



Business Operations Survey

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Business Operations Survey

Abstract

The Business Operations Survey is used to collect performance measures from New Zealand businesses to better understand the practices and behaviours they undertake which may have an impact on their performance. These statistics feed into policy and micro data research that helps identify the current situation of the New Zealand business environment, as well as potential areas of improvement. The survey covers all businesses in New Zealand that have 6 or more employees, and have been active for one year or more.

Purpose

The main objective of the survey is to collect information on the operations of New Zealand businesses in order to quantify business behaviour, capacity, and performance. In addition, each module in the survey has its own specific objectives. The modules included in the Business Operations Survey and their objectives are listed below.

Module A: Business Operations

This module aims to provide a longitudinal series of information relating to business performance. This will assist in the development of models aimed at investigating 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 business environmental information is to analyse any relationships between the environment in which a business operates and the results it achieves.

Module B: Innovation or Information and Communications Technology (ICT)

The content of module B alternates between Innovation (odd years) and ICT (even years). The objectives of each module are as follows:

ICT: This module aims to provide a core set of comprehensive, official statistics on businesses use of:

- 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
- cellphones.

Innovation: The objective of the innovation module is to provide information on the characteristics of innovation in New Zealand's private-sector businesses. This information will enable the development of policy that will facilitate innovation, and understand the dynamics of innovative businesses. The innovation module runs every two years, and replaced Statistics NZ's former Innovation Survey, last run in 2003. The module was designed in accordance with OECD guidelines to develop an understanding of the contribution of all aspects of innovation to the New Zealand economy by measuring:

- levels of firm innovation
- how and why firms collaborate with other firms and institutions in order to innovate
- factors affecting the ability of firms to innovate
- outcomes of innovation for firms, including its effect on exports.

Module C and D: Contestable module

The contestable module content changes year on year. Modules that have been run in the past are:

2005: Business practices

2006: Employment practices

2007: International engagement

2008: Business strategy and skills

2009: Business practices

2010: Price and wage setting; Financing

2011: International engagement

2012: Regulation

2013: Business practices; Skill needs and recruitment

2014: Skills acquisition; Business finance

2015: International engagement

2016: Regulation; Skill acquisition
 2017: Business Practices; Health and Safety
 2018: Changing nature of work; Business finance
 2019: International engagement
 2020: COVID-19
 2021: The Transition to a Low Emissions Economy

The specific objectives can be found in the study of each year.

Data Collection BOS

Subjects	Business Operations, ICT, Innovation, Business Practices, Employment Practices, International Engagement, Business strategy and skills, Price and wage setting, Financing, Regulation
Keywords	Operations, ICT, Regulation, Investment, Tourism, Exports, R&D, Employment, Performance, technology, competition, infrastructure, shareholding, finance, computers, security, Internet, Connection, activities, Purchases, Sales, Websites, Networks, Cellphones, Innovation type, Development of innovations, Activities to support innovation, Product development expenditure, Abandoned activities, Not yet completed activities, Reasons for innovation, Source of ideas, Co-operative arrangements, Intellectual property, Barriers, product standards, audits, inspections, monitoring, Resource Management Act, Consents or approvals, Project cancellation, National environment standards, Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act, Emissions Trading Scheme, Compliance costs, Current overseas income, source of overseas income, withdrawal from overseas income, reasons , future expansion, strategies, barriers, previous overseas income, Overseas production, purchases from overseas, price review, price change, exporting, wage and salary bargaining, unions, recent financing, Debt finance, goals, planning, suppliers, benchmarking, information, employee practices, market focus, staff breakdown, vacancies, skill gaps, skills, training, remuneration, Flexible working arrangements, constraints, employment relations disputes
Spatial Coverage	New Zealand
Highest Level	New Zealand
Lowest Level	New Zealand

Frequency

4 Annual

Usage and limitations of the data

Research use of the unit record data is high.

Analysis both by Stats NZ staff and also by researchers using the Data Laboratory takes place on an annual basis. Data has also been incorporated into the LBD (Longitudinal Business Database).

