

NOTES FOR TABLES ON

A. ENUMERATION OF THE WORKFORCE
2. WORKFORCE PARTICIPATION RATES

(A) COLONIAL CENSUS WORKFORCE PARTICIPATION RATES, 1828 TO 1901.

The workforce figures used to calculate participation rates are those presented in the preceding section in the analogous tables. These workforce numbers are expressed as a proportion of total population and so are best viewed as crude participation rates. More refined estimates require knowledge of the age structure of the population that was not accessible to the compiler, Tony Endres, at the time of compilation. These rates are previously unpublished. The total population figures used are those from the respective censuses.

The different treatment of census years and selected years is exactly as for the work-force data as discussed above.

(B) COMMONWEALTH CENSUS WORKFORCE PARTICIPATION RATES, 1911 TO 1981

To provide continuity with the available labour participation rate figures for the colonial period crude workforce participation rates based on total population, as given in the Commonwealth Census, are also provided in these tables. The previous discussion relating to absolute census workforce figures should be consulted for further detail.

To complement these analyses age-specific labour participation rates have also been included for census years 1911 to 1981. These are estimates prepared by the Commonwealth Department of Employment and Industrial Relations (1984).

SOURCES:

The Primary sources are census questionnaires and Statistician's Reports.

The secondary source for the table indicated is:

Department of Employment and Industrial Relations, Submission to the Committee of Review into Australian Industrial Relation Law and Systems, Canberra, May 1984.

NOTES FOR TABLES ON

A. ENUMERATION OF THE WORKFORCE
3. UNEMPLOYMENT

GENERAL NOTES

Statistics of unemployment from four types of official sources are presented. The colonial and Commonwealth census data for the period 1891 to 1981 are the first source and the population survey from 1964 to 1982 is another source. General information on these instruments has been provided in the discussion of workforce. More information specific to the unemployment component of the census workforce is given here. The two further official sources presented here which do not derive from workforce data collection are trade union derived data and public employment service data. Information on each of these is provided below. Finally an unemployment series derived from private union records for the Amalgamated Society of Engineers and an unemployment series derived from a mix of official sources are presented. Details of their construction are provided below.

(A) COLONIAL/Commonwealth Census Unemployment 1891 to 1981

In order to facilitate interpretation of the census unemployment count, it is helpful to list the census counting rules for absolute unemployment. Note first that aborigines were not counted as unemployed in census from 1911 to 1966. They were included in the census 1891, 1901 and census from 1971. Note also that where unemployment RATES are reported the base is the relevant official workforce figures given in the preceding workforce section.

The census counting rules for unemployment are as follows:

- 1891 The definition for householders was 'unemployed on census date'. The definition used for enumeration by official statisticians was unemployed with a former gainful occupation on census date.
- 1901 The definition for householders was 'not at work for more than a week immediately prior to census'. The counting rule explicitly excluded those on leave of absence from their jobs. The previous gainful occupation requirement was relaxed.
- 1911 The definition for householders was 'if out of work on census date'. The counting rule used by official statisticians for enumeration included only those with an unemployment duration of more than one week and less than one year prior to census date.
- 1921 The definition for householders and enumeration was 'if out of work at the time of census'. This included persons who were:
1. unable to secure employment
 2. temporarily laid-off from their jobs

3. not actively seeking work

4. who had lost their jobs because of permanent illness or disability.

1933

As for 1921.

1947

Householders definition as for 1921. Question on unemployment explicitly excluded those 'working regularly for considerably less than normal working hours ... unless they look to their earnings from such work for their main livelihood'; retired persons; clergy; members of religious orders and those temporarily absent from their jobs due to illness.

1954

Householders definition as for 1921. In comparison with 1947 it did not exclude those working for considerably less than normal working hours. Explicitly excluded those unable to work because of illness or old age.

