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Key facts
In 2014:

- Almost one-quarter of businesses used a fibre-optic Internet connection.
- 84 percent of businesses provided training to staff.
- 29 percent of businesses invested in expansion.
- The number of businesses with export sales has steadily increased since 2007.

Business activities
Last financial year at August 2007 to 2014

Source: Statistics New Zealand

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Commentary

- Increase in businesses with six or more employees
- Business Operations Survey gives a profile of New Zealand businesses in 2014
- More businesses engaging in exporting
- Less than one-third of businesses request finance
- Vacancies harder to fill; training rates high
- ICT now an established business tool, with more businesses getting faster Internet
- Access Business Operations Survey time series back to 2007

The Business Operations Survey is a modular survey that contains a repeating business operations module, an alternating information and communications technology (ICT) or innovation module, and a contracted module. In 2014, the contracted modules focused on skills acquisition and finance.

Increase in businesses with six or more employees

The number of businesses fitting our criteria for inclusion in the survey increased to 37,944 in 2014 – up from 35,307 in 2010. The Business Operations Survey only includes businesses with six or more employees.

Latest business demography statistics show there were 487,880 enterprises in 2014, and 90 percent of these had fewer than six employees. However, 89 percent of employees work in enterprises with six or more employees. This means the survey covers most of the business operations activity taking place.

Business profile by size
Last financial year at August 2014

Source: Statistics New Zealand

Business Operations Survey gives a profile of New Zealand businesses in 2014

The main characteristics we use to describe a business are the industry (as defined by the standard classification ANZSIC06) and the size (number of employees).
In 2014, the largest industries by business count were:

- agriculture, forestry, and fishing
- manufacturing
- construction
- retail trade
- accommodation and food services
- professional, scientific, and technical services.

Of the businesses with six or more employees, most had between six and 19 employees – almost three-quarters of businesses were in this size category. This was followed by businesses with 20 to 49 employees, at 17 percent.

The latest business demography statistics show that businesses with 100 or more employees were the least common. However, the highest proportion of employees – almost 50 percent – worked in businesses of this size. Over one-third of businesses with 100 or more employees were in the retail trade and manufacturing industries.

More businesses engaging in exporting

The survey collects information on participation rates in business activities, which include: export sales, sales from tourism, investment in expansion, and research and development. The trend since 2007 shows increases across each of these activities. The number of businesses engaged in export sales had the strongest growth, with an 8 percent increase since 2007.
Tourism sales and investment in expansion increased slightly since 2013. In 2014, 29 percent of businesses were investing in expansion, while 24 percent were involved in export sales.

![Business activities]

Less than one-third of businesses request finance

Businesses can request finance for a variety of reasons. In 2014, 8 percent of businesses requested equity finance, while almost one-quarter requested debt finance. Overall, less than one-third of businesses requested finance.

Businesses in the transport, postal, and warehousing industry had the highest proportion of businesses requesting debt finance – 37 percent. This industry also had the highest proportion of businesses to request equity finance – 14 percent.

Businesses may need to offer up collateral to secure finance. Thirty-seven percent of businesses used business assets as collateral for finance, while 26 percent used personal assets.

Figures from the survey reflect business counts only. We do not collect value amounts, such as the amounts in dollars.

Little change in credit facilities

We gauged how businesses felt about their financing situation by asking how their existing credit facilities changed over the last financial year. Overdraft/credit limits and security/collateral requirements for just over half of businesses stayed the same. However, just over one-third of businesses felt their interest rates had increased.
Fewer businesses have outstanding debt

Businesses can have different types of debt at one time, such as overdrafts, loans, leases, hire purchases, or credit cards. In 2014, fewer businesses reported having most of these kinds of debts, compared with 2010. At the same time, the proportion of businesses requesting debt finance to repay these debts has steadily declined since 2007.

Vacancies harder to fill; training rates high

Hard-to-fill job vacancies rise, as do total vacancies

In 2014, the proportion of businesses with job vacancies rose to 76 percent – compared with 68 percent in 2013. Even though more businesses had vacancies, they also reported a higher number of filled jobs over the same period (see Quarterly Employment Survey: September 2014 quarter).

