such work to ensure compatibility of the results of the research and data collection activities of all member agencies. ([Appendix 1](#) includes a list of SAG/SWG publications and a list of ABS publications with NCCRS input.)

Notable achievements of SAG and SWG, since establishment in 1985 have included the following:

- The development of a National Culture and Recreation Industry Statistical Framework to define the scope and extent of cultural activities, and the definitions for creators, producers, organisations and consumers.
- The adoption of the Framework by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.
- The establishment by the ABS of the National Centre for Culture and Recreation Statistics at its Adelaide office.
- Increased consideration of the needs of the cultural industries in wider ABS statistical collections and increased consideration by the ABS of the views of CMC.
- A major revision of the ABS industry classification which resulted in cultural activities being recognised as a cohesive and significant economic sector, and facilitated the inclusion of a range of cultural industry sectors in ABS Retail Census and Service Industries Surveys.
- Industry acceptance of the Framework and increasing use by industry bodies and arts training and research institutions.
- The compilation and publication of *Available Data and Sources*, the first comprehensive publication of national cultural statistics.

- Publication of *The Australian Cultural Industry, A Summary of 1988 Cultural Statistics*, and companion leaflet, which presented cultural statistics in a form accessible to the general public.
- The development and publication of the *Australia's Culture* pamphlet series providing easily accessible overview data on selected cultural industry indicators or industry sectors.
- The initial publication in a series, *Attendance at Selected Cultural Venues and Events, Australia, 4114.0*, released in November 1995, the first publication of cultural statistics drawn from an ABS ongoing statistical collection.
- The publication of 'Cultural Snapshots' for each State and Territory in 1993. Later SWG provided seed funding to the ABS for it to produce *Culture Reports* for each jurisdiction (in 2010). These were updated several times until they were ported to an online resource as data cubes with less analytical content in 2013.
- The online publication of 'Jurisdictional profiles', which evolved from the Cultural snapshots and provide a comprehensive overview of arts and culture at the national, State and Territory level, prepared by the ABS on behalf of SWG, drawn together from a variety of ABS sources.
- The publication of *Vital Signs: Cultural Indicators for Australia—First edition consultation draft 2010*, which continued widespread consultation with the cultural industries, academics and researchers and proposed a framework of quantitative and qualitative data to better measure cultural value, on the themes of economic development, cultural value, and engagement and social impact.
- The development of the Australian Cultural and Creative Activity Satellite Accounts, collections of detailed data from the Australian National Accounts that measure the economic impact of cultural and creative activity in Australia, the result of close collaboration between the ABS and SWG, resulting in the release of a report by the ABS in 2014.
- The creation of 'Cultural Data Online' which, through the Meeting of Cultural Ministers page on the Australian Department of Communication and the Arts website, provides access to a broad range of research relating to arts and culture in Australia, including publications and links, as well as information on SWG itself, the ABS and ABS data and other jurisdictions including the jurisdictional profiles.

'Internationally, SWG is unique.'

Much of Australia's success in culture statistics, be it locally or on the international stage, can be attributed to the way SWG and the Australian Bureau of Statistics' National Centre for Culture and Recreation Statistics have been able to partner in developing an improved statistical base. While some other countries may have culture-specific statistical advisory committees there are few, if any, that can rival SWG in its ability to influence the agenda of the nation's statistical agency. Where advisory committees do exist elsewhere they have generally been created, and are controlled, by the relevant national statistical agency.

Barry Haydon of Haydon Consulting—10 June 2009

Review of the Cultural Ministers Council (CMC) Statistics Working Group (SWG), 2009.

SWG now, looking to the future

MCM continues its commitment to SWG. The chair and secretariat role continues to rotate among the jurisdictions. In 2017 the chair and secretariat is the Australian Government.

SWG has continued to negotiate three-year MoUs with the ABS for ongoing collection of core data and special projects addressing priority issues. SWG wishes to see an ongoing presence within the ABS to manage and coordinate cultural data collection activities and for there to continue to be a point of contact in the ABS for SWG members and other key stakeholders.

The current Memorandum of Understanding (2015–16 to 2017–18) between the Australian Government on behalf of the Meeting of Cultural Ministers and the Australian Bureau of Statistics covers three collections of cultural data. These are:

- the Cultural Attendance and Participation Survey
- the Cultural Funding by Government Survey
- jurisdictional profiles.

