



Canberra Office  
ABS House  
45 Benjamin Way  
Belconnen ACT 2617  
Phone 1300 135 070

Locked Bag 10  
Belconnen ACT 2616  
[www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au)  
ABN 26 331 428 522



FOI Ref: 201718/01

Email: [foi+request-3769-2b0ae8e3@righttoknow.org.au](mailto:foi+request-3769-2b0ae8e3@righttoknow.org.au)

Dear Mr Diamond

### RE: YOUR FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST

I refer to your email of 6 August 2017 ([Attachment A](#)) in which you sought access to the following information under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (FOI Act):

- *'any document that details the instructions given to interviewers, including the words to be used by interviewers (i) in seeking information, for the purposes of enumeration, about household residents, (ii) in explaining the voluntary nature of the survey, and (iii) in ensuring that the interview was conducted in private with the interviewee, without the knowledge of other household residents;*
- *any documents that indicate how many times interviewers attempted to contact a person in the household for (i) the initial purpose of enumeration, and (ii) to interview the randomly selected potential interviewee.'*

### Response to Your Request

The ABS has conducted an exhaustive search for documents relating to your request. I am now able to notify you that 12 documents exist pertaining to your request. I have decided to give you access to all 12 documents in part. The documents being released to you are at [Attachment B](#).

### Reasons for Decision

I am an authorised decision maker under section 23 of the FOI Act. I have taken the following into account in making my decision:

- your email of 6 August 2017;
- the relevant provisions of the FOI Act, specifically sections 22, 47E and 47F;
- the content of the documents that fall in scope of your request;
- the guidelines issued by the Australian Information Commissioner under section 93A of the FOI Act; and
- the views of the document authors and the relevant facts considered.

### Section 22 – irrelevant or out-of-scope content

I have decided that three of the documents contain administrative details and other information that is irrelevant to your request under section 22 of the FOI Act. I have therefore removed the irrelevant information from the documents provided at [Attachment B](#).

### Section 47E – certain operations of the Agency

I have decided that 10 of the documents contain information which is conditionally exempt under section 47E of the FOI Act. Section 47E(d) of the FOI Act provides that a document is conditionally exempt if its disclosure would, or could reasonably be expected to, have a substantial adverse effect on the operations of the agency.

Disclosure of survey collection methods and techniques would be likely to prejudice the way in which statistical information is collected through surveys conducted under the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*. Collection methodology

underpins the way in which the ABS conducts its surveys, and disclosure of certain aspects of this information would fundamentally affect the ABS's ability to produce high quality, trusted statistics.

Given the sensitive nature of the Personal Safety Survey, specialised collection methodologies and techniques are essential to ensure the quality of the data collected. Disclosure of these methodologies would fundamentally affect the personal safety survey in the future. On this basis, I am satisfied that disclosure of this content would have a substantial adverse effect on the collection methodologies and survey outcomes for the agency. I have therefore removed the conditionally exempt content from the documents provided at [Attachment B](#).

### **Section 47F – personal privacy**

I have decided that two documents contain information which is conditionally exempt under section 47F of the FOI Act. Section 47F provides that a document is conditionally exempt from disclosure if disclosure would involve the unreasonable disclosure of personal information about a person. This exemption is designed to prevent the unreasonable invasion of parties privacy with the test for 'unreasonableness' balancing the public interest in disclosure of information held by government and the private interest of the individuals.

In determining whether the disclosure would involve an unreasonable disclosure of personal information, I have considered the following matters set out in section 47F(2):

- the extent to which the information is well-known;
- whether the person to whom the information relates is known to be or to have been associated with the matters dealt with in the document;
- the availability of the information from publicly accessible sources; and
- any other information that the agency considers is relevant.

The two documents contain personal information, specifically names of staff who are not known to be, or have been associated with the matters dealt within the documents. The staff members are non-SES employees, and as such, their names have been redacted as they are not publically available or well known. On this basis, I am satisfied that disclosure of this content would involve an unreasonable disclosure of personal information. I have therefore removed the conditionally exempt content from the documents provided at [Attachment B](#).

### **Public Interest Factors**

Section 11A(5) of the FOI Act provides that an agency must give access to a document if it is conditionally exempt unless access would, on balance be contrary to the public interest. As sections 47E and 47F are conditional exemptions I have considered the following public interest factors in making my decision.

#### **Factors in favour of disclosure**

- disclosure would promote the objectives of the FOI Act;
- disclosure would inform public debate on matters of public importance; and
- disclosure would promote effective oversight of public expenditure relating to a statistical collection made under the *Census and Statistics Act 2905*.

#### **Factors against disclosure**

- disclosure of these documents would have a substantial adverse effect on the survey methodology used by the ABS as set out in my consideration of section 47E; and
- disclosure of these documents would involve the unreasonable disclosure of personal information about non-SES employees as set out in my consideration of section 47F.

In consideration of these issues I am satisfied that the public interest factors against disclosure outweigh the factors in favour. On this basis I have decided that it would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest to disclose the conditionally exempt material.

### **Charges**

There is no charge for this request.

### Internal Review of the Decision

Section 54 of the FOI Act gives you the right to apply for an internal review of the decision by the ABS. Additionally you may request a review of this decision by the Information Commissioner. Details of both procedures involved in an application to review a decision are set out at Attachment C.

If you have any queries on this matter please contact the ABS FOI Contact Officer at [freedomofinformation@abs.gov.au](mailto:freedomofinformation@abs.gov.au) or on (02) 6252 7203.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kerry Markoulli', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Kerry Markoulli

Program Manager

Risk, Planning & Policy Branch

Australian Bureau of Statistics

5 September 2017



## Basics

"Mark R. Diamond" 06/08/2017 07:05 PM  
 <foi+request-3769-2b0ae8e3@righttoknow.org.au>

<b>Send</b>	<b>To</b> FOI requests at ABS <freedomofinformation@abs.gov.au>, <b>cc</b> <b>bcc</b>
<b>Subject</b>	Freedom of Information request - Conduct of the Personal Safety Survey, 2012 📎
<b>Protective Mark</b>	
<b>Categories</b>	Freedom of Information\Requests\Valid\2017/18

Dear Australian Bureau of Statistics,

Prompted by having learnt of the very poor sampling approach used by the Australian Human Rights Commission in their conduct of the survey which resulted in their report "Change the course", I am interested in obtaining further information about the conduct of the (unsurprisingly better!) "Personal Safety Survey" run by the ABS (4906.0 - Personal Safety, Australia, 2012) .

I seek any documents that add to the explanatory notes at;  
<http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/4906.0Explanatory+Notes12012>  
 In particular, I seek any document that details the instructions given to interviewers, including the words to be used by interviewers (i) in seeking information, for the purposes of enumeration, about household residents, (ii) in explaining the voluntary nature of the survey, and (iii) in ensuring that the interview was conducted in private with the interviewee, without the knowledge of other household residents. The documents would be of great benefit as educational/instructional material for anyone wanting to conduct a similarly sensitive survey in the future.

Additionally, if there are any documents that indicate how many times interviewers attempted to contact a person in the household for (i) the initial purpose of enumeration, and (ii) to interview the randomly selected potential interviewee, those documents would also be very helpful.

I'd be grateful if you would treat this as a request for administrative access. If it turns out that there are particular documents you cannot release except under FOI, please let me know. Then I can consider whether to ask you to treat this as a request under the Act.

Yours faithfully,

Mark R. Diamond

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 Please use this email address for all replies to this request:  
 foi+request-3769-2b0ae8e3@righttoknow.org.au

Is freedomofinformation@abs.gov.au the wrong address for Freedom of Information requests to Australian Bureau of Statistics? If so, please contact us using this form:  
[https://www.righttoknow.org.au/change\\_request/new?body=abs](https://www.righttoknow.org.au/change_request/new?body=abs)

This request has been made by an individual using Right to Know. This message and any reply that you make will be published on the internet. More information on how Right to Know works can be found at:  
<https://www.righttoknow.org.au/help/officers>

If you find this service useful as an FOI officer, please ask your web manager to link to us from your organisation's FOI page.

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**INFORMATION ON RIGHTS OF REVIEW**

**1. APPLICATION FOR INTERNAL REVIEW OF DECISION**

If you disagree with our decision you have the right to apply for an internal review under section 54 of the FOI Act.

Application for a review of the decision must be made within 30 days of receipt of this letter.

No particular form is required but it would assist the decision-maker were you to set out in the application the grounds on which you consider that the decision should be reviewed.

Application for a review of the decision should be addressed to:

ABS FOI Contact Officer  
Policy and Legislation Section  
Australian Bureau of Statistics  
Locked Bag 10  
BELCONNEN ACT 2617

OR

**2. APPLICATION TO AUSTRALIAN INFORMATION COMMISSIONER (INFORMATION COMMISSIONER) FOR REVIEW OF DECISION**

Section 54L of the Act gives you the right to seek a review of the decision from the Information Commissioner. An application for review must be made within 60 days of receiving the decision.

Applications for review must be in writing and must:

- give details of how notices must be sent to you; and
- include a copy of the notice of decision.

You should send your application for review to:

The Information Commissioner  
Office of the Information Commissioner  
GPO Box 5218  
SYDNEY NSW 2001

AND/OR

**3. COMPLAINTS TO THE INFORMATION COMMISSIONER**

Section 70 of the Act provides that a person may complain to the Information Commissioner about action taken by an agency in the exercise of powers or the performance of functions under the Act.

A complaint to the Information Commissioner must be in writing and identify the agency the complaint is about. It should be directed to the following address:

The Information Commissioner  
Office of the Information Commissioner  
GPO Box 5218  
SYDNEY NSW 2001

The Information Commissioner may decline to investigate the complaint in a number of circumstances, including that you did not exercise your right to ask the agency, the Information Commissioner, a court or tribunal to review the decision.