In 2014, 91 percent of businesses in the accommodation and food industry reported they had vacancies. This is due to the nature of the industry, which tends to have short-term or casual staff, with a lot of turnover.

The lowest proportion of businesses with vacancies were in the agriculture, forestry, and fishing industry, and the ‘other services’ industry – both with 66 percent.

Find more information on employment and unemployment, and the labour market.
Management skills are most difficult to obtain from job applicants

One-fifth of businesses found it difficult to obtain job applicants with management or supervisory skills, making these the hardest skills to find. The next-hardest were professional or technical skills, and trade-related skills. Just under one-fifth of businesses struggled to get applicants with these skills.

Team-working skills were easier to find – over half of businesses said these skills were not difficult to obtain from job applicants. Also more common were oral communication and numeracy skills, with just under half of businesses saying these skills were not difficult to find.
All industries have high rates of staff training

In 2014, 84 percent of businesses trained at least some of their staff. Almost all businesses in the health care and social assistance industry trained staff. Even the lowest rate of training was fairly high, at 75 percent in the agriculture, forestry, and fishing industry.

ICT now an established business tool, with more businesses getting faster Internet

With information and communications technology (ICT) now an established business tool, the proportion of businesses using the Internet hasn’t changed, and businesses reported only a small increase in Internet sales. However, the number of fibre-optic connections for ultra-fast broadband continues to grow.

In 2014, almost one-quarter of businesses that use the Internet were already using a fibre-optic connection, and a further 13 percent planned to connect within a year.

Internet Service Provider Survey: 2014 shows that fibre-optic connections across residential and business sectors increased to 46,000 – up from just 13,000 connections in 2013.

Access Business Operations Survey time series back to 2007

Business Operations Survey time series going back to 2007 are now available in NZ.Stat. These replace the detailed Excel tables that used to accompany this release. We have published this data at the full two-digit ANZSIC breakdown and by size (number of employees). This will allow you to create your own customised tables.
The data available includes information on:

- international presence
- employment
- business performance
- other business factors such as comparison to competitors, requests for finance
- computer use
- information and communications technology (ICT) services and security
- impact of ICT
- Internet and network use
- web presence
- cellphone use
- recruitment
- internal skills gaps
- barriers to training
- recent financing arrangements
- equity finance including reasons for requests, intent of use, provision
- debt finance including reasons for requests, intent of use, provision.

For summary tables in Excel, see the 'Downloads' box.
Definitions

About the Business Operations Survey

The Business Operations Survey collects information on the operations of New Zealand businesses. This information is used to quantify business behaviour, capacity, and performance. The survey gives insights into business activities, barriers, and motivations, and effects behind New Zealand business operations.

More definitions

ANZSIC06: Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification System 2006.

Business Frame: a register of all businesses operating in New Zealand.

Credit facilities: refers to access to finance and related charges such as interest rates and fees, and security/collateral requirements.

Debt finance: any finance that the business must repay (eg overdrafts, credit cards, and convertible debt).

Employees: the number of employees is defined by an enterprise's rolling mean employment (RME) count. RME is a 12-month moving average of the monthly employment count (EC) figure. The EC is obtained from tax data.

Enterprise: a business or service entity operating in New Zealand. It can be a company, partnership, trust, estate, incorporated society, producer board, local or central government organisation, voluntary organisation, or self-employed individual.

Equity finance: Equity finance is any finance which is provided in exchange for a share in the ownership of the business.

Research and development (R&D): any activity characterised by originality; it should have investigation as its primary objective, and an outcome of gaining new knowledge, or new or improved materials, products, services, or processes. Includes buying technical knowledge or information abroad. Does not include market research, efficiency studies, or style changes to existing products.
Related links

Next release


Subscribe to information releases, including this one, by completing the online subscriptions form.

The release calendar lists all information releases by date of release.

Past releases

Business Operations Survey has links to past releases.

Related information

Research and Development Survey: 2012

*Research and Development Survey: 2014* will be available 27 March 2015.