1961

The definition for householders: 'those out of a job at the time of the census but who are usually engaged in an industry, business, profession, trade or service'. Excluded persons on long-service leave; those temporarily absent from their jobs through illness, accident and annual holidays. Included persons who lost their jobs through illness or accident. Otherwise as for 1954.

1966

The census questionnaire contained four questions relevant to householders' status as unemployed:

1. Did the person have a job or business of any kind last week? and
2. Did the person do any work at all last week without pay or profit? and

3. Was the person temporarily laid off by his employer without pay for the whole of last week? and
4. Did the person look for work last week?

Those enumerated as unemployed included those persons who did no work during the reference week and either looked for work or were temporarily laid off from a job. It excluded part-time workers (who usually worked less than 15 hours per week) looking for full-time work, and people working unpaid in family business or farm who may have been looking for paid work. 'Looking for work' meant:

1. being registered with Commonwealth Employment Service
2. approaching prospective employers
3. placing or answering advertisements
4. writing letters of application
5. awaiting the result of recent applications.

Various Combinations for Unemployment
1966 Census

Question	A	B	C	D	E
1.	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
2.	No	No	No	No	No
3.	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
4.	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes

Column A represents those unemployed because they had no job in the previous week, did not work, were not laid off but looked for work. Column B represents those temporarily laid off but not looking for work. Column C represents those laid off and looking for work while column D represents those who did have a job but were not paid due to job lay-off and were

not looking for work. Column E represents those not gainfully occupied but looking for work.

1971 As for 1966.

1976 As for 1966.

1981 The following questions were put to the householder:

1. Did the person do any work at all last week? and
2. Last week, did the person have a job of any kind, business, profession or farm? and
3. Did the person look for work last week?

'Looking for work' had the same meaning as 1966.

Various Combinations for Unemployment
1981 Census

Question	A	B	C
1.	No	Yes	No
2.	No	No	Yes
3.	Yes	Yes	Yes

Column A refers to those who did not work in the Census reference week; who had no job and were seeking work. Column B refers to those who worked during the reference week but had no (gainful) job and were seeking work. Column C refers to those who did not work but had a job and were looking for work (e.g. those on long-term lay-off).

The only difference, apart from the form of the questions, between the 1966 and 1981 Census was that the category unemployed excluded those on temporary lay-off who were not

seeking work.

SOURCES:

The Sources are: Census questionnaires and Statisticians' Reports 1891-1981.

REFERENCES:

Carey, B.J., Australian Labour Force Data 1947-1971, Institute of Labour Studies, Working Paper No.38, 1979;

Endres, A. and Cook, M., 'Concepts in Australian Unemployment Statistics to 1940', Aust. Econ. Papers, 22(40) June 1983, 68 -82;

Palmer, G., A Guide to Australian Economic statistics, Melbourne, 1966;

Scherer, P., 'A Critical Guide to Australian Labour Statistics', Aust. Bull. of Lab., Supplement No.1 1978;

Stevens, S.P., 'Problems in the Interpretation of Australian Statistics of Unemployment', Ec. Rec., 39(86) 1963, 142-53.

(B) TRADE UNION UNEMPLOYMENT RATES, 1912 TO 1953

Unions series include all members of reporting unions. Returns were not collected from unions whose members were predominately in permanent employment (government including railways) and casual work (for example wharf labourers).

Trade union secretaries were directed to state the total number of union members and also the numbers unemployed for more than 3 days in the week at the end of each quarter. In the absence of direct counts, estimates were accepted. Those out of work because of sickness, accident or lack of work were included. Employers those persons who were not members of unions and those without a previous gainful occupation were not, of course, included.

For some States the returns are a more representative sample than for others. The data on unemployment rates by State should not be read as indicating the relative degree of unemployment among trade unionists in individual States but as an indication of trends of unemployment as reported by some trade unions. The industries included in trade union returns are not uniform for each State.

SOURCES:

Comonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics Quarterly Summary of Australian Statistics. Further details are also in the Labour Report and in Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics, 1933 Census Statistician's Report 302-05.