In addition, sponsors of the survey receive anonymised and confidentialised unit record datasets each year which are held off-site (as per the annual MOUs) and they use these for various programmes of micro-research.

The survey gets many customised data requests which use the final datasets- usually around 4 a year.

Internally, one variable from the data set is used to help identify the population for the Research and Development (R&D) survey, as Business Operations Survey asks businesses if they perform Research and Development.

The Research and development survey runs every two years, but uses all years of the Research and Development indicator from the Business Operations Survey.

Designed to produce results at an overall New Zealand level, and at 2 digit ANZSIC (industry) level. Results can be produced at levels other than this, but the quality is significantly lower, so it is not recommended.

Main users of the data

Central Government, stakeholders of Module C, i.e. a wide range of users due in part to the variety provided by Module C. The Business Operations Survey contributes to a range of wider OECD and international statistics by providing New Zealand data on innovation and business use of ICT measures for inclusion in international scorecards.

Significant events impacting this study series

Questionnaire changes from previous years in Module A and Module B. Changes have been mapped for easy use.

Related Materials

Other

- [Business Operations Survey Information releases](#)

- [Business Operations Survey information page](#)

Variables

Concepts

BOS Concepts

Name	Description
ANZSIC 06	Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification System 2006 . The classification can be found under 'Classifications' and 'Codes'
Border regulation	Includes Customs and Excise Act 1996, Biosecurity Act 1993, Immigration Act 2009
Business and trade laws	Includes Companies Act 1993, Commerce Act 1986, Fair Trading Act 1986, Consumer Guarantess Act 1993
Business Frame	A register of all businesses operatin in New Zealand that is maintained by Statistics New Zealand, and populated by Inland Revenue Department tax data
Carbon neutral	A business is carbon neutral when it emits no greenhouse gas or offsets any emissions it produces by purchasing credits.
Cellphones	Includes all cellphones and devices with cellphone capability used by employees and working proprietors. Does not include cellphones owned by staff that are used for work purposes.
Computers	Includes destops, laptops, or handheld computers (eg personal digital assisstants). Includes servers mainframes. Does not include computer controlled machinery, electronic tills.
Computer networks	A computer network is a system for communicatio between computers. Computers can be linked within the same building, over a wide geographic area, or to other organisations. Does not include the Internet
Cooperative arrangements	<p>Cooperative arrangements Active innovation participation with another organisation or individual.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes collaborative arrangements for innovation. • Each party should bring exclusive knowledge or expertise to the cooperative arrangement. • Partners do not necessarily gain immediate commercial benefit from the cooperative arrangement.
Debt finance	Debt finance is any finance that the business must repay (eg overdrafts, credit cards, convertable debt). Includes requests that were fully approved, partly approved, withdrawn or declined.
Employees	The number of employees is defined by an enterprise's rolling mean employment (RME). RME is a 12-month moving average of monthly employment figures. We obtain employment figures from tax data.
Employment regulation	Includes Employment Relations Act 2000, Holidays Act 2003, Parental Leave and Employment Protection Act 1987, Minimum Wage Act 1983
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.
Environmental regulation	Includes Resource Management Act 1991, Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act 1996, Emissions Trading Scheme, Conversation Act 1986
Equity finance	Equity finance is any finance which is provided in exchange for a share in the ownership of the business. Includes requests that were fully approved, partly approved, withdrawn or declined.