The survey questionnaire we mail to respondents is available from the 'Downloads' box.
Data quality

Period-specific information
This section contains information that has changed since the last release.

- Reference period
- Response rate
- Interpreting the data
- Consistency with other periods
- Data presentation

General information
This section contains information that does not change between releases.

- Data source
- Population and sample selection
- Interpreting the data
- Accuracy of the data
- Consistency with other periods or datasets

Period-specific information

Reference period
The survey was posted out in August 2014. We collected information for the last financial year for which the business had data available at that point.

Response rate
We aimed for an 80 percent response rate. We achieved an actual response rate of 80 percent, which represented 5,971 businesses from a population of 37,944 enterprises.

Interpreting the data

Sampling errors
Table 1 presents the sample errors for the different size and industry groups in the survey.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Business Operations Survey: 2014 sample errors by size and industry</th>
<th>Sampling error (percentage)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Business size</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6–19 employees</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20–49 employees</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50–99 employees</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100+ employees</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Industry</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture, forestry, &amp; fishing</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry</td>
<td>Value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial fishing</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forestry and logging</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture, forestry, and fishing support services</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Food, beverage, &amp; tobacco</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Textile, clothing, footwear, &amp; leather</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Wood &amp; paper product</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Printing, publishing, &amp; recorded media</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Petroleum, coal, chemical, &amp; associated product</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Non-metallic mineral product</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Metal product</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Transport &amp; industrial machinery &amp; equipment</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Other machinery &amp; equipment</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Other manufacturing</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electricity, gas, water, &amp; waste services</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wholesale trade</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Machinery &amp; equipment wholesaling</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Other wholesale trade</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail trade</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation &amp; food services</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport, postal, &amp; warehousing</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information media &amp; telecommunications</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Publishing</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Motion picture</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Telecommunications</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial &amp; insurance services</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Finance</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Insurance</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Auxiliary</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rental, hiring, &amp; real estate services</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional, scientific, &amp; technical services</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Computer systems design</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Other professional scientific</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative &amp; support services</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education &amp; training</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health care &amp; social assistance</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts &amp; recreation services</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other services</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The sampling errors provided in table 1 are measured at the 95 percent confidence level.
How to use the sampling errors

For all estimates at the national level, we would expect our sample estimate to differ from the true population value by an average of plus or minus 0.8 percent.

For example, if the estimated number of businesses in New Zealand reporting an activity is 20,596. This estimate is subject to a sampling error of approximately plus or minus 0.8 percent. This means that 95 percent of the possible sample of the same size will produce an estimate between 20,596 - 0.8 percent, and 20,596 + 0.8 percent – that is, between 20,431 and 20,761.

As another example, if the estimated number of businesses in the construction industry reporting an activity is 15,358. This estimate is subject to a sampling error of approximately plus or minus 3.3 percent. This means that 95 percent of the possible sample of the same size will produce an estimate between 15,358 - 3.3 percent, and 15,358 + 3.3 percent – that is, between 14,851 and 15,865.

The sampling errors detailed in table 1 show the sample errors for the count estimates published in NZ.Stat. We can provide sample errors for percentages presented in the summary tables (eg percentage results) on request. We can also provide sample errors for specific results if requested.

See sampling errors, under 'General information', for more information.

Consistency with other periods

The modular structure of the Business Operations Survey means its content changes each year as results are released. Statistics NZ works with other organisations to develop the mix of content for this survey.
Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Module A</th>
<th>Module B</th>
<th>Module C</th>
<th>Module D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Business operations</td>
<td>Innovation</td>
<td>Business practices</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Business operations</td>
<td>ICT</td>
<td>Employment practices</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Business operations</td>
<td>Innovation</td>
<td>International engagement</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Business operations</td>
<td>ICT</td>
<td>Business strategy and skills</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Business operations</td>
<td>Innovation</td>
<td>Business practices</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Business operations</td>
<td>ICT</td>
<td>Price and wage setting</td>
<td>Financing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Business operations</td>
<td>Innovation</td>
<td>International engagement</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Business operations</td>
<td>ICT</td>
<td>Impact of regulation</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Business operations</td>
<td>Innovation</td>
<td>Business practices</td>
<td>Skill needs and recruitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Business operations</td>
<td>ICT</td>
<td>Skills acquisition</td>
<td>Finance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: ICT – information and communication technology; N/A – not applicable.*

In addition, each module in the survey has its own specific objectives. The modules included in the Business Operations Survey 2014 and their objectives are listed below.