## PSS Interviewer Hints and Tips for Introducing the Survey and Handling Possible Refusals

In October, we asked PSS Interviewers to complete an eLearning exercise designed to give a quick refresher on introducing PSS, and best-practice refusal procedures.

Now that this eLearning has been completed we have compiled a quick go-to document of Interviewer hints and tips around introducing the PSS, 47E

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Perhaps some of you might like to refresh your cheat-sheets with some new hints and tips from other Interviewers around Australia.

Many Interviewers took the time to complete this exercise, and we really appreciate you fitting this in to your busy timetables - we know you are all working very hard at the moment. So a big thank you to all the Interviewers who completed this exercise. The information you have provided us will not only help us in the HSC to better understand what is happening out there but we think it will also help other Interviewers complete their workloads as effectively as possible.

Good luck!

The HSC PSS Team

### Introducing the Survey

The majority of Interviewers (approx. 85%) agree that the most effective and efficient way to introduce the survey at the doorstep is by moving straight from the Introductory statement to the screening questions:

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### What if a respondent asks what the survey is about?

Most Interviewers have found that using the wording from the introductory letter is sufficient:

*"The survey is about personal safety issues such as how safe people feel, stalking and sexual harassment"*

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You can mention the following:

- the information is used to educate the Australian public and improve programs, policy and services related to public safety.
- You might like to expand on the safety information: “how safe people feel catching public transport and walking in their local area at night”.

Most interviewers appear to briefly provide information about what the survey is about, then move quickly onto other information such as:

- anonymity
- the role of the ABS in Australia
- the ABS’ confidentiality requirements
- how important this survey is
- how quick the survey is
- how flexible you can be... etc

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### Voluntary Nature

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*“This is an official government survey conducted under the Census and Statistics Act (1905)”*

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### Top Conversion Moments

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- Flexibility is hint number two – is the respondent aware that you can conduct the Interview at a time and place that is convenient to them? (*“my job is to fit in with a time that suits you”* )
- If someone is very busy make it clear that you do not intend to intrude on their family/weekend/busy life *“Oh no, I won’t spring it on you right now, when is the best time for you?”*
- Make a *tentative* appointment, since they are very busy, and leave your details. Call the respondent the day before to check if this is still appropriate for them.
- It appears that many interviews are being conducted in private offices or during respondent lunch breaks.
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- Offer to conduct the Interview at a time when children/family members/housemates are out.
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Good morning, some of you wanted a copy of the slide used in training to introduce the survey on the doorstep.....

Speaker notes:

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Below is the slide which is similar to the introduction letter . I hope it helps.

*Good morning/afternoon, my name is [own name] and I'm from the Australian Bureau of Statistics. This is my official identification card.*

*Is this [visited address]?*

*This house has been included in an Australia-wide population survey. The survey will collect important information on personal safety issues and experiences such as how safe people feel, stalking and sexual harassment.*

*In order to identify whether anyone will be selected for an interview, I need to ask you a few questions about the members of your household.*

## 1.2 Overview of PSS Specific Procedures

- No Primary Approach Letter (PAL) will be posted to households prior to the survey;
- Pre-assigned Gender Selections for each dwelling;
- Specialised Call summary Card;
- Predominantly female Interviewers will be used;
- Use of on the doorstep screening questions;
- Private interviews only;
- Voluntary nature of survey;
- Interviewer observations will be collected;
- Collection of 47E information;
- Selected Respondent refusal questions; and
- Respondents will be offered an information card 47E

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For PSS, we have a number of specific field procedures. We have developed a list of procedures involved for PSS, which you may be unfamiliar with from your work on other Special Social Surveys.

Throughout the day, we will discuss all of these points, so no questions at this stage please.

### **\*\*REVEAL LIST**

No Primary Approach Letter (PAL) will be posted to households prior to the survey – **you will be cold calling**

Pre-assigned Gender Selections for each dwelling – **you will know whether the selected respondent will be male or female before you knock on the door**

Specialised Call summary Card – **which we have had peer reviewed by Interviewers who worked on the DR, taking on board their feedback for development**

Predominantly female Interviewers will be used;

Use of on the doorstep screening questions; - **to see if anyone of the assigned gender lives in the house**

Private interviews only – **to maximise the quality of the data collected**

Voluntary nature of survey – **due to the sensitive nature of the questions, a respondent may refuse or discontinue the survey at any point**

Interviewer observations will be collected – **to give us a better understanding of the non-responding population**

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And Respondents will be offered an information card

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## At the door

- Introducing the Survey
- Introductory Letter
- Screening Questions
- **47E**



## Introducing the Survey

- You do not know who you will be Interviewing yet...
- General Introduction only – for example:

*Good morning/afternoon, my name is [own name] and I'm from the Australian Bureau of Statistics. This is my official identification card.*

*Is this [visited address]?*

*This house has been included in an Australia-wide population survey.*

Before you know who you will be interviewing (or even if an interview is required at the dwelling), only a general introduction is required.

For example:

*Good morning/afternoon, my name is [own name] and I'm from the Australian Bureau of Statistics. This is my official identification card.*

*Is this [visited address]?*

*This house has been included in an Australia-wide population survey.*

If you are asked what the survey is about, a good guideline is to base your introduction on the limited information provided in the Introductory Letter, which can be found on Page 50 of your Interviewers Instructions, Part 1's. - Let's look at that now...

## Introductory Letter

- PSS not widely publicised
  - 47E
  - Ensure safety of respondent and Interviewer
- No PAL will be posted prior to enumeration
- You will receive a laminated Introductory Letter.
  - Show household spokesperson/ARA/Selected Respondent
  - Do not leave a copy of a paper Introductory Letter unless specifically requested to do so.
  - DO NOT leave a copy in the households letterbox.

FIRST, ask Interviewers to read through letter.

NEXT: reveal the rest of the text:

Due to the sensitive nature of the survey, the ABS will not be widely publicising the PSS prior to or during the collection period.


This is designed to:

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- help ensure the safety of both the respondents and Interviewers, should the respondent happen to be living in a current situation of violence.
- All of the PSS field procedures are aimed at ensuring that respondents are not subject to further instances of violence due to the survey.

In keeping with these important safety requirements, no Primary Approach Letter (PAL) will be posted to households prior to the enumeration period.

Instead, you will be given a laminated copy of an Introductory Letter to show to the Household spokesperson, ARA or Selected Respondent, where appropriate. While we do not encourage you to leave the Introductory letter at the household, you have been given spare paper copies to leave if you are specifically requested to do so.  
DO NOT leave copies of the Introductory letter in the letterbox.





**Australian  
Bureau of  
Statistics**


statistics for informed  
decision making

- Purpose of visit
- Official ABS survey
- Confidentiality

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*For example:*

*The survey will collect important information on personal safety issues and experiences such as how safe people feel, stalking and sexual harassment.*



**Dear Resident,**

Your household has been randomly selected in an Australia-wide survey being conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). This survey will collect important information from people in city and country areas, on personal safety issues and experiences such as how safe people feel, stalking and sexual harassment. The information will be used to help the ABS provide public safety, improve programs and services related to personal safety.

An ABS interviewer who will have an official identification card, will explain to you what you need to do.

**Your part in the survey**

1. Answer four short questions to determine if anyone in your household will be chosen for interview.
2. If required, the ABS interviewer will ask you to select one of the people who usually live in your household, but you can all remain ANONYMOUS.
3. After this, the interviewer will randomly select the person chosen for interview. The interviewer will then make a call to conduct the interview with that person, in private.

**Guarantee of confidentiality**

All information you provide will be held in confidence. The ABS is required by the Census and Statistics Act 1955 to maintain the secrecy of all information collected. No information will be released in a way that would enable an individual or household to be identified. The ABS also complies with the requirements of the Privacy Act 1988 when collecting and using personal information.

**Further information**

The ABS interviewer will be able to answer any questions you might have. However, if you wish to enquire further about the survey at a later time, please call 1300 363 763, and quote reference PS95. One of my officers will be glad to assist you.

I look forward to your cooperation in this important household survey.

Yours faithfully,

So, as we were discussing, the Introduction letter could be useful while Introducing the survey to the ARA.

The Introductory Letter broadly outlines the purpose of your visit to the selected dwelling and provides confirmation that participation in the survey is requested by the ABS.

The Introductory Letter may be used to:

provide proof that this is an official ABS survey; and/or  
reassure a respondent of the confidential nature of the survey and their responses.

The survey name has been intentionally left off the Letter.

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*The survey will collect important information on personal safety issues and experiences such as how safe people feel, stalking and sexual harassment.*

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statistics for informed  
decision making

## Screening Questions


- URs of required age (+18)
- And required gender (M/F)

SCRE\_Q01 How many people usually live here?

SCRE\_Q02 How many of these people are aged 18 years or over?

SCRE\_Q03 How many of these people aged 18 years or over are female?

SCRE\_Q04 How many of these people aged 18 years or over are male?



Hand out a copy of the call summary card to each Interviewer.

Four questions have been developed to determine whether there are any Usual Residents (UR) of the required age and gender living in the selected dwelling. The screening questions are printed on the front of the Call Summary Card and should be completed when making first contact with a household.

**\*\*Read screening Questions outloud.**

### WHO TO ASK?

A good tip: you should try to complete the screening questions with a person who is of the same gender as that assigned for the selection → this person is more likely to be the Selected Respondent, so you can start building rapport, and will not have to introduce the survey twice.

