

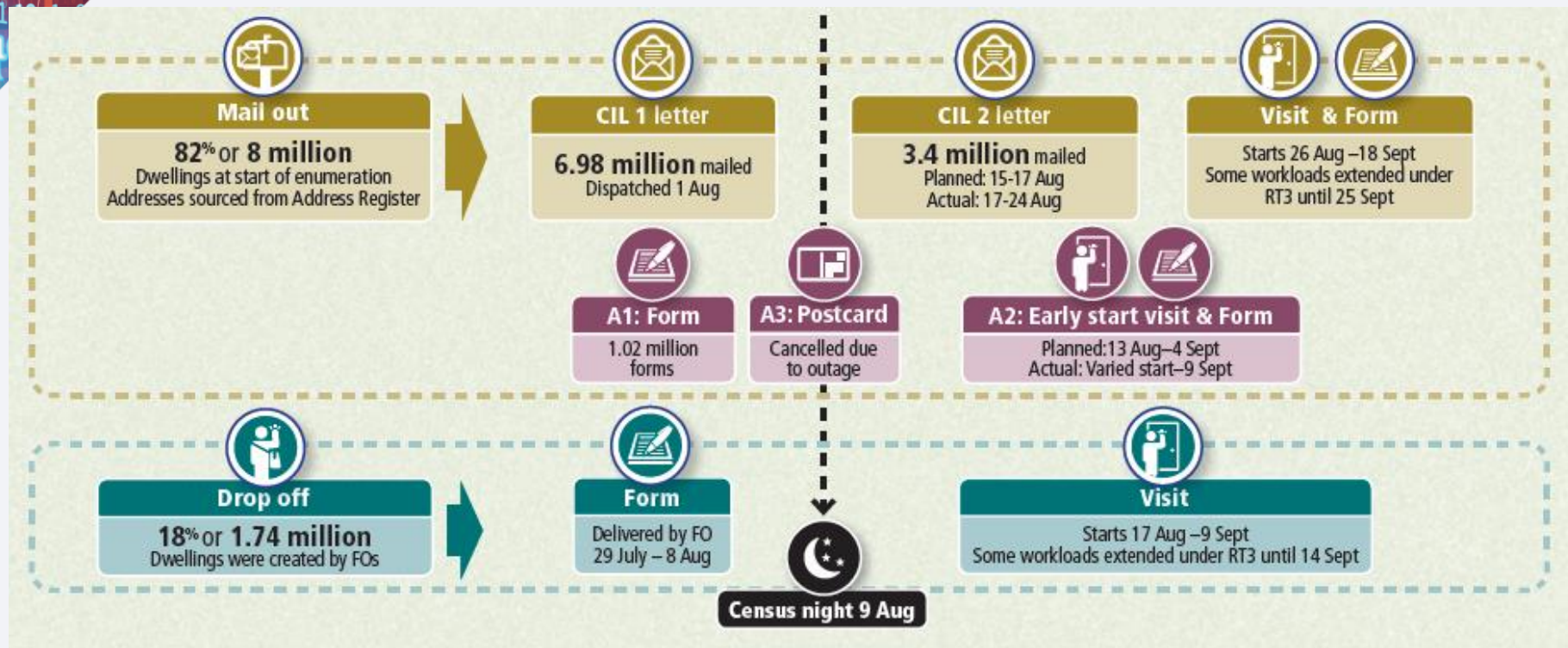
ABS Census experience

Pacific Statistics Method Board, October 2019

Australian Bureau of Statistics
Informing Australia's important decisions



2016 Collection operation

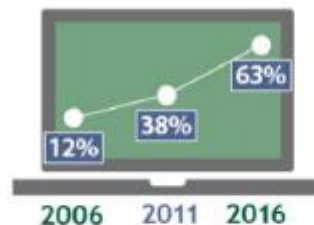


Online reporting

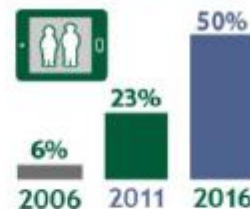
RESPONSE TYPE



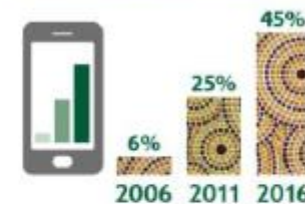
ONLINE RESPONSE RATE



ONLINE RESPONSE RATE FOR 65-69 YEAR OLDS



ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLES



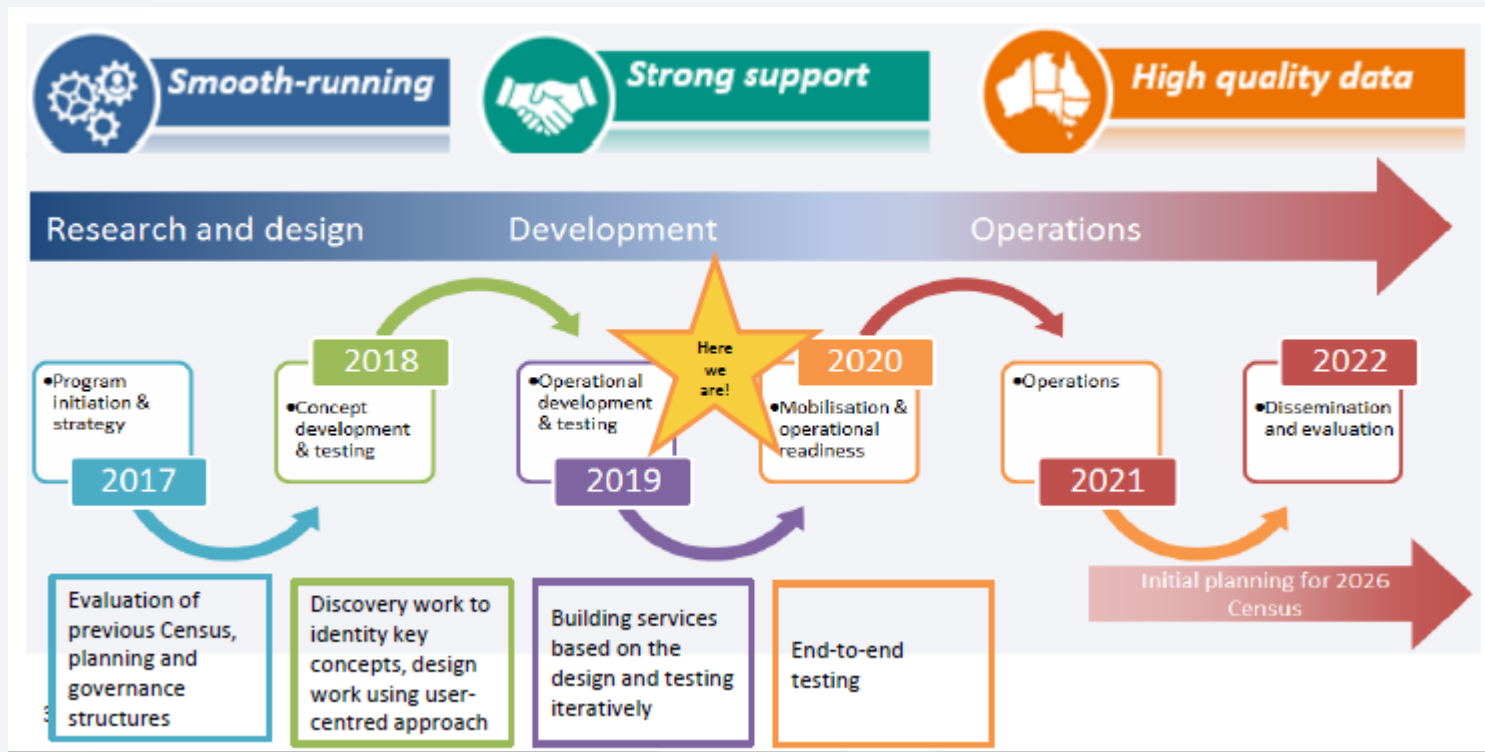
DEVICES USED



The 2016 Census [and in particular the online form] was more successful compared with previous Censuses in getting people to complete more items.

2016 Census Independent Data Quality Assurance Panel

5 year program




#censusfail



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A photograph of two men sitting at a table outdoors at night, playing chess. The man on the left is holding a tablet and pointing at it, while the man on the right looks on. The table is set with chess pieces, glasses of juice, and a small bowl. In the background, there is a large, glowing green circular light fixture with the number '11' inside it. The scene is lit with warm, ambient light from string lights.

AUGUST 9 IS CENSUS NIGHT.