**Module A: Business operations**

Provides a longitudinal series of information about business performance. This will help development of models that investigate causal relationships. As well as traditional measures of performance such as turnover and profitability, there is also a need to collect information on such areas as export intensity. The purpose of collecting information is to analyse relationships between the environment in which a business operates and the results it achieves.

**Module B: Information and communications technology (ICT)**

Module B alternates between innovation, in odd years, and information and communication technology (ICT), in even years. The purpose of this module is to provide comprehensive, official statistics on:

- computers, ICT services, and security
- impact of ICT
- Internet use and connection
- purchases and sales of goods or services via the Internet
- web presence
- computer networks
- cellphone use.
Module C: Skills acquisition

This module collects data on skills, training, and recruitment. Some of the questions included in the module have been featured in other modules, such as:

- skill needs and recruitment (2013)
- business strategy and skills (2008)

The 2014 module collected information on:

- recruitment of staff, including barriers to recruitment
- internal skill gaps
- training, both internal and external
- barriers to training

Module D: Finance

This module covers data previously collected in the 2010 and 2009 Business Operations Surveys about recent financing arrangements. These have been included to gain a better understanding of the current financing situation of businesses. The module collected information on:

- recent financing experiences
- equity finance, including reasons and barriers to equity finance
- debt finance, including reasons and barriers to debt finance.

Due to questionnaire changes between years, not all data is directly comparable. For example, when asking respondents about training, the questions have differed between a yes/no type question (in 2008 and 2006), and a scale of percentage of employees who were trained (in 2014, 2013, 2009, and 2005).

Data presentation

For the 2014 release, the data is presented differently to how it was in the past.

Previously, we presented data in Excel files, with one table per question asked in the survey. The results were usually shown as a percentage of businesses in each business size or industry category. Due to space constraints, we only presented two years’ worth of data.

In 2014, we presented data in NZ.Stat, with one table per module in the survey. The results are given as rounded counts of businesses, to provide greater transparency of the data. These tables show data available back to 2007, to allow easier time-series comparison.

Due to the change how we present results, the results in this release may differ from previously published figures. This may be because of changes in the questionnaire, revisions, and changes in methodology. The data in NZ.Stat is the most up-to-date and correct, and supersedes any previously published data.

The NZ.Stat release excludes data for 2005 and 2006, as that data was collected using the ANZSIC96 classification, whereas data collected from 2007 onwards was collected using the
ANZSIC06 classification. We aim to release the 2005 and 2006 data at a later stage, using ANZSIC06 to make the data comparable to other years.

**General information**

**Data source**

For New Zealand's economic performance to be measured against initiatives aimed at increasing economic growth, data on a variety of measures needs to be collected.

Because of the large range of data needed, Statistics NZ developed an integrated, modular survey – the Business Operations Survey – to collect the required information and minimise the reporting load for New Zealand businesses. The survey was designed to include a range of ‘modules’ and has been run annually by Statistics NZ since 2005.

The Business Operations Survey is a postal survey. We made initial contact with key and/or complex businesses in the survey by telephone, before the mail-out, to determine who to direct the survey to. For all other businesses, we addressed the survey form to the managing director. The survey was posted out in August and collected information for the last financial year for which the business had data available at that point.

**Population and sample selection**

The target population for the Business Operations Survey was live enterprise units on Statistics NZ’s Business Frame that at the population selection date:

- were economically significant enterprises (those that have an annual GST turnover figure of greater than $30,000)
- had six or more employees
- had been operating for one year or more
- were classified to ANZSIC06 codes as ‘in scope’ in list 1 below
- were private enterprises as defined by New Zealand Institutional Sector 1996 Classification (NZISC96) as in list 2 below.