REFERENCES:

Forster, C. 'Australian Unemploynt', Ec. rec. 41, 1965 pp.426-50

Endres, A. and Cook, M. 'Concepts in Australian Unemployment Statistics to 1940', Australian ec. pap. 22, 1983 68-82.

(C) REGISTERED UNEMPLOYED, 1904 TO 1981

Data for the period 1904 to 1940 are available but relate only to Victoria State Labour Exchanges.

Prior to the 1st October, 1900 two labour exchanges or 'bureaus' were administered by the Railways Department of Victoria but no registration figures were kept. Subsequently, the Public Works Department of Victoria took over labour exchange administration and its first set of monthly returns was published in 1904.

The figures include only males and within this category, anyone who registered and was at least 13 years old. Many applicants were eventually provided with temporary or casual employment (private and public) through the exchanges and some were advanced railway tickets to search for employment. Once notification was received that registered persons were in employment, they were lapsed from the register. Each year there were repeat registrations as temporary work ceased. Lapsing procedures may have varied over the 36 year period covered by this table.

The sharp rise in registrations during 1930 is due to making registration a prerequisite for unemployment relief works and sustenance payments.

Statistical records of registrations from 1941 are not available. In March 1942 the Department of Labour and National Service took responsibility for administering the State labour exchanges in Victoria. Data for each state is presented for the Commonwealth Employment Service from 1946.

Unemployed persons from 1946 comprise all persons who were still registered with the Commonwealth Employment Service (CES) at the Friday nearest the end of the month, who claimed when registering that they were not employed and were seeking full time employment, i.e. 35 hours or more per week. They

include persons referred to employers but whose employment was still unconfirmed and persons who had recently obtained employment without notifying the CES. All recipients of Unemployment Benefits are included.

A counting rule change in registering school leavers was introduced in 1973. Under previous arrangements it was possible in some States of Australia for school-leavers to be recorded as unemployed at the end of the school year even if they did not contact the CES once they had finished school. Students completed advance registration forms during the school year. The effect of this change ensured that 'registered unemployed' included only those school leavers who actually sought job placement assistance by indicating, once they had finished school, that they were ready to commence work immediately.

The CES counting definition otherwise remained unchanged through to the termination date. It should be noted, however, that the figures are sensitive to changes in the real value of unemployment benefits and changes in rules affecting eligibility for unemployment benefits over the period.

The first national scheme of unemployment relief was introduced by the Commonwealth Government on 1 July 1945. Prior to that, and with the exception of Queensland, unemployment assistance consisted of grants of rations or sustenance or provision of relief work. The table presents unemployment rates for single adult persons and married adult persons. Additional benefits for dependents were payable from 1973. Reduced rates have been payable for unemployed persons under 21 or 18 years of age. The rates reported are maximum rates and are reducible in relation to other earnings. The Department of Social Security is responsible for administration of the unemployment benefit scheme but administration operates in conjunction with the Commonwealth Employment Service, registration with which is a pre-requisite for payment of benefit. Nevertheless many CES registrants are not unemployment benefit recipients. Accordingly a final series is provided of numbers of persons in

receipt of unemployment benefit as at the end of June of each year. The sources for the unemployment benefit rate series are Department of Social Security, *Developments in Social Security: A Compendium of Legislative Changes Since 1908*, Research Paper 20, Development Division, June 1983 and DOSS, *Annual Report, 1982/83*. The number of beneficiaries is from the same Annual Report and earlier issues.

REFERENCES:

Report of the Advisory Committee on CES Statistics Melbourne AGPS, 1973

Review of the Commonwealth Employment Service, Canberra AGPS 1977.

Di Giorgio, F. and Endres, A. The Changing Fortunes of CES Unemployment Statistics, Australian Quarterly VOLUME 55(3), 1983.