**OUR MOMENT TO
PAUSE AND MAKE
A DIFFERENCE.**

#MyCensus



Census
census.abs.gov.au

OUR MOMENT TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Census: Australian Bureau of Statistics says website attacked by overseas hackers

Updated 10 Aug 2016, 1:53pm

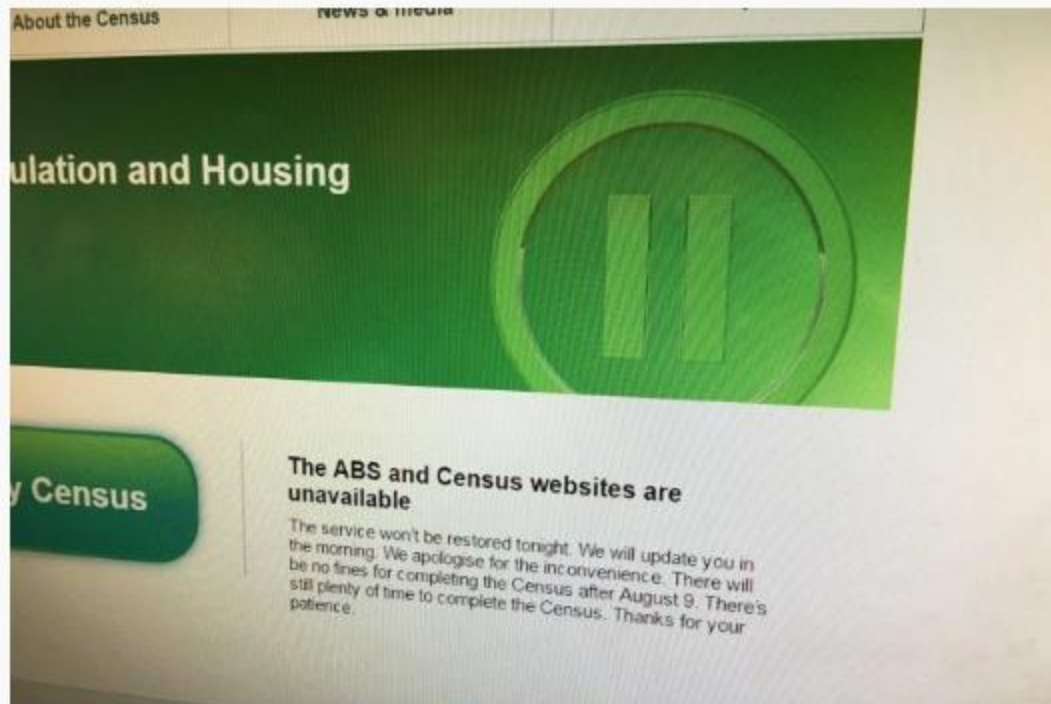


PHOTO: This error message was still showing on the ABS census website this morning

CENSUS 2016



Timeline: How the Government says census night shambles unfolded



The biggest #CensusFail: Communication with the public



How does the census work?



Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull has unloaded on the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) over its handling of the botched census, but says possible sackings will not come until after a full investigation.

The census was now back online on Thursday, almost two days after it was shut down following a denial of service cyber attack.

Mr Turnbull fronted press gallery reporters in Canberra, expressing his unhappiness over events which he said had "inconvenienced millions of Australians" after the ABS shut down the census website on census night in response to what it called a series of [denial of service cyber attacks](#).

The census collection process was paralysed for days, leading the Labor Party to describe it as one of the biggest shambles in the history of the Australian government.

"Which heads roll, where and when, will be determined once the review is complete," Mr Turnbull said.

"I made it very, very clear that what we needed to do was be absolutely straight and frank with the Australian people.

"This has been a failure of the ABS."

RELATED STORY: [Deputy PM nominates census minister for ice bucketing](#)

RELATED STORY: ['Scrap the 2016 census', former NSW deputy privacy commissioner says](#)

RELATED STORY: [Chinese hackers 'may have attacked census over Olympics drugs spat'](#)

RELATED STORY: [Was the minister responsible for the census hacked?](#)

Key points:

- The site has gone back online, more than two days after it was disabled
 - "This has been a failure of the ABS," the PM says
 - Turnbull's special cyber security advisor says more attacks expected
-

Key lessons learnt from 2016

- ▶ “You can’t outsource risk”
- ▶ The importance of social licence and public support
- ▶ Privacy concerns can be very damaging
- ▶ Contingencies need to be in place
- ▶ Don’t over-emphasise Census night
- ▶ 2021 objectives:
 - Smooth running
 - Strong support
 - High quality data



Questions?