3401.0 - Overseas Arrivals and Departures, Australia, Aug 2014 

Below is the consolidated information released by the ABS in their most recent release of this publication, which can be found at [http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/3101.0](http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs%40.nsf/mf/3101.0)

**CHANGES IN THIS ISSUE**

Overseas arrivals and departures (OAD) data from October 2013 to July 2014 have been **revised** in this month's release. Investigations by the ABS uncovered a quality issue with the input data used for imputation of duration of stay, leading to a higher count of long-term visitor arrivals and a lower count of short-term visitor arrivals. For more detail, and a table showing the specific categories of movement that have changed, see the last section in the Data Quality Issues Appendix under the Explanatory Notes tab of this release (copied below).

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| All associated OAD time series spreadsheets and data files have been revised. The revision has not affected estimates of net overseas migration (NOM), the estimated resident population (ERP) or data used for the Labour Force time series. |

**October 2013 to July 2014, Duration of Stay**

In the August 2014 release, OAD data from October 2013 to July 2014 was revised. Investigations by the ABS uncovered aquality issue with the input data used for imputation of duration of stay, leading toa higher count of long-term visitor arrivals and a lower count of short-term visitor arrivals. For more information about this imputation see the section "Duration of stay - current" in this paper.

The ABS has reprocessed data from October 2013 to July 2014. All associated time series spreadsheets and data files were revised. The specific categories of movement that have changed due to the changes of the duration of stay are shown in the table below.

**A4 Difference between Revised and Original Data - October 2013 to July 2014**

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| **Category of traveller** | **Revised** | **Original** | **Difference** | **% Change** |
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| **October 2013** | http://www.abs.gov.au/icons/ecblank.gif | http://www.abs.gov.au/icons/ecblank.gif | http://www.abs.gov.au/icons/ecblank.gif | http://www.abs.gov.au/icons/ecblank.gif |
| Long-term visitor arrivals | 36 345 | 36 569 | -224 | -0.6 |
| Short-term visitor arrivals | 534 712 | 534 485 | 227 | 0.0 |
| Total movements | 2 748 565 | 2 748 561 | 4 | 0.0 |
| **November 2013** | http://www.abs.gov.au/icons/ecblank.gif | http://www.abs.gov.au/icons/ecblank.gif | http://www.abs.gov.au/icons/ecblank.gif | http://www.abs.gov.au/icons/ecblank.gif |
| Long-term visitor arrivals | 30 104 | 31 558 | -1 454 | -4.6 |
| Short-term visitor arrivals | 575 335 | 573 879 | 1 456 | 0.3 |
| Total movements | 2 586 170 | 2 586 168 | 2 | 0.0 |
| **December 2013** | http://www.abs.gov.au/icons/ecblank.gif | http://www.abs.gov.au/icons/ecblank.gif | http://www.abs.gov.au/icons/ecblank.gif | http://www.abs.gov.au/icons/ecblank.gif |
| Long-term visitor arrivals | 24 776 | 24 943 | -167 | -0.7 |
| Short-term visitor arrivals | 785 193 | 785 031 | 162 | 0.0 |
| Total movements | 3 100 590 | 3 100 596 | -6 | 0.0 |
| **January 2014** | http://www.abs.gov.au/icons/ecblank.gif | http://www.abs.gov.au/icons/ecblank.gif | http://www.abs.gov.au/icons/ecblank.gif | http://www.abs.gov.au/icons/ecblank.gif |
| Long-term visitor arrivals | 62 236 | 65 917 | -3 681 | -5.6 |
| Short-term visitor arrivals | 551 774 | 548 095 | 3 679 | 0.7 |
| Total movements | 3 190 548 | 3 190 550 | -2 | 0.0 |
| **February 2014** | http://www.abs.gov.au/icons/ecblank.gif | http://www.abs.gov.au/icons/ecblank.gif | http://www.abs.gov.au/icons/ecblank.gif | http://www.abs.gov.au/icons/ecblank.gif |
| Long-term visitor arrivals | 68 618 | 72 710 | -4 092 | -5.6 |
| Short-term visitor arrivals | 631 193 | 627 102 | 4 091 | 0.7 |
| Total movements | 2 515 207 | 2 515 208 | -1 | 0.0 |
| **March 2014** | http://www.abs.gov.au/icons/ecblank.gif | http://www.abs.gov.au/icons/ecblank.gif | http://www.abs.gov.au/icons/ecblank.gif | http://www.abs.gov.au/icons/ecblank.gif |
| Long-term visitor arrivals | 36 830 | 36 780 | 50 | 0.1 |
| Short-term visitor arrivals | 595 826 | 595 876 | -50 | 0.0 |
| Total movements | 2 573 396 | 2 573 395 | 1 | 0.0 |
| **April 2014** | http://www.abs.gov.au/icons/ecblank.gif | http://www.abs.gov.au/icons/ecblank.gif | http://www.abs.gov.au/icons/ecblank.gif | http://www.abs.gov.au/icons/ecblank.gif |
| Long-term visitor arrivals | 30 895 | 30 869 | 26 | 0.1 |
| Short-term visitor arrivals | 526 375 | 526 405 | -30 | 0.0 |
| Total movements | 2 737 905 | 2 737 909 | -4 | 0.0 |
| **May 2014** | http://www.abs.gov.au/icons/ecblank.gif | http://www.abs.gov.au/icons/ecblank.gif | http://www.abs.gov.au/icons/ecblank.gif | http://www.abs.gov.au/icons/ecblank.gif |
| Long-term visitor arrivals | 26 884 | 28 835 | -1 951 | -6.8 |
| Short-term visitor arrivals | 470 123 | 468 168 | 1 955 | 0.4 |
| Total movements | 2 451 858 | 2 451 854 | 4 | 0.0 |
| **June 2014** | http://www.abs.gov.au/icons/ecblank.gif | http://www.abs.gov.au/icons/ecblank.gif | http://www.abs.gov.au/icons/ecblank.gif | http://www.abs.gov.au/icons/ecblank.gif |
| Long-term visitor arrivals | 29 464 | 32 102 | -2 638 | -8.2 |
| Short-term visitor arrivals | 455 018 | 452 379 | 2 639 | 0.6 |
| Total movements | 2 595 974 | 2 595 973 | 1 | 0.0 |
| **July 2014** | http://www.abs.gov.au/icons/ecblank.gif | http://www.abs.gov.au/icons/ecblank.gif | http://www.abs.gov.au/icons/ecblank.gif | http://www.abs.gov.au/icons/ecblank.gif |
| Long-term visitor arrivals | 54 179 | 54 068 | 111 | 0.2 |
| Short-term visitor arrivals | 586 771 | 586 885 | -114 | 0.0 |
| Long-term resident departures | 6 682 | 6 678 | 4 | 0.1 |
| Short-term resident departures | 787 401 | 787 405 | -4 | 0.0 |
| Total movements | 2 930 555 | 2 930 557 | -2 | 0.0 |
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**Duration of stay - current**

