Business Names Dataset

HELP FILE

ASIC Business Names Dataset – Help File

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Getting Started

1. Purpose

This document is to provide detailed context and understanding of the Business Names Dataset files uploaded to Data.gov.au by ASIC every Wednesday.

2. Business Name Register

The ASIC Business Names register file as it appears on data.gov.au is a dataset from ASIC's Business Names register. This dataset does not contain all the information captured on ASIC's register but is a snapshot of Business Names data from a point in time.

The Business Names Dataset contains the following:
- Select fields that are publicly available (see data dictionary for field details);
- All currently registered Business Names that are able to be uploaded to data.gov.au; and
- Deregistered Business Names for the 12 months.

2.1.   File Format

The Business Names Dataset is provided in a file with the extension of csv (comma separated values) and ZIP that contains the CSV file inside.

Important note: The data contained within the Business Names Dataset csv is **not** separated by commas.

The Business Names Dataset csv uses the 'TAB' character as the delimiter (value separator) between values in the dataset; the 'TAB' character is used in place of a comma separator because business names can contain commas in their name and therefore is not a suitable delimiter for this dataset.

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An example of the data in the Business Names Dataset csv is as follows

REGISTER_NAME	BN_NAME	BN_STATUS	BN_REG_DT	BN_CANCEL_DT			
	BN_STATE_NUM	BN_STATE_OF_REG	BN_ABN				
BUSINESS NAMES	MINET TRAN CLOTHING	Registered	02/07/2007				B1698852E
	VIC						

2.2. File interaction

The Business Names Dataset contains over 2.7 million records. Because of the number of records contained in the file, common programs used to view data from CSV's (MS Excel, notepad, etc.) will not work.

Example: Most versions of MS Excel limits the number of rows to approximately 1 million, which means that if that dataset is viewed in Excel, less than half of the actual number of records will be available.

It is recommended users interact with the dataset on data.gov.au via one of the following methods:

Important note: ZIP file extensions cannot be access via an API. XLSX file extensions is no longer supported by CKAN as of December 2021 and any information extracted using this method may not return up to date data. For more information, see the CKAN website.

- Dataset Preview on data.gov.au;
- Access resource data via a web API with powerful query support (Web API information can be found in the main CKAN Data API and DataStore documentation); or
- Import csv into an appropriate database (MS Access, Oracle, etc).

A step-by-step data import guide to importing Business Names data into MS Access can be found in the appendix of this help file. (APPENDIX ITEM 1)

2.3. Dataset Fields

The Business Names dataset contains the following fields:

- REGISTER_NAME
- BN_NAME
- BN_STATUS
- BN_REG_DT

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- BN_CANCEL_DT
- BN_STATE_NUM (where applicable)
- BN_STATE_OF_REG
- BN_ABN

A comprehensive description of each field in the dataset is provided in the attached data dictionary (APPENDIX ITEM 2).

3. ASIC Connect Search

An alternative to searching the data contained in the Business Names Register extract is to use ASIC Connect.

We have two services currently available through ASIC Connect:

- Search company and other registers
- Search business names registers

You can view publicly available information and purchase extracts on entities such as companies, business name, banned & disqualified or check name availability.

4. Contact

Any further enquiries can be directed to ASIC via email at Access.Request@asic.gov.au
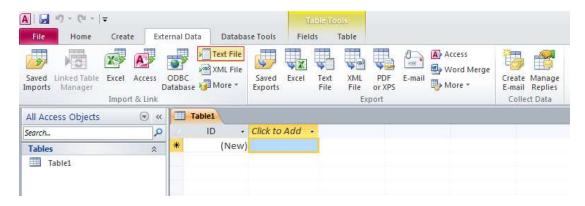
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Appendices

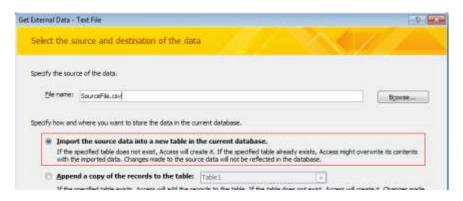## Business Names Register - MS Access Import Guide