Australian National Accounts: Cultural and Creative Activity Satellite Accounts

Key results:

- In 2008–09, on a satellite account basis, cultural and creative activity was estimated to have contributed.
- \$86.8 billion (6.9% to Australia's Gross Domestic Product (GDP)).
- There is a cross over between the two segments:
- Cultural activity—\$50.1 billion (4.0%); Creative activity—\$78.3 billion (6.3%).
- The industries and occupations common to these two segments accounted for \$42.4 billion (3.4%).
- Volunteer services to arts and heritage organisations are estimated to have contributed \$756 million to GDP on a satellite account basis in 2008–09.
- It is estimated that there was an average of 972,200 people during 2008–09 whose main employment was in a cultural or creative industry or occupation.
- At the end of June 2009, there were 164,730 entities actively trading as a business or non-profit institution within the cultural and creative industries.

Appendix 1: publications

Statistics and research are made available on the SWG website 'Cultural Data Online' at www.arts.gov.au/mcm/cultural-data-online.

SAG/SWG publications

Prior to the Internet and online publications, SAG/SWG released the following hard-copy publications.

Title

- The National Culture-Leisure Industry Statistical Framework, first edition, 1989
- The Australian Cultural Industry: Available Data and Sources, first edition, 1989
- The National Culture-Leisure Industry Statistical Framework, second edition, 1990
- The Australian Cultural Industry: Available Data and Sources, second edition, 1990
- The Australian Cultural Industry: A summary of 1988 Cultural Statistics, 1991
- Multipliers for culture-related industries, March 1995
- Youth and the Arts, April 1996
- Overseas Born Persons and the Arts, April 1996 Australia's Balance of Trade in Culture, December 1996
- Measuring the Impact of Festivals: guidelines for conducting an economic impact study, April 1997 Domestic Cultural Tourism in Australia 1994–95, October 1997
- Household expenditure on culture, May 2002 Australia's Trade in Culture 2000–01, March 2003 Australia's Cultural Volunteers 2000, May 2003
- Music in Australia: A Statistical Overview, February 2007
- Arts and culture in Australian life: a statistical snapshot, February 2008 Cultural Funding in Australia
- (also called Cultural Funding in Australia: Three Tiers of Government):
- 1993–94, 1995–96, 1996–97 and then annually from 1998–99 to 2009–10
- (In the following years, 2010–11 and 2011–12, this series was published by the ABS as Catalogue No. 4183.9)
- Title
- Australia's Culture brochures:
- Attendance at Selected Cultural Venues—1990–91 Museums and Art Museums
- No. 3: Music and Performing Arts No. 4: Employment
- No. 5: Video Hire
- No. 6: Attendance at Selected Cultural Venues—1994–95 No. 7: Employment
- No. 8: Cultural Industries
- No. 9: Attendance at Selected Cultural Venues April 1999
- No. 10: Children's Participation in Culture and Leisure Activities 2000 No. 11: Selected Cultural Industries 1999–2000
- No. 12: Work in Selected Culture and Leisure Activities 2001 No. 13: Attendance at Selected Cultural Venues 2002
- No. 14: Children's Participation in Culture and Leisure Activities 2003
- No. 15: Work in Selected Culture and Leisure Activities April 2004
- No. 16: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians: Involvement in arts and culture No. 17: Attendance at Selected Cultural Venues 2005–06.

For publications from 1990–91 onwards, in particular those released after the establishment of the NCCRS, most of these publications have a descriptor such as ‘prepared by the National Centre for Culture and Recreation Statistics’. For some the content appears to be directly provided by the ABS; and for others there is significant re-interpretation and representation of the data. The publisher credited for all these publications is the Statistical Advisory Group or the Statistics Working Group of Cultural Ministers Council.

Contribution to ABS publications

In 2009, Barry Haydon of Haydon Consulting undertook a review of the Cultural Ministers Council Statistics Working Group, and in that review he listed the culture-related outputs produced by the ABS since 2002–03. He noted that although not all of the reports on this list have been produced directly by the NCCRS they have all benefited by direct NCCRS input (either at survey development stage or analysis and output stage, or both).