If this is not possible the questions may be answered by any knowledgeable person (aged 18 years or over), who is available and willing to do so on behalf of all URs.

At your discretion, where there is a knowledgeable person (aged 18 years or over), who is not a UR, but who is available and willing to answer these questions on behalf of all URs in the household, you may ask them these questions. For example – a grandparent who is babysitting.

## Determining Whether an Interview is required.

- ✓ One UR is 18+ and assigned gender
  - This UR will be the Selected Respondent
- ✓ Multiple URs are 18+ and assigned gender
  - The household form will need to be completed, to determine the Selected Respondent.
- ✗ No URs 18+
- ✗ URs 18+ do not meet the assigned gender for the selection

Screening questions are used to identify whether or not an interview needs to be completed at the dwelling. Sometimes the screening questions will even enable you to work out who the selected respondent is before completing the household form. Let's look at the 4 different outcomes from asking the screening questions:

### REVEAL DOT POINT

If the screening questions tell you that there is one UR 18 years and over of the assigned gender, you will need to complete an interview with that person.

### REVEAL NEXT DOT POINT

If the Screening questions tell you that there is more than one UR 18 years and over of the assigned gender, you will need to complete the household form in order to determine which one of these people will be the selected respondent.

### REVEAL NEXT DOT POINT

If the Screening questions tell you that there are no URs 18 years and over living in the dwelling, you will NOT need to complete an interview.

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REVEAL NEXT DOT POINT

If the Screening questions tell you that there is nobody of the selected gender who is over 18 years of age, you will NOT need to complete an interview.

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Nb. While you only need to complete the household form to work out who is the Selected respondent when there are two URs of the assigned gender, you will still need to complete the household form for all Interviews.

## At the door- Review



### 1. General Introduction

- name, official survey
- Introduction letter is a guide to your limits

### 2. Screening Questions

- 47E
- See suggestions – Interviewer Instructions, Part 1 - Page 17.
- Try taking a cheat sheet with you until you feel comfortable

So, let's review the "On the doorstep" procedures for PSS:

1. Begin with a general introduction only. If asked, you may provide some information about the survey content, but use the Introductory letter as a guide.

2. [REDACTED]  
47E [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

We have listed a few of the suggested ways that these Interviewers successfully led into the screening questions on page 17 of your Interviewer Instructions, Part 1.

These include:

**(you read aloud ...)**

*Hello I'm [own name] from the Australian Bureau of Statistics, I'm here to conduct an official government survey...*

*...To start with I have four quick questions for you...*

*...In order to identify whether anyone will be selected for an interview, I need to ask you a few questions about the members of your household...*

*...However, not all households will be selected. I have some questions which might eliminate you...*

**\*\*draw on experience of DR interviewers in the room?\*\***

Of course, you may have a preferred method of introducing surveys already.

We will workshop this before morning tea so that you can practice introducing PSS in a few different ways, and share your ideas with the group if you would like.

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**47E**

## Why is PSS voluntary?

- The *Census and Statistics Act* covers confidentiality aspects
- Highly sensitive subject matter
- Adopted for the 1996 and 2005 Surveys

Respondents can:

- refuse sensitive topics/questions (Ctrl R) or;
- withdraw completely at any time.

### Session 2.3:

Now that you have thought about your introduction, there are a few other field procedures which may make introducing the survey more difficult for you, however we will now discuss some ways in which to handle these in the field.

Firstly, we will look at the voluntary nature of PSS. Why is PSS Voluntary?

#### **\*\*REVEAL REST OF SLIDE\*\***

The PSS will be conducted under the authority of the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*.

This ensures that:

- the ABS has the authority to ask the questions and;
- that the confidentiality provisions of the Act will be applied
- (as in all ABS surveys)

However, because of the potential sensitivities of this survey, the compliance provisions of the Act will not be applied and the survey will instead be conducted on a voluntary basis.

Same field procedure was adopted for the WSS in 1996, and the PSS 2005.

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We suggest that you adopt a positive body language (you could even nod while you say this), and say something along these lines:

*"It is an official government survey collected under the Census and Statistics Act. This authorises the ABS to ask the questions included in the survey."*

This wording can be found on page 8 of your Interviewer Instructions, Part 1, and could be included on your cheat sheet if you like.

If required, you may wish to add further information (while pointing this information out in the introductory letter, if you feel the need):

- explain the importance of the survey, and value to the community;
- stress that the co-operation of the household is vital to the survey's success; and
- emphasise that the answers provided will be treated confidentially.

## Interviews MUST be conducted in private



Information is to be collected using a Face-to-face Personal PRIVATE Interview or where the respondent requests it, (or where there is no other option) a Telephone Interview.

Due to the sensitive and potentially <sup>47E</sup> of the questions in the PSS, interviews are to be conducted in a private setting.

Why? (next slide)

## Why Private Interviews?

- Safe environment for Respondent to speak openly and freely
- Comfortable environment for Interviewer
- Respondent privacy
- 47E
- Data Quality
- Consistency
- ✗ NO CHILDREN

A respondent may not have told the people they live with about past experiences. A private interview setting will:

- provide a safe environment for the respondent, with the opportunity to speak openly and honestly
- It will make you feel more comfortable asking some of the questions in the survey
- Obviously, the content of the survey is very private, and the respondent may not be comfortable sharing this information with the people that they live with
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- This increases our data quality and
- maintains a consistent approach for all PSS interviews

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For these reasons we stress that you must conduct ALL interviews in PRIVATE.

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47E [redacted]
- 47E [redacted]
- 47E [redacted]  
47E [redacted]  
47E [redacted]

[redacted]  
**47E** [redacted]  
[redacted]

## 47E [REDACTED] a private Interview:

- Another time
- Another location
- Another room
- *Suggested wording - Interviewer Instructions, Part 1 – Page 25.*

We know that some respondent's find it very difficult to organise an interview in a private setting, [REDACTED]

47E [REDACTED]

You should urge respondent's to make a private interview possible by:

- offering to reschedule the interview;
- offering to move the interview to another location; or
- arranging for other household members to leave the dwelling for the duration of the interview or to go into another room.

Interviewers from the Dress Rehearsal last year have given us some very helpful examples of things you could say to the respondent to emphasise the importance of a private Interview. If we all turn to page 25 of the Interviewers Instructions, Part 1 – Read out:

47E [REDACTED]

47E [REDACTED]

47E [REDACTED]

47E [REDACTED]

47E [REDACTED]

47E [REDACTED]

47E [REDACTED]

47E [REDACTED]

47E [REDACTED]



## Refusals – Encouraging Participation

1. Stress value/importance to community
2. Data used to:
  - educate Australian public
  - improve services and policy related to public safety
3. Co-operation is vital for survey success
4. Emphasise confidentiality
5. Anonymity
6. Remember the Introductory Letter



There are a number of things that you can say which might encourage participation in the survey:

- explain the importance of the survey, and value to the community;
- briefly explain the results from the survey will be used to educate the Australian public and improve programs and services related to public safety and health.
- stress that the co-operation of the household is vital to the survey's success;
- emphasise that the answers provided will be treated confidentially; and/or
- Tell the respondent that they may remain anonymous

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- If the respondent would like, they may check the details of the survey on the Abs website, or phone the office.

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## Opt-out point (OOP)

### Question Specification

From Population	Question/Field	To question:
SEXUAL HARASSMENT: HRS_L01_END	<p><b>OOP_Q01</b></p> <p>That ends the initial part of the survey. The remaining questions cover areas that may be personal or sensitive, such as sexual or physical assault, and <u>you do not have to answer these questions.</u></p> <p>This information will contribute to national statistics on the number of people subjected to aggressive and threatening behaviour.</p> <p>To ensure that the ABS produces representative statistics, we need to ask these questions of a range of people, not just those that have experienced this behaviour.</p> <p>Are you okay to proceed (with these questions)?</p> <p><i>Remember: Male Interviewers are available if the respondent prefers to talk to a male.</i></p> <p>1. Yes 5. No</p> <p>22</p>	1 VIO 5 OOP_Q02

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**HRS\_Q12** Has a [man/woman] ever touched you, without your permission, in a sexual way, such as unwanted touching, grabbing, kissing, or fondling?

'Unwanted sexual touching' is momentary or brief touching or contact.

- Groping or brushing against a breast or bottom

#### **Additional Information**

- Any incidents of a sexual nature which were longer than momentary should be included as sexual assault in the *Violence Module*. (Refer to *VIO\_Q01* for a definition of 'Sexual Assault').

### **MODULE 12 – OPT-OUT POINT (OOP)**

The PSS survey contains questions that may be particularly personal and sensitive to some respondents, for example their personal experiences of sexual or physical assault. Before this set of questions are asked there is an Opt-out point where respondents are provided with a brief explanation of the upcoming questions and are then asked 'Are you ok to proceed with these questions?'. This provides them with the opportunity to exit from the survey should they feel uncomfortable in continuing the interview.

***OOP\_Q01*** That ends the initial part of the survey. The remaining questions cover areas that may be personal or sensitive, such as sexual or physical assault, and you do not have to answer these questions.

This information will contribute to national statistics on the number of people subjected to aggressive and threatening behaviour.

To ensure that the ABS produces representative statistics, we need to ask these questions of a range of people, not just those that have experienced this behaviour.

**Are you okay to proceed (with these questions)?**

- **47E**
- Further instructions referring to the OOP are in the Interviewer Instructions Part 1.

