



29 June 2018

Census Topic Review
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Brisbane QLD 4001
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Ask for: Kathleen McClusky
Phone: 9932 1004
Our Ref: A2894378

Dear Sir/Madam,

Census 2021 – Review of Census Topics

Hobsons Bay City Council welcomes the opportunity to provide input on the construction and content of the Census 2021. Council uses the Census and other Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) information as core components for municipal planning.

Please find attached a submission on the Review of 2021 Census Topics. We look forward to the finalised questions and continuing to work with the ABS to understand and plan for our changing community needs.

If you have any questions regarding this submission please contact Kathleen McClusky, Manager Strategy and Advocacy on 9932 1004 or email kmccclusky@hobsonsabay.vic.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

Aaron van Egmond
Chief Executive Officer



Review of the Census 2021 Topics

The City of Hobsons Bay covers an area of 64 square kilometres, extending seven to 20 kilometres south-west of Melbourne's central business district.

It is home to approximately 95,000 residents. Of this population, 23 per cent come from countries where English is not their first language and 5.6 per cent require assistance with core activities. The municipality has continued to see growth in the 50 to 69 years age group as well as experiencing significant changes within dwelling structures via increased medium density.

The Census is a key tool to ensure Council can continue to plan for the changes within the municipality. The following section articulates key areas that should be considered in the development of the Census 2021.

Data protection – The difficulties experienced in 2016 in online responses to the Census and concerns raised at that time over possible illegal accessing of Census response data are recognised. The continued strong protection of data privacy so that the Census remains a vital and valid resource for planning at all levels in the community is supported. This should remain a key priority for the ABS.

Use of Internet to Complete Census – Household connection to the internet within Hobsons Bay is 78 per cent. Whilst the internet is the principal means of accessing and completing the Census, continued attention should be given to those people who either cannot or do not use the internet to lodge their responses. This can include people who have difficulty accessing an internet connection, have limited internet skills, people who have difficulty with the English language and some people who have a disability. Alternatives to the use of the internet need to be maintained to ensure access for all.

SEXP – Gender Question – It is noted that the ABS attempted to reform the gender question for Census 2016 but difficulties were experienced during implementation, preventing change. It is considered that the gender question needs to be a priority for reform in the Census 2021 so that all forms of gender can be included. This should be a seamless integration within the Census. There is very limited data on gender diversity therefore having such inclusion in the Census will not only fill this gap and provide high quality data but it will also allow for better planning and provide the recognition of the diversity within communities.



ASSNP – Presence of Disability Question – People with a disability represent over 18 per cent of the community, however this figure is only understood at the National level and extrapolated to state and municipal levels. Currently there is only one question within the Census that asks whether the need for assistance is present. This misses many of our population that may not need assistance with daily tasks however still require access to services and accessible infrastructure within the community.

It is suggested that the Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia Survey (4430) that is implemented every three years via the ABS be reviewed with the consideration of some of the questions such as; degree of limitation, extent to which assistance is met and associated long term health conditions, be included in the Census to provide higher quality data and understanding at municipal levels.