Data on this variable is from two separate sources depending on whether it is the first leg, or the second leg of a travellers' journey.

* For the first leg of a journey the only source available is the passenger card and is based on a travellers' intended duration of stay. For example, long-term visitor arrival (LTVA), short-term visitor arrival (STVA), long-term resident departure (LTRD), and short-term resident departure (STRD) are all the first leg of a journey and the duration of stay is based on intention. There is no alternate source available for duration of stay from the first leg of a journey.
* For the second leg of a journey the only source available is administrative systems at DIBP which measures the exact date a traveller crosses the Australian border and therefore accurately records a travellers' duration of stay on the second leg of their journey. For example, long-term visitor departures (LTVD), short-term visitor departures (STVD), long-term resident returns (LTRR), and short-term resident returns (STRR) are all the second leg of a journey and the duration of stay is recorded by DIBP. Although duration of stay would be available from the passenger card, it is not coded and is unavailable. There is no alternate source used for duration of stay from the second leg of a journey.

The quality for actual duration of stay recorded at the second leg of a journey is better than that based on a traveller's intended duration of stay from the first leg of the journey. For example, analysis shows that the majority of those with an intention of permanently departing, return to Australia within the following year (which is captured at the second leg of the journey). In the calendar year 2011, of the 84,240 Australian residents who stated they were departing permanently, only 15,890 (19%) spent 12 months or more overseas. Similarly, around 75% of all visitors who stated they intended to stay for one year exactly, actually stayed less than one year. A similar pattern is true for resident departures, although the proportion is lower at around 65%.

There are two separate parts to the imputation for duration of stay. The first part is used if a response is missing. For this imputation, the variables used to align the recipient with a suitable donor are: passenger card box type, intention to live in Australia for next 12 months (for arrivals only), country of birth and country of citizenship.

The second imputation is only used when a traveller has put one year exactly as their intended duration of stay. It will therefore only apply to those who have completed box B or box E on the passenger card. This imputation reflects historical patterns that clearly show the majority stay less than one year. The imputation first involves creating an historical data set based on information from two years earlier. It then calculates the actual recorded duration of stay for those travellers who had originally put one year exactly as their intended duration of stay. For this imputation the variables used to align the recipient with a suitable donor are: corresponding months in the historical data set, those who also stated exactly one year, passenger card box type, and country of citizenship. For the proportions imputed to either a long-term stay and short-term stay, for each passenger card box type for the current months, see Table A3 below.