Culture Related Outputs Produced by the Australian Bureau of Statistics

| Title and catalogue number | Date | Reference period |
|--|-------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Directory of Culture and Leisure Statistics, 1143.0.55.001 | 16/07/2008 | |
| | 13/08/2002 | |
| Book Publishers, Australia, 1363.0 | 17/08/2005 | 2003–04 |
| | 04/08/2004 | 2002–03 |
| | 12/09/2003 | 2001–02 |
| | 17/09/2002 | 2000–01 |
| Book Retailers, Australia, 1371.0 | 20/09/2005 | 2003–04 |
| | 21/09/2004 | 2002–03 |
| | 14/10/2003 | 2001–02 |
| | 14/11/2002 | 2000–01 |
| Attendance at Selected Cultural Venues and Events, Australia, 4114.0 | 25/01/2007 | 2005–06 |
| | 28/10/2003 | 2002 |
| | 13/12/1999 | 1999 |
| | 30/11/1995 | 1995 |
| Culture and Recreation News, 4147.4.55.001 | Latest 18/03/2009 | Numerous~6 monthly |
| Arts and Culture in Australia: A Statistical Overview | 22/10/2008 | 2008 (2nd edition) |
| | 26/05/2008 | 2008 (1st edition) |
| Arts and Culture in Australia: A Statistical Overview, 4172.0 | 18/06/2007 | 2007 |
| | 06/09/2006 | 2004 |
| Children's Participation in Cultural and Leisure Activities, Australia, 4901.0 | 5/12/2006 | April 2006 |
| | 30/01/2004 | April 2003 |
| Australian Culture and Leisure Classifications, 4902.0 | 16/07/2008 | 2008 (2nd Ed) |
| | 11/02/2008 | 2008 (2nd Ed)—Draft for consultation |
| Employment in Culture, Australia, 6273.0 | 27/02/2008 | 2006 |
| | 29/05/200 | 2001 |
| Work in Selected Culture and Leisure Activities, Australia, 6281.0 | 19/12/2007 | April 2007 |
| | 22/12/2004 | April 2004 |

| Title and catalogue number | Date | Reference period |
|---|------------|--|
| Household Use of Information Technology, Australia, 8146.0 | 18/12/2008 | 2007–08 |
| | 20/12/2007 | 2006–07 |
| | 15/12/2006 | 2005–06 |
| | 15/12/2005 | 2004–05 |
| | 22/09/2004 | 2002 and 2003 |
| | 10/09/2003 | 2001–02 |
| Digital Game Development Services, Australia, 8515.0 | 08/04/2008 | 2006–07 |
| Television, Film and Video Production and Post-Production Services, Australia, 8679.0 | 22/07/2008 | 2006–07 |
| | 28/07/2004 | 2002–03 |
| Gambling Services, Australia, 8684.0 | 20/09/2006 | 2004–05 |
| Clubs, Pubs, Taverns and Bars, Australia, 8687.0 | 25/06/2002 | 2000–01 |
| Selected Amusement and Leisure Industries, Australia, 8688.0 | 30/04/2002 | 2000–01 |
| Performing Arts, Australia, 8697.0 | 28/05/2008 | 2006–07 |
| | 03/09/2004 | 2002–03 |
| Towards Comparable Statistics for Cultural and Heritage Organisations, 4916.0 | 17/11/2008 | |
| Information Paper: Arts and Cultural Heritage—An Information Development Plan, 4915.0. | 14/03/2008 | 2008 |
| Discussion Paper: Arts and Cultural Heritage in Australia—Key Issues for an Information Development Plan, 4915.0 | 14/03/2006 | |
| State Reports—a compendium of key data for each State and Territory. Each jurisdiction determines how to release the information but most provide it more widely by storing it on their websites. | | The NCCRS provides these (at least annually) |

State / territory publications

Individual states and territories released local publications based on the outputs of the above developed and prepared by the local SAG / SWG representative.

Victoria commissioned and published the first comprehensive statistical picture of the industry in that State in 1994 with the 148 page: *The Arts Industry in Victoria: a statistical overview*. A revised edition was published in 1998. Victoria also produced *Arts Count*, a quarterly brochure each focussing on a sector or ABS publication, from 1996 to 2004.

Tasmania also produced a series of *Statistical Bulletins* in the mid 1990s focusing on topics such as employment, attendances and cultural tourism.

NSW took the lead from Victoria and Tasmania and regularly published online cultural snapshots commissioned from the ABS of available cultural data at the NSW and national levels.