### **MODULE 13 – VIOLENCE SINCE THE AGE OF 15 (VIO)**

The *Violence Module* is a series of 8 repeating loops, consisting of the same questions but for different types of violence by a man/by a woman. The respondent is asked whether they have ever (since the age of 15) experienced any of the following 8 types of violence:

1. Sexual Assault by a Male
2. Sexual Assault by a Female
3. Threatened Sexual Assault by a Male
4. Threatened Sexual Assault by a Female
5. Physical Assault by a Male
6. Physical Assault by a Female
7. Threatened Physical Assault by a Male
8. Threatened Physical Assault by a Female

# Page 1 – Interviewer Tips for Introducing PSS

- 47E [REDACTED]
- 47E [REDACTED]
- 47E [REDACTED]
- 'This is an **extremely important** survey because public safety has the potential to affect all or any of us at any given time.'
- 47E [REDACTED]
- 'This dwelling has been selected 47E [REDACTED] and some dwellings have been selected for female respondents and some for male. This dwelling has been selected for a ---- respondent - how many females or males over the age of 18 live in this dwelling. May I please speak to that person or can I please enter the household details so that I know who I need to speak to? We are asking important questions about whether people feel safe in their homes at night or whether they feel safe out on the street at night.'
- 47E [REDACTED]
- 47E [REDACTED]
- 47E [REDACTED]
- 47E [REDACTED]

## Page 2 – Interviewer Tips: “What is the Survey about Anyway?”

- 'The survey is designed to get current information in relation to personal safety issues in your area, and issues that have become more publicised in recent times including stalking.'
- **47E**
- **47E**
- **47E**
- **47E**
- 'We are interested in knowing how safe people feel, and without your participation we are unable to get the information that is needed to institute new programs and facilities.'
- I explain that the information is used to educate the Australian public and improve programs and services related to public safety.
- **47E**
- 'The survey gathers important information about personal safety. Your name is not required, there are general questions about age, country of birth, language, education and work, as well as questions about how safe people feel, stalking, sexual harassment and other topics.'
- **47E**
- 'The survey aims to get a clearer picture of what is happening in the community and how people feel about these issues.'
- '.....and how these experiences impact on personal and community well-being.'
- **47E**
- 'The survey gathers information about personal safety issues so education programs can be implemented and services provided where needed by using relevant and up to date information.'
-



# Pages 3 & 4 – Interviewer Tips: “Do I Have to Do it?”

- Explain that the dwelling has been randomly selected and cannot be replaced by another.

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- **47E**

- 'The information we are collecting is important and relevant to the safety of all people.'

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- **47E**
- 'Most of our surveys are compulsory however this survey isn't due to the sensitive nature of the topic. But as you can imagine, it's really important that your household is involved because you represent thousands of households in this area.'
- 'The data from the survey is used by government departments to determine what services are required to help the broader community. Without the survey they are working in the dark.'
- **47E**
- **47E**
- 'Your participation is vital as the government is interested in the responses of real people.'
- **47E**
- 'At this stage we are asking for your assistance for the success of this survey, ultimately it is not compulsory, although it is an official government survey which will help aid the future planning of our support services, and look at high risk areas throughout Australia that need more support than others. We would love your input if you could spare a few minutes. It doesn't need to be now (if you can see their rushed or agitated.)' Ask if there's a more convenient time you can come back to speak to them.
- 'This is an important official government survey and only a small sample is selected to represent the population so your input is really valuable and important. We would really appreciate you taking the time to do the survey and I will arrange an appointment time that is most convenient to you.'

## Pages 5, 6 & 7 – Top Conversion moments:

Main issue: Private Setting



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**47E**   


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**47E**   


Main issue: Too Busy

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**47E** 

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**47E** 

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**47E** 

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Main issue: Privacy

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Main issue: Not Willing to do Surveys

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Main issue: "Survey isn't relevant to me"

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### 2.1.3 Modes of collection

Information for this survey will be collected using the following methods:

- A household spokesperson will answer Screening questions to ascertain whether or not an interview will be required; then
- Any responsible adult (ARA) can provide household details; and
- A personal interview with the Selected Respondent.

## 2.2 Overview of PSS

### 2.2.1 Survey content

The PSS contains questions on the following topics:

Survey module	Survey reference/s
Language of Respondent and Partner	LANR and LANP
Education of Respondent and Partner	EDUR and EDUP
Labour Force of Respondent and Partner	LABR and LABP
Income of Respondent, Partner and Household	INCR, INCP and INCH
Financial Stress	FS
Social Connectedness	SCON
Health	HLTH
Disability	DIS
General Safety	SAFE
Sexual Harassment	HRS
Violence since the age of 15	VIO
Abuse before the age of 15	ABU
Emotional Abuse	EMAB



Partner Violence – Current Partner	PVCP
Partner Violence – Previous Partner	PVPP
Stalking	STK

◇ More detailed information on the content and concepts of each survey module is provided in the *Interviewer Instructions Part 2*.

### **2.2.2 Uses**

Violence against women and men is an area of significant interest because of its potential impact on personal and community wellbeing. The PSS provides much needed data about people who have experienced violence and their outcomes.

In Australia, both Commonwealth and State/Territory governments undertake research and policy development in relation to violence. The states and territories are primarily responsible for the provision of related services. All levels of government are committed to improving outcomes through developing strategies aimed at preventing the occurrence of violent acts in the first place, and minimising the impacts on individuals and the broader community, if they do occur.

### **2.2.3 Users**

Major users of PSS data include:

- Government Departments of Family and Community Services, Health, Women and Justice;
- Peak Institutes for Criminology, Family Studies, Health and Welfare;
- Study Centres for Domestic/Family Violence and Sexual Assault; and
- University research and academic centres.

## **2.3 Official Nature of the Survey**

### **2.3.1 Census and Statistics Act 1905**

The PSS is conducted under the authority of the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*. This authorises the ABS to ask the questions included in the PSS.

### **2.3.2 Collection of sensitive information**

The *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth) requires the ABS to notify individuals of certain matters when collecting their personal information, particularly anything that could be considered 'sensitive'. In particular, Information Privacy Principle 2 requires that an individual be told:

- why the ABS is collecting the information;
- any legal authority the ABS has to collect the information; and
- to whom the ABS usually gives that sort of information.

This information is provided in the PSS Introductory Letter. Providing this information to the respondent is a key privacy obligation and underpins collection practices. It is particularly important when the information being sought is of a potentially sensitive and intrusive nature.

### **2.3.3 Voluntary nature of the survey**

The PSS is a very sensitive survey that collects information about a person's experience of violence. The PSS will be conducted under the authority of the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*. This ensures

that the ABS has the authority to ask the questions and that the confidentiality provisions of the Act will be applied, as in all ABS surveys. However, because of the potential sensitivities of this survey, the compliance provisions of the Act will not be applied and the survey will instead be conducted on a voluntary basis.

To achieve the high levels of participation in the survey needed to produce reliable statistics, there are a number of special field procedures aimed at ensuring maximum cooperation.

A person can refuse to answer sensitive topics or questions, or withdraw completely at any time.

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*"It is an official government survey collected under the Census and Statistics Act. This authorises the ABS to ask the questions included in the survey."*

You may wish to add further information:

- explain the importance of the survey, and value to the community;
- stress that the co-operation of the household is vital to the survey's success; and
- emphasise that the answers provided will be treated confidentially.

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More information on how to introduce the survey can be found in Section 5.5.

## 2.4 Introduction to PSS Specific Aspects on the Call Summary Card

The specialised Call Summary Card was explained briefly in the eLearning CD-ROM.

A copy of the Call Summary Card is included in Appendix 2. As part of trying to better understand the characteristics of refusing and non-responding households compared to responding households, a number of specific clerical tasks are included for the PSS. The intention is that these measures will provide valuable information that will assist in survey non-response analysis.

Each *Call Summary Card* contains the following segments, which may or may not need to be completed. Further information is provided in each of the Sections listed below.

- Screening questions – are asked on the doorstep to determine whether there are any URs of the required age and gender living in the selected dwelling (see Section 5.6 for further information about how to ask the Screening questions).
- Interviewer Observations – are questions that we are asking you about the selected dwelling. These are to be completed for all responding, part responding, and non-contact dwellings. Interviewer Observations should be completed on the first daylight visit (or "drive by") to the dwelling, before you go inside (see Section 5.4 for further information about how to complete the Interviewer Observations).

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Due to the sensitive nature of the PSS, we ask that you consider the following situation:

- In this scenario there are confidentiality issues as both dwellings may surmise, from their own interview experience, what might have happened to their neighbour.

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Unless otherwise specified, standard Monthly Population Survey (MPS) procedures apply. These are outlined in the *ABS Interviewers Manual*.

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### 5.1.2 Gendered Selections

Before you head out into the field, you will know the assigned gender for each selection in your workload. PSS has pre-assigned a gender to each selection as either male or female.

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This way, you will be aware of which gender you are looking for as you approach the dwelling. For PSS the genders are denoted as either:

- Male = maleB; or
- Female = femaleK.

### 5.2 Introductory Letter in lieu of a PAL

Due to the sensitive nature of the survey, the ABS will not be widely publicising the PSS prior to or during the collection period. This is designed to help gain maximum participation, should respondents be living with a perpetrator of violence (who may prevent participation should they be aware of the content of the survey). They are designed to help ensure the safety of both the respondents and Interviewers, should the respondent happen to be living in a current situation of violence. They are also aimed at helping to ensure that respondents are not subject to further instances of violence due to the survey.

In keeping with these important safety requirements, no Primary Approach Letter (PAL) will be posted to households prior to the enumeration period.

Instead, you will be given a laminated copy of an Introductory Letter to show to the Household spokesperson, ARA or Selected Respondent, where appropriate. While we do not encourage you to leave the Introductory letter at the household, you have been given spare paper copies to leave if you are specifically requested to do so.