(D) POPULATION SURVEY UNEMPLOYMENT, 1964 TO 1984

SEE SECTION ON POPULATION WORKFORCE - PAGE 16

(E) ASE UNEMPLOYMENT INDEXES, 1853 TO 1943

From 1852 the Amalgamated Society of Engineers (ASE) compiled statistics of branch membership; members in receipt of donation (unemployment) benefit; sick benefit; contingent (strike) benefit and superannuation benefit. Estimates in the above table express total ASE unemployed as a percentage of ASE non-superannuated membership eligible for unemployment benefit. Not all ASE branches distinguished unemployment due to separate factors of sickness and dispute. For this reason, two indexes are included in these tables. The first overall index includes 'sickness' and 'lack of work' as causes of unemployment. This index indicates the trend of labour which in a wide involuntary sense fails to receive wages in the engineering industry. The second index provides a measure of involuntary ASE unemployment due to 'lack of work'. Estimates of unemployment due to sickness, accident and disputes are excluded from this second index.

In all estimates only statistics of reporting branches are included. Different methods were employed over various periods to derive the indexes. Buckley revised Butlin's estimates up to 1894 after incorporating fresh material from UK records of the parent union. Monthly Reports of the ASE gave total expenditure on each and distinguished between the numbers of members on different rates of unemployment and sickness benefits. Benefit payments were scaled to the duration unemployed. Except in times of heavy depression, the number of members on 'short' benefits (a lower rate due to long term unemployment) was generally below the number of those on full benefit (paid after three consecutive days unemployed). Where a branch reported regularly, if not monthly, over a year, it was possible to make an estimate of the duration and the amount spent on short benefit as opposed to full benefit. Where a member appeared to be unemployed in one month only, he was credited with two weeks unemployment; if unemployed in two consecutive months, six weeks unemployment and so on. Together, the duration of short and full

benefit provided the basis for calculating the percentage unemployed. When a firm failed to lodge any monthly reports it was sometimes possible to include that branch in the calculations if the branch's total benefit expenditure was available (Buckley, 110-112).

The index given here for 1853-59 should be treated with caution because of the smallness of numbers involved and the lack of reporting branches.

In arriving at the unemployment series from 1905 the numbers involved in disputes, those 'away from trade' and an estimated number of apprentices involved in disputes are deducted from the series of members on donation benefit. From 1913 a separate unemployment series is directly available from union records. From this were subtracted an estimate of numbers involved in disputes. The essential differences between the indexes for the period 1905-1912 and those from 1913-1943 is that apprentices were excluded from the ASE labour force in the earlier period.

The series should be read to apply to NSW only to 1858, NSW and Victoria, 1859-63; NSW, Victoria, South Australia and Queensland 1864-91; and the Commonwealth thereafter.

Finally a number of specific points should be made:

The year used in the data is December year quarterly averages 1853 to 1876 inclusive. The 1877 figures are for the three quarters 1 January 1877 to 30 September 1877. Thereafter the year runs from October to September. Thus the 1877-78 figures are to the year October 1877 to September 1878. From 1895 inclusive the period is December year monthly averages except for 1897 where the November Report is lacking and an eleven month average is used.

For 1853 to 1855 inclusive membership figures are obtained from U.K. Monthly and Annual Reports of the Society. From 1856 figures are more

accurate quarterly averages derived from Australian branch reports. Membership entitled to unemployment benefit excludes those in receipt of superannuation benefit and those 'away from trade' (those permitted to retain union membership but not actively engaged in engineering employment). Thus percentages reported for unemployment refer to estimated number of members on unemployment ('donation') benefit as a percentage of non-superannuated members.

For the years 1853-1858 benefit payments data in Monthly Reports are fragmentary and uninformative. In the absence of a strike fund some members may have been paid from the unemployment fund during the years, 1860-61, 1874. Some allowance is made in these estimates for strikers in Sydney who were in receipt of unemployment benefit for 1861 only. In 1891 a special benefit was paid to some newly recruited, but unemployed, members not eligible for unemployment ('donation') benefit. Therefore estimates of unemployment for 1890-91 are below the actual level.