An enterprise is defined as a business or service entity operating in New Zealand, such as a company, partnership, trust, government department or agency, state-owned enterprise, university, or self-employed individual.

**List 1 – ANZSIC06 codes**

ANZSIC06 code – description

A – Agriculture, forestry, and fishing
B – Mining
C – Manufacturing
D – Electricity, gas, water, and waste services
E – Construction
F – Wholesale trade
G – Retail trade
H – Accommodation and food services
I – Transport, postal, and warehousing
J – Information media and telecommunications
K – Financial and insurance services
L – Rental, hiring, and real estate services
M – Professional, scientific, and technical services
N – Administrative and support services
P – Education and training
Q – Health care and social assistance
R91 – Sport and recreation activities
R92 – Gambling activities
S94 – Repair and maintenance

Out of scope
O – Public administration and safety
R89 – Heritage activities
R90 – Creative and performing arts activities
S95 – Personal and other services
S96 – Private household employing staff and undifferentiated goods and service producing activities of households for own use

List 2 – NZISC96 codes
NZISC96 code – description
1111 – Private corporate producer enterprises
1121 – Private non-corporate producer enterprises
1211 – Producer boards
1311 – Central government enterprises
2211 – Private registered banks
2221 – Private other broad money (M3) depository organisations
2291 – Private other depository organisations nec
2311 – Private other financial organisations excluding insurance and pension funds
2411 – Private insurance and pension funds

Out of scope
1321 – Local government enterprises
21 – Central bank
2212, 2213, 2222, 2223, 2292, 2293, 2312, 2313, 2412, 2413 – Central and local government financial intermediaries
3 – General government
4 – Private non-profit organisations serving households
5 – Households
6 – Rest of world

Sample design

The sample design was a two-level stratification according to ANZSIC industry and employment size groups. This information was obtained using enterprise ANZSIC industry and employment information from Statistics NZ’s Business Frame.

The first level of stratification was 36 ANZSIC groupings. Within each of the ANZSIC groups there is a further stratification by employment size group. The four employment size groups used in the sample design are:

- 6–19 employees (small)
- 20–29 employees (medium 1)
- 30–49 employees (medium 2)
- 50 or more employees (large).
The two medium groups have been amalgamated, and the large size group further broken down for this publication, as these businesses were of particular interest for some of the results.

The survey has been designed to produce aggregate statistics at a national level. This design does not facilitate statistics to be produced at a regional level.

**Interpreting the data**

**Unit non-response**

Unit (or complete) non-response occurs when units in the sample do not return the questionnaire. The initial selection weight of the remaining units in the stratum was adjusted to account for the unit non-response (no item non-response imputation would occur for the units that did not return the questionnaire).

**Item non-response**

Item (or partial) non-response is when units return the questionnaire but some questions are not answered. No item non-response imputation was carried out for units that did not answer 60 percent or more of the questions they were required to answer (based on questionnaire routing rules). The respondents who did not meet this criterion were classified as unit non-responses and the weights were adjusted accordingly.

**Imputation of numeric questions**

The imputation methods used were weighted mean imputation and donor imputation. Using the weighted mean method, a weighted mean was calculated from linked responding units for each numeric linecode within each imputation cell. Non-responding units were then imputed with the weighted mean for their imputation cell. Weighted mean imputation was used to impute totals.

Donor imputation randomly selected a donor from within each imputation cell. The non-respondent was then imputed with the value(s) from the donor. Donor imputation was used to impute components and percentages so that the distribution was maintained.

**Imputation of categoric variables**

For categoric imputation the method used was nearest neighbour imputation, which involved finding a donor with the most similar responses. The donor supplied responses for all categoric variables requiring imputation. If the donor unit did not respond to any of the variables requiring a response, then we chose the next best donor to supply this information. This was continued until all the variables had a response.

**Accuracy of the data**

**Treatment of sub-industries**

The sub-industries presented in this release (indented industries in the tables) should be treated with caution since they have higher sample errors than those mentioned in Table 1.02. Further disaggregation below design level results in further loss of data quality.
The Business Operations Survey results are subject to measurement errors, including both non-sample and sample errors. These errors should be considered when analysing the results from the survey.