The Introductory Letter broadly outlines the purpose of your visit to the selected dwelling and provides confirmation that participation in the survey is requested by the ABS. The survey name has been intentionally left off the Letter. The Introductory Letter may be used to:

- provide proof that this is an official ABS survey; and/or

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## 5.5 Introducing the survey

### General introduction only

Before you know who you will be interviewing (or even if an interview is required at the dwelling), only a general introduction is required. For example:

*Good morning/afternoon, my name is [own name] and I'm from the Australian Bureau of Statistics. This is my official identification card.*

*Is this [visited address]?*

*This house has been included in an Australia-wide population survey.*

If you are asked what the survey is about, a good guideline is to base your introduction on the limited information provided in the Introductory Letter (see Appendix 3). You could say something like:

*The survey will collect important information on personal safety issues and experiences such as how safe people feel, stalking and sexual harassment.*

## 5.6 Screening Questions

Due to the assigned gender selections used for PSS, you will be able to combine your introduction of the survey with the Screening questions. These are used to identify whether or not an interview needs to be completed at the dwelling. Sometimes the screening questions will enable you to work out who the selected respondent is before completing the household form.

The following four questions have been developed, and printed on your *Call Summary Card* to assist in determining whether the selected dwelling contains any Usual Residents (URs) aged 18 years or over who meet the assigned gender. You should ask these immediately after introducing the survey.

**SCORE\_Q01:** How many people usually live here?

**SCORE\_Q02:** How many of these people are aged 18 years or over?

**SCRE\_Q03:** How many of these people are aged 18 years or over are female?

**SCRE\_Q04:** How many of these people are aged 18 years or over are male?

**47E**

*Hello I'm [own name] from the Australian Bureau of Statistics, I'm here to conduct an official government survey...*

**47E**

*...In order to identify whether anyone will be selected for an interview, I need to ask you a few questions about the members of your household...*

**47E**

## 5.7 Screening Questions – Who to Ask?

Screening questions can be asked of a Household spokesperson (aged 18 years or over) on behalf of all usual residents of the household.

When making first contact with a household you might find it more efficient if you can complete the Screening questions with a person who is of the same gender as that assigned for the selection.

If this is not possible, these questions may be answered by any knowledgeable person (aged 18 years or over), who is available and willing to answer the questions on behalf of all usual residents of the household.

At your discretion, where there is a knowledgeable person (aged 18 years or over), who is not a UR, but who is available and willing to answer these questions on behalf of all URs in the household, you may ask them these questions. For example, a grandparent is babysitting usually resident children and would know the age/s and gender/s of the usually resident parent/s.

The Screening questions may also be completed by telephone.



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## 5.8 Determining whether an interview is required

From the Screening questions you will be able to determine whether an interview is required with anyone in the household.

### Interview required

- ✓ Where only one UR is aged 18 years or over and meets the assigned gender of the selection (this will be Selected Respondent), or
- ✓ Where more than one UR is aged 18 years or over and meets the assigned gender of the selection.

**No interview required**

- ✕ Where no URs are aged 18 years or over, you do not need to complete an interview with anyone in the household 47E
- ✕ Where URs are aged 18 years or over, but none are of the assigned gender for the selection, you will not be required to complete an interview with anyone in the household 47E

47E**5.8.1 Household Form and Selection Process**

The Household Form can be completed by Any Responsible Adult (ARA). This may or may not be the:

- Household spokesperson; or
- Selected Respondent.

A household form is to be completed in all instances where you have deemed that an interview is required, including:

- When you already know who the Selected Respondent will be (e.g. where there is only 1 UR who meets the assigned gender).
- Where there is more than one UR aged 18 years or over who meet the assigned gender. The Household Form will need to be completed so that the survey instrument can randomly select which of these will be the Selected Respondent.

◇ While children (and URs who aren't the allocated gender) are not interviewed in the survey, it is essential that everybody is included in the HF as their listing enables correct classification of family and household types.

**5.8.2 Introducing the Survey to the Selected Respondent**47E

While you can emphasise the importance of the survey to the respondent, you should not pressure them if they are reluctant to participate.

**5.8.3 Encouraging participation**

If the household spokesperson or ARA is hesitant about answering the screening questions, you could also briefly explain the results from the survey will be used to:

- educate the Australian public; and
- improve programs and services related to public safety and health.

Where appropriate, show a copy of the Introductory Letter (Appendix 3). This will help your explanations by:



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### 5.12 PSS Interviewer panel

Differing to other household surveys you may have worked on, the PSS Interviewer panel consists mainly of female Interviewers. Evidence suggests that males and females generally feel more comfortable talking to a woman about their experiences of violence, than a man.

The rationale for not using male Interviewers was that the extreme sensitivity of the topics would inhibit female respondents, thus reducing their willingness to reveal incidents of violence.

Research, expert advice and testing have shown that most men will be comfortable providing details of their experiences of physical and sexual violence to a female Interviewer.

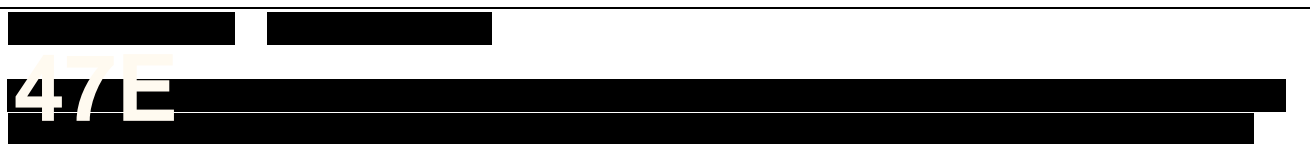
There may be some cases where men (and potentially women) will not be comfortable being interviewed by a female. A small number of male Interviewers will be trained to cater for these instances.

### 5.13 Option for a male interviewer

Male Interviewers are available on request, should a Selected Respondent prefer to complete their interview with a man.

A male Interviewer can be offered at any time during your contact with the Selected Respondent, if/when you feel that the respondent may be feeling uncomfortable due to you being a female.

If a male Interviewer is requested, you will need to release the selected record back to the office so that it can be re-allocated to the nearest male Interviewer.



### 5.14 Personal and Private Interviews

For the PSS, information is to be collected using either:

- face-to-face Personal Interview, or
- where the respondent requests it (or there is no other option available), a Telephone Interview.

#### Private interviews

Due to the sensitive and <sup>47E</sup> of the questions in the PSS, interviews are to be conducted in a private setting.

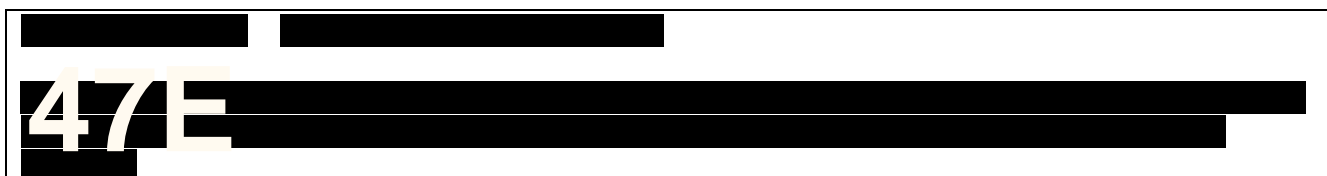
A respondent may not have told the people they live with about past experiences. A private interview setting will:

- provide a safe environment for the respondent, with the opportunity to speak openly and honestly; and
- minimise the chance of a respondent refusing when we reach the sensitive questions.

It is also possible that a respondent may currently be living in a situation of violence.

We know that some respondent's find it very difficult to organise an interview in a private setting, especially when you have only told them limited information about the survey content - they do not understand the necessity.

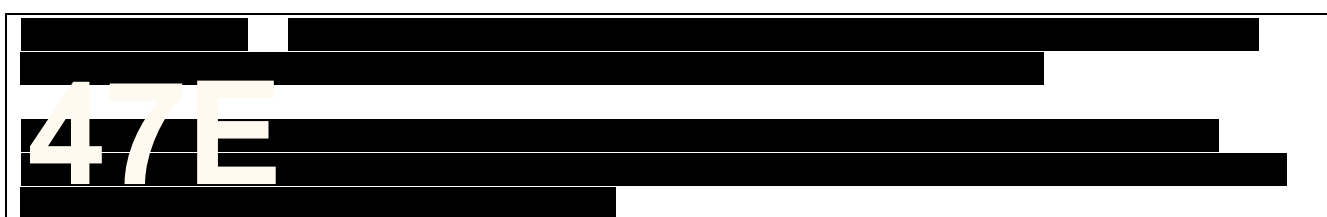
- ✓ attempt to find out when someone who speaks English may be home;
- ✓ try to ascertain which language is spoken in the household (you can use a Language Card to assist you identify the language spoken);
- ✓ obtain a phone number for the household (if possible);
- ✓ advise the person you are speaking with (if possible) that the office may phone to arrange an interview;
- ✓ if you have been able to complete the Screening questions, record the name of the Selected Respondent; and
- ✓ conclude your visit.



## 5.16 No Proxy Interviews

Due to privacy and safety concerns for the respondent and the Interviewer, no proxy interviews are to be conducted.

Record a field query for all cases where a proxy interview would usually have been conducted, but due to the special nature of the PSS, this did not occur.



## 5.17 Telephone Interviewing (TI)

We do NOT recommend Telephone Interviewing. This is due to the following factors:

- there are a large number of prompt cards - these will need to be read out to the respondent over the telephone;
- it will be much more difficult to monitor respondent reactions via the telephone;
- it will be harder to ensure that the interview occurs, or continues to occur, in private; and
- there may be people present influencing their answers that you cannot see.