Generally, imputation required for missing duration of stay is less than 10% of relevant records. All movements are fully imputed for this variable.

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| **A3 DURATION OF STAY — IMPUTATION FOR 1 YEAR EXACTLY - August 2014**  |
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| http://www.abs.gov.au/icons/ecblank.gif | http://www.abs.gov.au/icons/ecblank.gif |  |  |
| **Box type** | no.  | %  |
|  |
| B: Visitor or temporary entrant who stated 1 year exactly  | 25,122  | 100.00  |
| those imputed to long-term visitor arrivals | 6,087  | 24.23  |
| those imputed to short-term visitor arrivals | 19,035  | 75.77  |
|  |  |  |
| E: Australian resident departing temporarily who stated 1 year exactly | 5,968  | 100.00  |
| those imputed to long-term resident departures | 2,621  | 43.92  |
| those imputed to short-term resident departures | 3,347  | 56.08  |
|  |
| http://www.abs.gov.au/icons/ecblank.gif |
| http://www.abs.gov.au/icons/ecblank.gif |

Classification of duration of stay by category of movement is as follows:

* **Permanent arrivals:** Duration of stay not applicable - set to zero.
* **Permanent departures:**
	+ - **Australia-born residents:** Duration of stay not applicable - set to zero.
		- **Overseas-born Australian residents:** Based on actual duration of stay as calculated by TRIPS using the initial permanent arrival date. However, there are some records that cannot be matched with the initial permanent arrival date. Duration of stay for these records is calculated using 1 July 1990, as no earlier data is available for matching. For these cases the migration arrival date is imputed to be 1 July 1990 which is the introduction date of TRIPS. An assumption is therefore being made that the migration of those overseas-born Australian residents was prior to this date.
* **Visitor departures and returning Australian residents - second leg of journey:** Based on actual duration of stay/absence as calculated by TRIPS using the most recent arrival/departure date. However, when the previous movement cannot be found in TRIPS the duration of stay/absence is supplied by DIBP to ABS as missing. These are then imputed by the ABS as noted earlier.
* **Visitor arrivals and Australian residents departing temporarily - first leg of journey:** Based on the intended duration of stay/absence as stated by travellers on the incoming and outgoing passenger cards.

For a complete list of the categories of movement see the *Glossary* under the [Explanatory Notes](http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs%40.nsf/exnote/3401.0/) tab.

There is evidence to suggest that when completing the intended duration of stay question on the incoming passenger card (Box B), some passengers are entering their arrival/departure date or their birth date rather than their intended duration of stay. From September 2003, a rule has been implemented to the data processing system stating that if all three elements are complete (years, months and days), then the intended duration of stay is to be coded to a non-response. Prior to July 2004, the ABS assigned a 'not stated' duration of stay as 10 days and therefore as a short-term movement.

**Duration of stay - historical**

Prior to the rebuild of the OAD system, a simple assumption was in place that set any traveller with a missing duration of stay to 10 days and therefore to a short-term movement. Missing duration of stay using the improved hot deck imputation methodology, as noted in 'Duration of stay - current' section above, has been revised back to July 2004.

Over time, there have been a number of changes to information collected on duration of stay. Initially, the intended duration of stay was only collected from information provided by all travellers on incoming and outgoing passenger cards in the intended length of stay fields. Therefore historically, the first leg and second leg of a journey both collected duration of stay based on intention.

With the introduction of TRIPS by DIBP in July 1990, the new system made possible the calculation of the actual length of stay/absence for travellers on the second leg of their journey (i.e. departing overseas visitors and returning Australian residents). This calculation based on TRIPS data commenced in July 1998. This change resulted in an improvement in data quality for duration of stay. In particular, the distribution of the number of passengers staying for one year exactly declining significantly for this group of travellers.

The introduction of a new passenger card processing system from July 2001 provided further evidence of travellers rounding to one year exactly for their intended duration of stay in Australia or overseas. To reflect the historical movement patterns, the records with a reported duration of one year exactly were allocated to short-term or long-term. For visitors arriving in Australia, 75% of such records were allocated to short-term and 25% to long-term. For residents departing Australia, the distribution was 67% short-term and 33% long-term. With the rebuild of the OAD system, these proportional splits were able to be based on the behaviour of travellers from two years earlier - see Table A3 and the section above 'Duration of stay - current'. Data back to July 2004 has been revised using the new methodology based on these dynamic proportional splits.

Missing response rates for the duration of stay are only available since November 1998. Prior to this, imputation carried out as part of processing by DIBP prevented reliable estimation for missing duration of stay.