

## **METHODOLOGY DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP WITH AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS**

The pressing need to establish a program of research into new and innovative methods of collecting, analysing and exploiting statistical information has led to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) partnering with the University of Wollongong (UOW) to establish a Chair in Statistical Methodology.

Professor Ray Chambers commenced in this position in May 2006, following a distinguished career as Director of the Southampton Statistical Sciences Institute at the University of Southampton in the UK.

The Australian Statistician, Mr. Dennis Trewin, said the agreement would forge stronger links between the ABS and the university sector and ensure that statistical methodology skills are available more widely around the nation. "Statistical methodology is an area of critical importance to the ABS and other providers of statistics. It requires specialist training to ensure quality statistics are produced for Australia. It is increasingly important in the information age and there is need for more people with these skills," he said.

Recent activities as part of this partnership include:

- A series of one-day Fellows Research Meetings ([insert link here](#)) held at Goulburn has been established. "Goulburn 4" was held in July 2007, and Goulburn 5 is planned for November 2007. These meetings are hosted by UoW, and include a range of researchers and statisticians from UoW, the ABS, the Australian Bureau of Research Economics and other government departments and universities.
- UoW has conducted annual symposiums at the ABS since 2005.
- UoW has presented a number of short courses at the ABS including Survey Estimation, Principles and Practices of Methodological Research and Logistic Regression.
- ABS managers and statisticians have visited UoW for a number of visits, to discuss research plans, statistical issues at the ABS and to plan joint activities.
- A mentoring scheme has been established where UoW academic statisticians provide technical leadership and mentoring for selected ABS staff.

An ARC Linkage project on "Handling Missing Data in Complex Household Surveys" commenced in July 2007, with industry partner the ABS. An ARC Linkage project on "New Methods for Small Group Analysis" was approved in 2007 and will commence shortly. The industry partners for this project are the ABS, the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics, and the Centre for Epidemiology and Research, Public Health Intelligence in NZ Ministry of Health.

For further information, contact [Professor Ray Chambers](#).