After taking these concerns into account, you may offer a TI in circumstances where:

- the Selected Respondent requests this type of interview; or
- the interviewing environment is unsuitable, according to Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) guidelines.

When you call the Selected Respondent, you should try to ensure that they are able to participate in private. Where this is not possible, alternative arrangements should be made (e.g. the TI could be conducted with the respondent at an alternative location).

Under no circumstances are you to leave any survey-specific material (e.g. Prompt Card booklets) at the selected households.

### ***Suggested techniques***

Interviewers in the PSS DR used the following types of techniques to try and cater for the different aspects of conducting a TI.

To try and gauge whether pauses in the interview were intentional or were due to the respondent becoming upset, they said:

*‘As I can’t see you, can you please let me know if you are pausing to think’*

If background noises changed in some way, Interviewers used the following type of probe:

*‘Are you able to continue in private or should we arrange another time?’*

When closing a TI, Interviewers either:

- offered to read the details from the Information Card <sup>22</sup> [REDACTED]; or
- mentioned that the same details were available from the business pages in the phone book.

## **5.18 Return Appointments**

Due to the sensitive nature of the survey, you may need to make an appointment to return to the dwelling in order to conduct an interview.

It is possible that multiple appointments will be required, either for contact purposes or if a respondent requests their personal interview be conducted in more than one session.

If a respondent finds it difficult to arrange an appointment time, you may telephone at a later date and arrange an appointment.

◇ Under no circumstances should you leave any survey-specific material at the selected household, this includes Prompt Card booklets.

### **Timing of appointments**

Remember that some interviews may leave you feeling emotionally drained. It is suggested that you allow sufficient time between appointments for an adequate break from interviewing, to collect your thoughts and also to undertake any home editing required.

**47E** [REDACTED]

## **5.19 Alternative location for an interview**

If more convenient to those involved, an interview may be conducted at a location other than the respondent’s household (e.g. library, Regional Office meeting room, etc.). You should leave the choice of alternative location for the respondent to suggest. It is important that they feel safe and comfortable in participating in an interview at that location.

## 5.21 Dealing with interruptions to the interview

Feedback from past PSS Interviewers suggests that in many instances respondents took control of the situation if another person interrupted an interview. Interviewer strategies varied, depending on the type of interruption. Suggestions include:

- pressing F4, which will return you to the start of the Household Form and ask these or the Demographic questions over again;
- ending the interview and making an appointment to come back and complete the interview at a time when there will be no-one else home;
- making arrangements to conduct the rest of the interview at an alternate location;
- making arrangements to conduct the rest of the interview by telephone; or
- asking the respondent to arrange for other household members to leave the dwelling, or organising to go into another room, for the rest of the interview.

◇ If you or the respondent are concerned that the interview cannot be continued in private you should try to reschedule if possible.

## 5.22 Questions relating to other household members

The respondent is asked questions about their current partner and/or household for the following topics:

- language;
- education;
- labour force status;
- income; and
- financial stress.

If the respondent doesn't know some, or any, of the details for the question asked you should use the Ctrl K (or Ctrl R, if applicable) options provided.

- ✖ The respondent should NOT attempt to contact the partner or other household members at any time, and neither should you. In relation to income, it is sufficient for respondents to provide an estimate.

## 5.23 Opt-Out Point

Prior to commencement of the more sensitive topics in the questionnaire you will inform the respondent of what is to come. The following statement, the "Opt-Out Point", appears before the Violence Module:

*That ends the initial part of the survey. The remaining questions cover areas that may be personal or sensitive, such as sexual or physical assault, and you do not have to answer these questions.*

*This information will contribute to national statistics on the number of people subjected to aggressive and threatening behaviour.*

*To ensure that the ABS produces representative statistics, we need to ask these questions of a range of people, not just those that have experienced this behaviour.*

## Appendix 3 – Sample Introductory Letter

Dear Resident,

Your household has been randomly selected in an Australia-wide survey being conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). This survey will collect important information from people in city and country areas, on personal safety issues and experiences such as how safe people feel, stalking and sexual harassment. The information will be used to educate the Australian public and to improve programs and services related to personal safety.

An ABS interviewer, who will have an official identification card, will explain to you what you need to do.

### Your part in the survey

1. Answer four short questions to determine whether anyone in your household will be chosen for interview.
2. If required, the ABS interviewer will ask for the names of people who usually live in your household, but you can all remain ANONYMOUS.
3. After this, the interviewer's notebook computer will randomly select the person chosen for interview. The interviewer will then make a convenient time to conduct the interview with that person, in private.

### Guarantee of confidentiality

All information you provide will be treated confidentially. The ABS is required by the *Census and Statistics Act 1905* to maintain the secrecy of all information provided to it. No information will be released in a way that would enable an individual or household to be identified (including to any organisation or government department). The ABS also complies with the requirements of the *Privacy Act 1988* when collecting and using personal information.

### Further information

The ABS interviewer will be able to answer any questions you might have. However, if you wish to enquire further about this survey at a later time, please telephone (free call) 1800[insert number] and quote reference '[insert reference]'. One of my officers will be glad to assist you.

I look forward to your cooperation in this important household survey.

Yours faithfully

[Name]

Assistant Director, Regional Office, Population Survey Operations

[State]

[Date], February 2012

# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Overview

These Regional Office (RO) Instructions cover background information, interviewing procedures and subject matter for the 2012 Personal Safety Survey (PSS12). These Instructions should be read in conjunction with the related instructions which have been issued to Interviewers.

There are three parts to the Interviewers Instructions:

- Part 1 covers administrative and field procedures;
- Part 2 covers instructions on specific parts of the questionnaire and survey content; and
- Part 3 PSO Standard Field Procedures and Instructions.

It is essential that all officers involved in the PSS12 spend sufficient time studying the documentation so they are fully aware of the requirements of the survey.

## 1.2 PSO Standard Field Procedures and Instructions

This document should be read in conjunction with the *Interviewers Instructions Part 1* issued for PSS12. This document is located in the PSO Standard Field Procedures and Instructions tab of the PSO Print Shop in the CAI Interviewers WDB. Contained within this document are standard procedures that generally remain unchanged from survey to survey. In the event that there is a change to the standard procedures, Interviewers will be advised of the relevant changes in their Interviewers Instructions Part 1.

## 1.3 PSS specific procedures

You will notice a number of specific procedures have been put in place for the PSS12. Briefly, these include:

- No Primary Approach Letter (PAL) will be posted to households prior to the survey;
- Pre-assigned Gender Selections for each dwelling (shown in Supp ID);
- Predominantly female Interviewers will be used;
- Private interviews only;
- Use of on the doorstep screening questions;
- Interviewer observations will be collected;
- 47E [REDACTED]
- Selected Respondent refusal questions; and
- Respondents will be offered an information 47E [REDACTED]

47E [REDACTED]

These procedures are designed to help gain maximum participation, preserve data integrity, and to help ensure the safety of both respondents and Interviewers (should respondents be living with a perpetrator of violence). The collection of Interviewer observations and refusal information will also assist in assessing data quality.

Due to the sensitive nature of the survey, the ABS will not be widely publicising the PSS12 prior to or during the collection period.

## 2.3 Official Nature of the Survey

### 2.3.1 Census and Statistics Act 1905

The PSS12 is conducted under the authority of the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*. This authorises the ABS to ask the questions included in the PSS12.

### 2.3.2 Collection of sensitive information

The *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth) requires the ABS to notify individuals of certain matters when collecting their personal information, particularly anything that could be considered 'sensitive'. In particular, Information Privacy Principle 2 requires that an individual be told:

- why the ABS is collecting the information;
- any legal authority the ABS has to collect the information; and
- to whom the ABS usually gives that sort of information.

This information is provided in the PSS12 Introductory Letter. Providing this information to the respondent is a key privacy obligation and underpins collection practices. It is particularly important when the information being sought is of a potentially sensitive and intrusive nature.

### 2.3.3 Voluntary nature of the survey

The PSS12 is a very sensitive survey that collects information about a person's experience of violence. The PSS12 will be conducted under the authority of the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*. This ensures that the ABS has the authority to ask the questions and that the confidentiality provisions of the Act will be applied, as in all ABS surveys. However, because of the potential sensitivities of this survey, the compliance provisions of the Act will not be applied and the survey will instead be conducted on a voluntary basis.

To achieve the high levels of participation in the survey needed to produce reliable statistics, there are a number of special field procedures aimed at ensuring maximum cooperation. Interviewers will be trained specifically to ensure they understand the reasons behind these procedures and know how to implement them.

Office staff may also be queried about the compulsory nature of the survey when contacted by respondents ringing in about the survey. For information on what to say refer to section 9.1 below.

You should refer carefully to the *Interviewer Instructions Part 1 section 2.3.3*, which explains in detail how Interviewers should respond if any questions arise about whether the Survey is compulsory.



## 4.6 Times to Interview

Suitable times for face-to-face interviews under normal MPS guidelines.

## 4.7 Private Interviews

All PSS12 Interviews are to be conducted in a private setting.

This is to help preserve confidentiality as a respondent may not have told others present what has happened to them.

It also provides a safe environment and the opportunity for the respondent to speak openly, honestly and freely where they are not influenced by others being present. It is also designed to ensure accurate responses to sensitive questions and to minimise the chance of a respondent refusing when we reach the more sensitive questions.

It is also for the safety of respondents and Interviewers as it is possible that a respondent may currently be living in a situation of violence.

We know that some Interviewers find it very difficult to organise an interview in a private setting, especially when they are only able to tell the respondent limited information about the survey content - they do not understand the necessity.