Appendix 2: convenors/chairs

Convenors and Chairs of the Statistics Working Group

| Chair | Meeting presided over |
|---|---|
| Dr. Don MacRae Assistant Secretary, Research and Information Branch, Department of Arts, Heritage and Environment | 1st meeting 24 July 1986 2nd meeting 5 March 1987 3rd meeting 2–3 September 1987 [1] 4th meeting 27 November 1987 5th meeting 7–8 March 1988 [1] |
| Mr Graeme Wilcox Department of the Arts, Sport, the Environment, Tourism and Territories | 6th meeting 11–12 August 1988 7th meeting 16–17 March 1989 [1] |
| Dr Kay Daniels Assistant Secretary, Arts Branch, Department of the Arts, Sport, the Environment, Tourism and Territories | 8th meeting 3–4 October 1989 9th meeting 13–14 March 1990 10th meeting 6–7 August 1990 |
| Ron Brent Assistant Secretary, Film Branch Department of the Arts, Sport, the Environment and Territories | 11th meeting 11–12 February 1991 12th meeting 15–17 July 1991 13th meeting 28–29 November 1991 Mr Brent was an apology for this meeting, and it was chaired by Reye Wright, Chief Projects Officer, Development Programs, Department for the Arts and Cultural Heritage |
| Michael Coley Director, Film Programs Department of the Arts, Sport, the Environment and Territories | 14th meeting 23–24 March 1992 15th meeting 7–8 December 1992 |
| Les Neilson Assistant Secretary, Film Branch Department of the Arts, Sport, the Environment and Territories | 16th meeting 4–5 March 1993 17th meeting 5 October 1993 18th meeting 17–18 February 1994 Mr Neilson was an apology for this meeting, and it was chaired by Michael Coley, Director, Film Support and Broadcasting, Australian Cultural Development Office) 19th meeting 28–29 September 1994 Mr Neilson was an apology for this meeting, and it was chaired by Michael Coley, Director, Film Support and Broadcasting, Australian Cultural Development Office) 20th meeting 9–10 March 1995 [1] |
| James Barr Chief Executive Officer, Department for the Arts and Cultural Development | 21st meeting 21–22 September 1995 |
| Winnie Pelz Chief Executive Officer, Department for the Arts and Cultural Development, SA | 22nd meeting 14–15 March 1996 23rd meeting 17–18 October 1996 |

| Chair | Meeting presided over |
|---|---|
| Tim O'Loughlin Executive Director, Arts SA | 24th meeting 3 April 1997 25th meeting 25 September 1997 26th meeting 5 March 1998 27th meeting 10 September 1998. Mr O'Loughlin was an apology for this meeting, and it was chaired by Peter Young, Acting Assistant Secretary, Arts Branch, Department of Communications and the Arts 28th meeting 25 March 1999 29th meeting 23 September 1999 Mr O'Loughlin was an apology for this meeting, and it was chaired by Les Neilson, General Manager, Arts, Department of Communications Information Technology and the Arts (DOCITA) |
| Les Neilson General Manager, Arts Branch, Department of Communications Information Technology and the Arts | 30th meeting 10 November 2000 |
| Alastair Bryant Director General, Western Australian Ministry for Culture and the Arts | 31st meeting 08 June 2001 32nd meeting 22 February 2002 33rd meeting 1 November 2002 34th meeting 12 February 2003 35th meeting 22 August 2003 36th meeting 12 December 2003 37th meeting 11 June 2004 38th meeting October 2004 (teleconference) [1] 39th meeting 22 April 2005 40th meeting 18 October 2005 41st meeting 13 October 2006 |
| Leigh Tabrett, PSM Deputy Director-General, Arts Queensland | 42nd meeting 23 March 2007 43rd meeting 2 August 2007 44th meeting 8 February 2008 45th meeting 22 August 2008 46th meeting 26 February 2009 [1] 47th meeting 20 August 2009 48th meeting 6 May 2010 49th meeting 10 June 2011 |
| Katherine Hough Director, Arts Tasmania | 50th meeting 23 March 2012 |
| Allanah Lucas Director General, Department of Culture and the Arts, Western Australia | 51st meeting 12 November 2012 (teleconference) 52nd meeting 25 February 2012 |
| David Ansell A/Deputy Director General, Department of Culture and the Arts, Western Australia | 53rd meeting 18 October 2013 54th meeting 11 April 2014 55th Meeting 15 September 2014 56th Meeting 6 November 2015 |
| Rachel Antone Assistant Secretary, Access and Participation Branch, Ministry for the Arts | 57th Meeting 21 February 2017 |

Note: [1] The working group was unable to source minutes from these meetings. Accordingly Chairs, and the dates of the meetings, are not confirmed.

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Hamilton, Jane, 1999 'Role and Function of the Cultural Ministers Council'.

Haydon Barry, 2009, 'Review of the Cultural Ministers Council (CMC) Statistics Working Group (SWG)'. Meeting of Cultural Ministers, www.arts.gov.au/mcm, accessed 17/11/15.

Tabrett, Leigh, 2009, 'Cultural Ministers Council Statistics Working Group Protocol and Advice for Members'.

The Statistics Working Group manages a national program of cultural data collection, research and analysis on behalf of the Meeting of Cultural Ministers.

The Statistics Working Group aims to improve policy and decision—making in cultural industries and government by enhancing the quality, range and availability of relevant cultural statistics.

Visit www.arts.gov.au/mcm/cultural-data-online for more information about the Meeting of Cultural Ministers Statistics Working Group.