National Indigenous Reform Agreement: PI 01-Estimated life expectancy at birth, 2015-16; Quality Statement

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Identifying and definitional attributes

Metadata item type: Data Quality Statement

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Registration status: Indigenous, Superseded 07/02/2018

Data quality

Institutional environment: For information on the institutional environment of the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), including the legislative obligations of the ABS, financing and governance arrangements, and mechanisms for scrutiny of ABS operations, see ABS Institutional Environment.

Death statistics are sourced from death registrations systems administered by the various State and Territory Registrars of Births, Deaths and Marriages. It is a legal requirement of each State and Territory that all deaths are registered. Information about the deceased is supplied by a relative or other person acquainted with the deceased, or by an official of the institution where the death occurred. As part of the registration process, information on the cause of death is either supplied by the medical practitioner certifying the death on a Medical Certificate of Cause of Death, or supplied as a result of a coronial investigation.

Timeliness: Life expectancy for Indigenous Australians is calculated for a 3-year period and reported every 5 years, with 2010–2012 estimates released in November 2013 in *Life Tables for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, 2010-2012* (ABS 2013).

An improvement has been made to the method of calculating Indigenous life tables at the Australia level for the period 2010-2012. The method now takes age-specific identification rates into account when calculating the under-identification adjustment.

This method could not be used for state and territory life tables due to insufficient sample from the Post Enumeration Survey (PES) to accurately calculate age-specific identification rates. The estimates for New South Wales, Queensland, Western Australia and the Northern Territory were therefore calculated without an age-specific adjustment, and followed the same methodology that was used for the 2005-2007 life tables. Due to the different methodologies, life expectancy estimates for these states and the Northern Territory are not comparable with the headline estimates for Australia, which used an age-specific adjustment. Comparable, non age-adjusted Australia level life tables are provided to enable national and state and territory comparisons.

This release also includes Indigenous life tables by remoteness areas for the first time, also without age-specific adjustments.

Comparable 2005-2007 life expectancy estimates, which specifically factor in the statistical impact of this methodological refinement and the improved collection of Indigenous status in the PES, were also released in *Life Tables for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians,* 2010-2012 (ABS 2013).

Accessibility: Indigenous life expectancy estimates are also published on the ABS website (ABS 2013).

Interpretability: The Explanatory Notes and Glossary provide information on the data sources, terminology, classifications and other technical aspects associated with these statistics.

Relevance:

Life tables based on assumed improvements in mortality are produced by the ABS using assumptions on future life expectancy at birth, based on recent trends in life expectancy. These life tables are not published by the ABS, they are used as inputs into ABS population projections.

Life tables for Indigenous Australians from which life expectancy at birth estimates were sourced were produced to enable the compilation of ABS estimates and projections of the Indigenous population of Australia for the period 2001 to 2026.

Estimates of life expectancy at birth for Indigenous Australians are commonly used as a measure for assessing Indigenous population health and disadvantage.

Accuracy:

Compilation of life tables requires complete and accurate data on deaths that occur in a period, and reliable estimates of the population exposed to the risk of dying during that period. These data are required by age and sex so as to calculate age-sex specific death rates.

In the case of life tables for the Indigenous population, registrations of Indigenous deaths and Indigenous population estimates present particular methodological challenges. For example, there are a number of factors which may contribute to under-identification of Indigenous deaths in death registrations records. In addition, there are quality issues associated with Indigenous population estimates, such as undercount of the Indigenous population in the Census, and non-response to the Indigenous status question on the Census form. Due to the inherent uncertainties in these data, care should be exercised when interpreting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander life expectancy estimates.

Coherence:

Due to the improvements made to the method of compiling the 2010-2012 Indigenous life tables at the National level, a comparable set of 2005-2007 life tables was released by the *ABS in Life Tables for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, 2010-2012* (ABS 2013).

Source and reference attributes

Submitting organisation: Australian Bureau of Statistics

Reference documents: ABS (Australian Bureau of Statistics) 2013. Life Tables for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, 2010-2012. ABS Cat. no. 3302.0.55.003. Canberra: ABS.

Relational attributes

Related metadata references:

Supersedes National Indigenous Reform Agreement: P01-Estimated life expectancy at birth, 2010 QS
Community Services (retired), Superseded 04/04/2011

Has been superseded by National Indigenous Reform Agreement: PI 01-Estimated life expectancy at birth, 2018; Quality Statement
Indigenous, Superseded 07/02/2019

See also National Indigenous Reform Agreement: PI 07-Proportion of babies born of low birthweight, 2015-16; Quality Statement
Indigenous, Superseded 07/02/2018

Indicators linked to this Data Quality statement:

National Indigenous Reform Agreement: PI 01—Estimated life expectancy at birth, 2017
Indigenous, Superseded 06/06/2017