Interviewers have been instructed to urge respondent's to make a private interview possible by:

- offering to reschedule the interview;
  - offering to move the interview to another location; or
  - arranging for other household members to leave the dwelling for the duration of the interview or to go into another room.
- × Children must not be present during an interview.

## 4.8 Telephone interviews

While Telephone interviews are permitted, these are not recommended.

This is due to the following factors:

- there are a large number of prompt cards - these will need to be read out to the respondent over the telephone;
- it will be much more difficult to monitor respondent reactions via the telephone;
- it will be harder to ensure that the interview occurs, or continues to occur, in private; and
- there may be people present influencing their answers that you cannot see.

Under no circumstances are Interviewers to leave any survey-specific material (e.g. Prompt Card booklets) at the selected households.

## 5 DOCUMENTATION

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### 5.2 No Primary Approach Letter (PAL)

Due to the sensitive nature of the survey, a PAL will not be posted to households prior to enumeration.

For further information refer to *Interviewer Instructions Part 1 section 5.2*.

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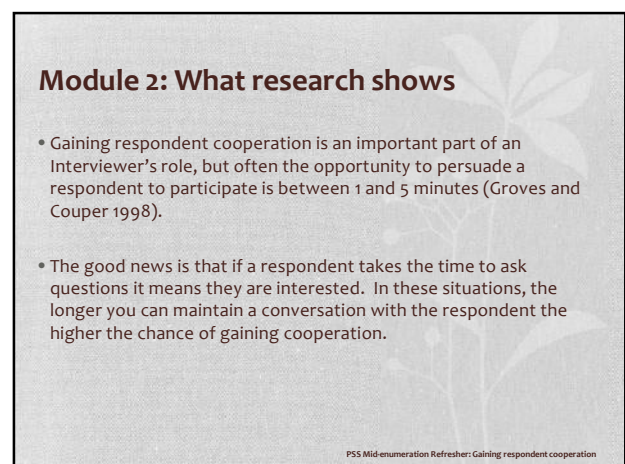
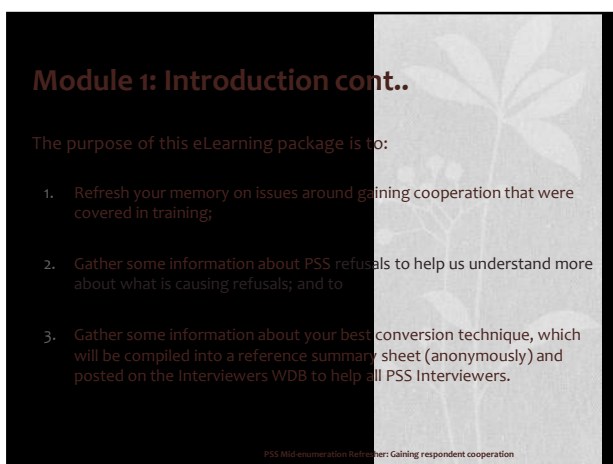
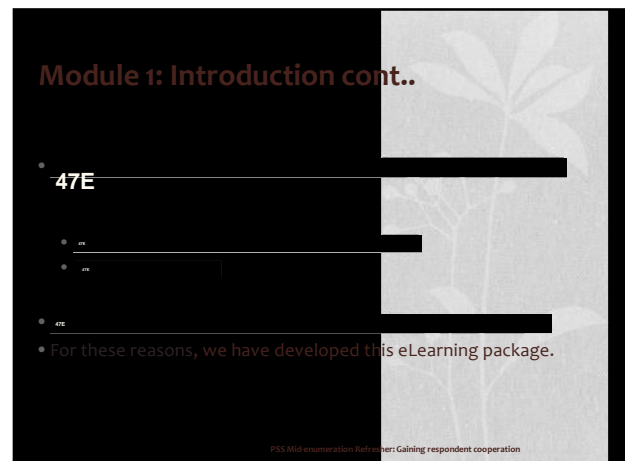
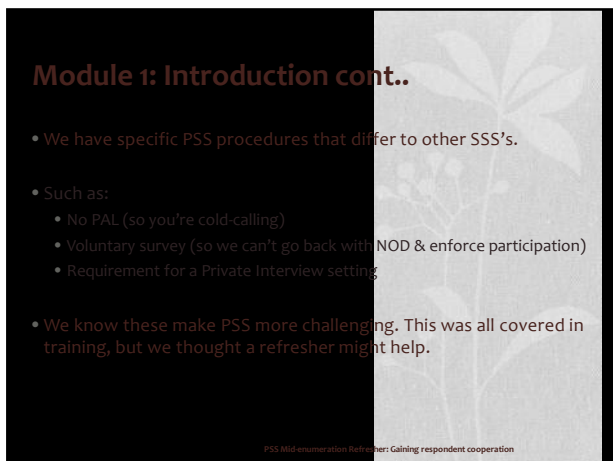
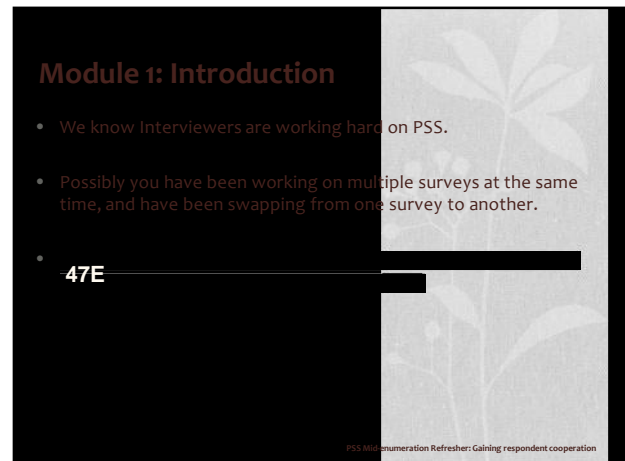
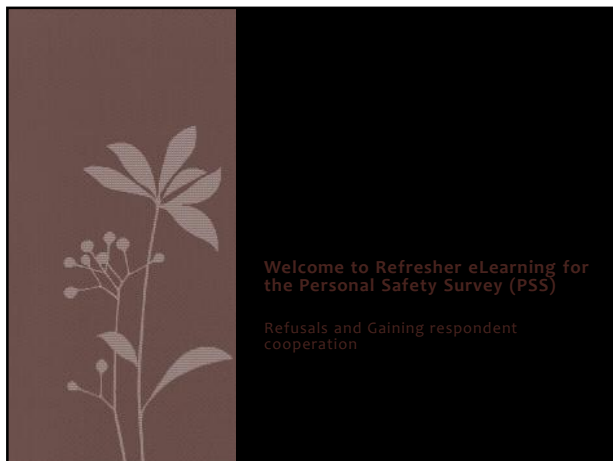
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## Module 2: What research shows cont..

Reasons why it's a good sign that the Respondent is asking questions:

- ❖ By asking questions it shows that the respondent is motivated and interested in talking to you;
- ❖ Questions allow the conversation to continue; and
- ❖ You can use the information the respondent tells you to formulate appropriate responses.

PSS Mid-enumeration Refresher: Gaining respondent cooperation

## Module 3: Best chance of success

- Be positive – never apologise for what you do. Attitude and self confidence has a huge impact on how the respondent perceives you.
- Hesitation leads to a break in conversation, and this sends a cue to the respondent to end the discussion.
- If it's been a while since you've worked on PSS, take some time to review your Interviewer Instructions and Cheat Sheet.

PSS Mid-enumeration Refresher: Gaining respondent cooperation

## Module 3: Best chance of success cont..

- Gaining respondent cooperation involves thinking on your feet.
- You need to focus on:
  1. Quickly identifying the concern – *what is the respondent really worried about?*
  2. Quickly delivering a brief situation-appropriate response – *what can I say to address the respondent's concern in words they will understand?*

PSS Mid-enumeration Refresher: Gaining respondent cooperation

## Module 3: Best chance of success cont..

- Research conducted by Groves & Couper 1998 showed that Interviewers more adept at tailoring (i.e. adapting their approach to the specific characteristics of households) and maintaining interaction (i.e. continuing the conversation with the respondent) were more successful in obtaining cooperation from the respondent.
- Tailoring your response to suit the respondent is important.

PSS Mid-enumeration Refresher: Gaining respondent cooperation

## Module 3: Best chance of success cont..

So, what can you do to give yourself the best chance of success?

- Practice thinking on your feet by getting family members or other Interviewers to 'role play' a disgruntled or aggressive respondent.
- Reflect on previous interviews and think about what you did well, and what you could try next time.
- Have your 'cheat sheet' on hand to help build your confidence and remind you on the spot what to say.


PSS Mid-enumeration Refresher: Gaining respondent cooperation

## Module 4: Refresher - Introducing the survey

- Interviewers from the DR said the best way to introduce the survey was to move quickly from the introductory statement to the screening questions (don't take a breath).
- For example:  
*"Hello my name is Sam Smith from the Australian Bureau of Statistics. I am here to conduct an official government survey. To start with, I just have 4 quick questions that I need to ask you..."*
- See the Interviewer instructions – Section 5.5 *Introducing the Survey* and 5.6 *Screening Questions* for more examples...

PSS Mid-enumeration Refresher: Gaining respondent cooperation

## Module 4: Refresher - Introducing the survey cont.

- Do you find this approach generally works? 
- Do you have a different introductory opening you use that is working? If yes, please provide detail:

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PSS Mid-enumeration Refresher: Gaining respondent cooperation

## Module 5: Refresher – encouraging participation

For PSS 2012, we can see that most refusals are occurring on the doorstep when speaking with the ARA.

Remember, when trying to convert a refusal it is important that you listen for the respondent's concerns, and address those.