For the indexes 1905-1912 apprentices are excluded from ASE membership and unemployment series. It was likely that unemployment was less for apprentices and accordingly, the series for this period would tend to overestimate unemployment. From 1913, a 'member out of work' series was compiled by the ASE. An estimate of numbers involved in disputes was deducted from this series.

REFERENCES:

- K. Buckley 'A New Index of Engineering Unemployment' Economic Record, 43, 1967.
- N.G. Butlin 'An Index of Engineering Unemployment' Economic Record, 22, 1946.

(F) M. KEATINGS' UNADJUSTED UNEMPLOYMENT RATES 1911 TO 1961

Workforce Series A involved interpolating between population census benchmarks the movement in the workforce participation rate (proportion of a specific population group in the workforce) of each population age group. Intercensal workforce participation rate changes were estimated by fitting trends supplemented by data on educational enrolment ratios; a more detailed breakdown of female workforce participation rates and allowances for the effect of fluctuations in the level of demand for labour on the participation rate of each age and sex group. The workforce participation rates data was then applied to the known age structure of the population as at 30 June each year in order to obtain a workforce as at June each year. An estimate of the average workforce in each financial year was derived by taking the mean of the two June figures. This method makes no allowance for irregularities in the timing of changes in the workforce within each year. An attempt was made to allow for irregularities in the timing of migration when estimating the average male workforce. It was assumed that there would have been a larger leakage of female than male migrants from the workforce - so that the female workforce estimates did not include allowance for migration timing within a year.

Series B was derived by, firstly, adjusting the population census data to a consistent industry classification. Second, crews of overseas ships, Commonwealth Reconstruction Training scheme students and persons absent on leave without pay were excluded. Third, the population census figure of employment was increased by an estimate of the number of part-time employees and Australian overseas defence forces not recorded by the census. Employment in different primary and manufacturing industries was interpolated between benchmark census estimates. Prior to July 1941, the main source of cross-validating data was the Production Bulletin. The Production Bulletin data were first reconciled with the benchmark estimates so that differences in

coverage could be allowed for. Seasonal employment variations had to be incorporated in both Production Bulletin data and benchmark estimates. Between 1911 and 1943, the Production Bulletin only recorded permanent rural employees so that casual employment in rural industries was based on indexes of work completed by casual employees. Prior to the introduction of the payroll tax in July 1941, there were no data available which covered workforce engaged in industries such as railways, communications and public administration. Intercensal estimates of employment in such industries relied on information in various government reports. The movement of employment in some private services including finance and property between benchmarks was based on an index of wages paid deflated by an index of average earnings.

Keating's unadjusted unemployment series were, for all years up to and including 1946-47, obtained by taking the movement in trade union unemployment percentages. For the period 1947-48 to 1952-53, unemployment series were derived from both the trade union returns and the numbers registered as unemployed with the Commonwealth Employment Service (CES). CES data was also used to derive unemployment series for the years 1953-54 to 1960-61. The method used was to calculate the balance of unemployment at each of the population census dates after the registered unemployed were subtracted from the total census unemployment. This balance was then expressed as a percentage of the number of employees. This percentage of non-registered unemployed was then interpolated between census benchmarks with some allowance for fluctuations shown by CES registration. It was assumed in this calculation that the percentage of non-registered unemployed would vary to a lesser extent, with the level of the demand for labour, than would registered unemployed. The total number of unemployed was then derived by adding the registered unemployed to the estimated number of non-registered unemployed.

The Wages Class Workforce Series is civilian employees including absentees and the unemployed.

REFERENCES:

M. Keating, The Australian Workforce 1910-11 to 1960-61, Canberra 1973,
362-78.

Keating 'Australian Work Force and Employment', Aust. Econ. Hist. Rev. 7(2)
1967 150-55.