



## Australian Population Association

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#### ***The forecast accuracy of Australian Bureau of Statistics national population projections***

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This paper evaluates the accuracy of previous Australian Bureau of Statistics national population projections. In addition to total population forecast errors, also examined are errors in age-sex-specific populations, fertility, mortality, migration, the elderly dependency ratio and the jump-off population. Amongst the error measures employed is an alternative Percentage Error which takes into account offsetting errors in fertility, mortality and migration. Total projected populations are also compared with those obtained from naïve forecasts in which the average annual growth rate of the last five years is assumed constant. As well as giving useful feedback on past forecasting efforts, the analysis provides information which can help inform future probabilistic population forecasts.