**Non-sample errors**

Non-sample errors include mistakes by respondents when completing questionnaires, variation in the respondents’ interpretation of the questions asked, and errors made during the processing of the data. In addition, the survey applied imputation methodologies to cope with non-respondents. Statistics NZ adopts procedures to minimise these types of error, but they may still occur and are not quantifiable.

Given the nature of the data collected, there are limitations on the level of accuracy that can be expected from the survey. Businesses’ records may not be kept in the form required for the survey and some estimation by the respondent may be required.

**Sampling errors**

The estimates in this report are based on a sample of businesses. Somewhat different figures might have been obtained if a complete census of the entire business population had been taken using the same questionnaire and processing methods etc. Because the estimates are based on a sample of businesses, all estimates have a sampling error associated with them. The variability of a survey estimate, due to the random nature of the sample selection process, is measured by its sampling error.

Sampling errors vary from estimate to estimate, and with population breakdown and population size. Exact sampling errors can be produced for each variable within the Business Operations Survey upon request if required.

**Consistency with other periods or datasets**

**Industry classification change**

From 2008, the design of the survey was updated to the Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification 2006 (ANZSIC06). See the technical notes of Business Operations Survey: 2008 for more information.

**Information collected**

Due to the modular nature of the survey, different data is released each year from the Businesses Operations Survey. Where possible, the current information has been compared with the most recent data from previous iterations of the surveys.

**Research and Development Survey**

Results on research and development from the Business Operations Survey differ slightly from those from the Research and Development Survey because of differences in sample selection, target population, and reporting periods.

The Research and Development Survey collects information from businesses, government, and higher education (universities) to gain an accurate picture of R&D activity in New Zealand. It is targeted to businesses we know perform R&D, and collects detailed information on their R&D expenditure, as well as staff, funding, type, benefits and purpose of research. Due to the
expanded definition in the R&D survey of what R&D includes, and the targeted population, the expenditure in the R&D survey is higher than in the Business Operations Survey. The results from the R&D survey are considered the official measure of R&D expenditure.

The Business Operations Survey is a sample of businesses in New Zealand, regardless of if they perform R&D or not. Therefore, some R&D activity is not collected by BOS. However, the BOS survey does go to a wider selection of businesses, in industries not known to perform R&D. Therefore, BOS provides a more detailed picture of the spread of business R&D across the economy. It also provides information on related activities such as innovation, to help understand what may influence a business and their R&D activity. It is the supporting information from BOS on other activities that helps complement the R&D survey.

More information

Statistics in this release have been produced in accordance with the Official Statistics System principles and protocols for producers of Tier 1 statistics for quality. They conform to the Statistics NZ Methodological Standard for Reporting of Data Quality.

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Tables

The following tables are available in Excel format from the 'Downloads' box. If you have problems viewing the files, see opening files and PDFs.

Summary tables

Table 1.01    Business profile – size by industry, last financial year at August 2014
Table 1.02    Business activities, last financial year at August 2007 to 2014
Table 1.03    Internet sales, last financial year at August 2012 and 2014
Table 1.04    Plans to use fibre-to-the-premise connection, last financial year at August 2014
Table 1.05    Vacancies and training, last financial year at August 2013 and 2014
Table 1.06    Applicant skills, last financial year at August 2014
Table 1.07    Business finance, last financial year at August 2010 and 2014
Table 1.08    Change in credit facilities, last financial year at 2014
Table 1.09    Outstanding debt, last financial year at August 2010 and 2014

Detailed tables in NZ.Stat

Detailed tables for all variables in the survey, broken down by business size and sub-industry, are available in NZ.Stat. These tables are separated into the different topics or modules in the questionnaire:

- business operations
- information and communications technology (ICT)
- innovation
- business practices
- business strategy and skills
- employment practices
- international engagement
- price and wage setting
- regulation
- skills needs and recruitment
- skills acquisition
- financial conditions.

Next release