Use the following steps to import csv data into a new MS Access database; similar steps can be used to update an existing database:

Steps are provided using MS Access 2010

1. Download CSV dataset file;
2. Create blank database in MS Access;
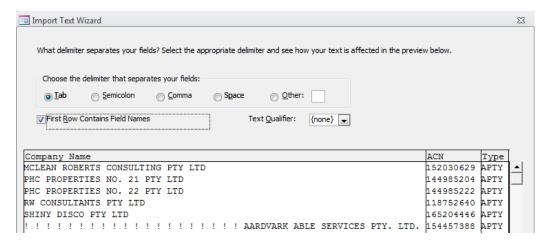3. Select 'Text File' from the Import & Link section of the External Data tab;

4. Browse to the CSV dataset file and choose to import into a new table and select 'Next';

5. Select Delimited format and select 'Next';

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6. Choose the 'Tab' delimiter for your fields, and check the box indicating the first row contains Field Names. Select 'Next';

7. Select Next to accept field names as is;
8. Decide on a primary key option (this decision may change depending on use), select 'Next';
9. Give the table a name and select 'Finish'.

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Business Names Register – Data Dictionary

Field	Description	Data Type	Max Length	Data Parameters
REGISTER_NAME	Name of the Register	Text	200	Register name as appears on ASICs register
BN_NAME	A name used, or to be used, in relation to one or more businesses. Business Name as it appears on ASIC's Business Names register	Text	200	As appears on the ASICs register **Allowable characters**: A-Z 0-9 . ! ( ) : ; ? ' , - & " = $ % # \ | / _ { } [ ] * @ space
BN_STATUS	Registration Status for the Business Name	Text	12	Values for this field are limited to the following: **Registered**: An organisation that is currently registered by ASIC or another government organisation and is listed on ASIC's registers **Cancelled**: A Business Name that has been cancelled by ASIC (whether voluntarily by its holder, or initiated by ASIC). It ceases to exist as a registered business name. **Allowable characters**: letters A to Z

BN_REG_DT	The date by which the Business Name started	Date/Time	10	All Business Names should have a Date of Registration
BN_CANCEL_DT	The date by which the Business Name ceased	Date/Time	10	**Logic:** **IF** Business Name has been cancelled **THEN** show 'Date of Cancellation' **ELSE** show NULL **Date format**: DD/MM/YYYY
BN_STATE_NUM	An identifying number allocated to a business name registered by a previous business names regulator in a particular Australian state or territory of Australia, prior to 28 May 2012	text	10	**Logic:** **IF** Business Name was registered by the previous Business Names regulator **THEN** show 'Former State Number' **ELSE** show NULL
BN_STATE_OF_REG	The state the business name was registered in by the previous business names regulator	text	3	State name in abbreviated notation **Allowable values:** ACT NSW NT QLD SA TAS VIC WA **Logic:** **IF** Business Name was registered by the previous Business Names regulator **THEN** show 'Previous State of Registration' **ELSE** show NULL

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BN_ABN	The Australian Business Number (ABN) is a single identifier for all business dealings with the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) and for dealings with other government departments and agencies and is shown in the Australian Business Register. This number is not issued by ASIC. For further information refer to the Australian Business Register.	text	20	**Logic:** **IF** Business Name has an ABN issued from previous regulator and not recorded with ASIC **THEN** show NULL **OR IF** Business Name has more than 1 (multiple) ABN **ELSE** show 'ABN' **Note**: Suppressed ABN's are shown as NULL

Dataset Change Log

Change	Date	Description
Suppressed ABNs	09/09/2016	Added clarification on suppressed ABN's to data dictionary.
Updated help file	29/04/2022	Updated help file information.
Remove BN_RENEW_DT	14/04/2025	A business decision was made to remove the BN_RENEW_DT from the dataset.
Updated help file	11/07/2025	Updated Search information.