Here are some ideas for things you can say to encourage participation:

- Explain the importance of the survey and value to the community -
  - Briefly explain that the results from the survey will be used to educate the Australian public.
  - Results will be used to improve services and policies related to health and/or public safety.
- Remember - respondents are interested in what the survey will do for their local community and/or family. Tailor your response to them (does the respondent have small children/grandchildren? ).
- Intro letter: "The information will be used to educate the Australian public and to improve programs and services related to personal safety."

PSS Mid-enumeration Refresher: Gaining respondent cooperation

## Module 5: Refresher – encouraging participation cont.

A few more ideas...

- Explain to the respondent that their cooperation is vital to the success of the survey, and to ensure representative data across Australia (i.e. they are very important, the government cares about them).
- Emphasise confidentiality - explain what this means:
  - Who gets to see the data? No individuals can be identified.
  - Who doesn't - i.e. Tax, Medicare, Centrelink etc.
- Let the respondent know they may remain anonymous.
- You may like to emphasise some of the content of the survey (safety, sexual harassment and stalking are your limits), pointing out to the respondent how important this information is to gather.

PSS Mid-enumeration Refresher: Gaining respondent cooperation

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### Module 7: Summary

- If you've been working on other surveys, or have had a break from PSS, read your Interviewer Instructions again.
- Understand the purpose of the survey, and how the information collected will benefit the respondent.
- Practice thinking on your feet:
  - What is the respondent really worried about?
  - Assess verbal and visual cues from the respondent.
  - What do I need to say to convince them?
  - Tailor responses to suit respondent and situation. The same phrase will not work in all situations, arm yourself with a number of phrases and strategies.

PSS Mid-examination Refresher: Gaining respondent cooperation

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## Session 4: Overview of PSS specific procedures

### Key philosophy of the Survey Procedures:

- aimed at ensuring safety of respondents and interviewers
- gaining willing cooperation
- providing a safe environment that provides opportunity to speak openly, honestly and freely
- obtaining accurate responses to sensitive questions
- obtaining data that is consistent across the survey

Similar procedures used for  
1996 WSS & 2005 PSS

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*Run through slide*

Important message here is that we want ROs to be aware of what we're asking our Interviewers to do.

## What does PSS do that is so different to other SSS?

- No Primary Approach Letter: Interviewers cold-calling
- Voluntary survey **47E**
- Pre-allocated Male/Female Selections
- Predominantly female Interviewers
- Private interviews only
- Use of on the doorstep screening questions **47E**
- **47E**
- Interviewer observations collected
- **47E**
- Workloads (Exmet) not in local area
- No publicity about the survey during enumeration

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**47E**

**47E**

**47E**

**47E**

**47E**

### 4.1 - Specialised Call Summary Card

[illegible]

## Specialised Call Summary Card

- Double sided
- Interviewers will need to either stick labels or print PDF file for front page on pre-printed back page only CSC
- We'll run through the separate facets but key differences:
  1. Gendered selection box - male/female selection
  2. Screening questions
  3. Selected respondent refusal questions
  4. Interviewer Observations
  5. Refusal reasons
  6. PSS response codes (quick reference guide for PSS clerical tasks)

## 4.3 – Voluntary survey

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Important to be encouraging.

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## 4.5 – Cold Calling with Introductory letter (no PAL)

Why no PAL?

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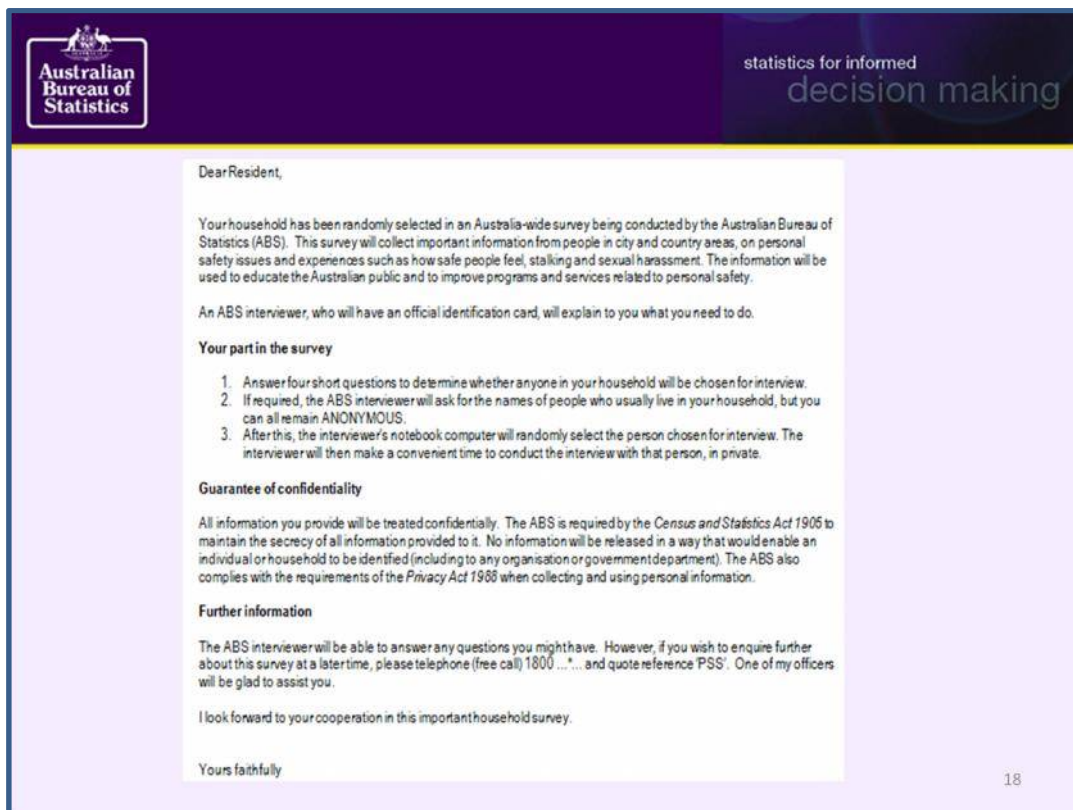
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Safety of respondents (and interviewers!) paramount

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Interviewers are to be provided with Laminated copy to show at the door

47E [REDACTED]  
47E [REDACTED]  
47E [REDACTED]

We will cover this DAY 2 session with ROs but have a think about this for Office procedures but worth thinking about:

47E [REDACTED]  
47E [REDACTED]  
47E [REDACTED]  
47E [REDACTED]  
47E [REDACTED]

## 4.8 – Private interviews/no proxies

### Why Private interviews/no proxies:

- Safe environment for Respondent to speak openly and freely
- Comfortable environment for Interviewer
- Respondent privacy
- 47E
- 47E
- 47E
- ✗ NO CHILDREN to be present during interview
- ✗ NO FAMILY/FRIENDS to act as interpreter



47E

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A respondent may not have told the people they live with about past experiences. A private interview setting will:

- provide a safe environment for the respondent, with the opportunity to speak openly and honestly (esp if they live with a Perp)
- It will make Interviewers feel more comfortable asking some of the questions in the survey
- Obviously, the content of the survey is very private, and the respondent may not be comfortable sharing this information with the people that they live with (esp if their carer is the one inflicting violence: they won't reveal their true experiences)
- 47E
- This increases our data quality and
- maintains a consistent approach for all PSS interviews

Interviewers have been instructed to urge respondent's to make a private interview possible by:

- offering to reschedule the interview;
- offering to move the interview to another location; or





So just what can Interviewers expect at the doorstep and what should they do when?

Section 5.11, Page 22 of IIPart 1

Outline of what to collect at the doorstep

## 4.15 – Telephone Interviews



- LAST RESORT ONLY when respondent requests or interviewing environment unsuitable for OHAS reasons
- Why NOT recommended:
  - Number of Prompt cards (to be read out over the phone)
  - Difficult to monitor respondent reactions
  - Hard to ensure interviews occurs, or continues to occur in private
  - May be other people present influencing respondent answers
- More likely to be needed:
  - Male Interviewer requested
  - Foreign language interview

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## 5.6 Field Procedures – Face to Face Interviewing

### 5.6.1 Call Backs – All Surveys

There is a requirement for a minimum number of contact attempts to be made at a variety of times. The following table (from the Interviewer Employment Conditions Manual section 5.7) provides details of the basic number of calls to make and the hours in which they can be made, before the household is considered a non-contact. This should be considered both the minimum and maximum number of calls and includes making the initial visit to the household. This should be considered the minimum required number of calls and preferred maximum. Within reason, additional calls can be made on difficult to contact dwellings.

Face to Face URBAN	Face to Face RURAL	Telephone
5 attempts consisting of at least:	3 attempts consisting of at least:	8 attempts consisting of at least:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 calls between 8.30 am and 6.30 pm</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 call between 8.30 am and 6.30 pm</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4 calls between 8.30 am and 6.30 pm</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 calls between 6.30 pm and 8.30 pm</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 call between 6.30 pm and 8.30 pm</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3 calls between 6.30 pm and 8.30 pm</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 call on Saturday between 9am and 5pm</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 call on Saturday between 9am and 5pm</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 call on Saturday between 9am and 5pm</li> </ul>

Hours of interviewing are as specified in the ABS Interviewers Certified Agreement clause 83.

In addition to the hours of interviewing work set out in the Certified Agreement, the Interviewer Manual specifies a requirement to call at various times, including evenings and Saturdays to spread contact attempts. At the discretion of the Interviewer, interviews may also be conducted between 9.00am and 5.00pm on Sundays and public holidays. Interviewing on Sundays and public holidays is optional to Interviewers.

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