

Census Regulations 1994 No. 309

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

Statutory Rules 1994 No. 309

Issued by the authority of the Assistant Treasurer

Census and Statistics Act 1905

Census Regulations

Subsection 8(1) of the Census and Statistics Act 1905 (the Act) provides that:

"The Census shall be taken in the year 1981 and in every fifth year thereafter..."

Section 27 of the Act provides that:

"The Governor-General may make regulations, not inconsistent with this Act, prescribing all matters and things which, by this Act, are required or permitted to be prescribed, or which are necessary or convenient to be prescribed for carrying out or giving effect to this Act..."

Section 2 of the Act provides that:

"This Act, other than Part III, extends to such external Territories as are prescribed."

Subsection 8(3) of the Act provides that:

"For the purposes of the taking of the Census, the Statistician shall collect statistical information in relation to the matters prescribed for the purposes of this section."

A census is to be conducted in 1996 and accordingly the external Territories to be included in the Census and the matters in relation to which statistical information will be collected have been prescribed.

The Regulations allow the development of the Census processing systems and procedures and printing of the Census form to proceed.

Details of the Regulations are:

Regulation 1 provides a citation for the Regulations.

Regulation 2 defines certain terms for the Regulations.

Regulation 3 describes for the purpose of section 2 of the Act the external Territories to be included in the Census. In the 1991 Census, the external Territories of Christmas Island and Cocos (Keeling) Islands were included and the same Territories will be included in the 1996 Census.

Regulation 4 describes for the purpose of Section 8 of the Act the matters on which statistical information is to be collected in the Census. Final wording of questions and definitions and the sequencing of questions will be decided once testing of questions and procedures for the Census

has been completed. However, in recognition of the need for the public to be as fully informed as possible on the Census, details of the topics and associated questions to be included in Census forms have been made available in an Australian Bureau of Statistics information paper entitled "1996 Census of Population and Housing: Nature and Content (Catalogue No. 2008.0)" tabled in Parliament at the same time as the Regulations.

Three new topics have been included in the 1996 Census compared to the 1991 Census. These are: Number of children ever born (applicable to females aged 15 or more years of age); Address of usual residence 1 year ago (replacing a question on State of usual residence); and Location of dwelling (information to be provided by the Collector).

Regulation 5 repeals the previous Statutory Rules relating to Censuses.

Cabinet has agreed to the inclusion of questions in the 1996 Census in relation to the matters prescribed and to the inclusion of the external Territories of Christmas Island and Cocos (Keeling) Islands.