Expenditure on applying for resource consents	Includes application fees, legal costs, consultancy costs, salaries and wage for internal staff time spent on resource consent related work.
Full Time	Working 30 hours or more per week
Generating overseas income	<p>Generating overseas income The aim is to capture active sales overseas. Overseas income is from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • overseas sales of goods and services • fees and royalties from licensing and franchising.
Goods and services tax (GST)	We exclude GST from financial information used in the Business Operations Survey.
Graduated random rounding (GRR)	With graduated random rounding (GRR), cells of different sizes are rounded to different bases. The rounding base gradually increases as the cell size does. This means the ratio of the rounding base to the cell size is reasonably constant.
ICT security attack	An ICT security attack eg a virus, trojan horse, or worm. Does not include attacks that were successfully prevented by security measures in place
ICT support	Support is help in installing and using ICT products (eg troubleshooting, trianing, software fixes / patches, and upgrades). Support may be given via telephone, email, or face to face. ISP is Internet service provider.
Impact of Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act	Includes approval processes for new hazardous substances or new organisms, staff training for hazardous substances, certification for locations, equipment, and people.
In-house Research and Development	Includes subcontractors working-inhouse. Does not include research and development funded by the business, but carried out by another organisation.
Innovation	<p>Innovation Developing or introducing any new or significantly improved activity.</p> <p>This includes activity to improve products, processes, and methods that the business was the first to develop and those adopted from other organisations. We collect innovation data according to the definitions in the [OECD Oslo Manual (2005)](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/3859598/5889925/OSLO-EN.PDF).</p>
International engagement	<p>International engagement Businesses with some form of engagement with overseas countries. This engagement includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • **using goods and services sourced from overseas** – how businesses access goods and services from overseas and what firms gain from being foreign owned. • **workforce and/or offices overseas** – measures the overseas activities of businesses. Until 2011, we measured overseas activity by overseas production. From 2015, it includes overseas production of goods and services and overseas endeavours that require significant investment to establish and maintain an offshore presence. This category is now overseas based: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o sales and marketing teams o senior management presence o research and development (including product design) o goods production o providing services to customers o after sales services o back office services.

Investment in Expansion	Includes purchase of one or more businesses or assets (eg land, buildings, equipment). Includes development or introduction of new or significantly improved goods, services, or processes. Includes entry into new markets. Does not include increases in turnover for existing business. Does not include ongoing operational expenses.
Last financial year	Refers to the most recent financial year (at August) for which the business has results available.
Managers and professionals	Managers lead organisations, departments or divisions and determine the policy of the organisation or department (eg General manager, finance manager). Professionals perform analytical, conceptual or creative tasks with skills equivalent to a bachelor degree or higher (eg accountant, engineer, journalist, computer programmer).
Marketing methods	Marketing methods Sometimes referred to as marketing innovation. Activity intended to increase the appeal of goods or services for specific market segments, or to gain entry to new markets.
National environment standards regulation	Includes Air Quality Act 2004, Sources of Human Drinking Water 2007, Telecommunications Facilities 2008, Electricity Transmission Activities 2009, Managing of Contaminants in Soil to Protect Human Health 2011.
New goods or services	New goods or services Sometimes referred to as product innovation. Does not include selling new goods or services wholly produced and developed by other businesses.
Operational processes	Operational processes Sometimes referred to as process innovation. The method of producing or distributing goods or services.
Organisational or managerial processes	Organisational or managerial processes Sometimes referred to as organisational innovation. Significant change in the business strategy, structure, or routine.
Other occupations	Includes clerical, sales and service workers who perform administrative, organisational, liaison, sales, and clerical tasks, and may provide support services in the fields of finance etc (eg secretary, receptionists, sales representative, waiter). Includes production and transport workers who operate vehicles or complex equipment (eg bulldozer operator, bus driver, storeperson). Includes labourers and related workers who perform routine tasks, either manually or using equipment (eg cleaner, factory hand, trades assistant. Includes all other occupations.
Part time	Working less than 30 hours per week
Placing orders via the Internet	Includes capital and current purchases (eg travel, and other services, office supplies, equipment). Includes orders placed via the Internet whether or not payment was made on-line. Includes orders placed via websites, specialised Internet marketplaces and extranets. Does not include order submitted via conventional email or orders which were cancelled or not completed.
Product standards and product safety regulation	Includes Building Act 2004, Food Act 1981, Animal Product Act 1996, Wine Act 2003, standards developed by organisations like Standards New Zealand, New Zealand Good Safety Authority.
Receiving orders via the Internet	Includes orders received on behalf of other businesses, and orders received by other businesses on behalf of the business. Includes orders received via the Internet whether or not payment was made on line. Includes orders received via websites, specialised Internet marketplaces, and extranets. Does not include orders submitted via conventional email or orders which were cancelled or not completed
Research and Development	Any activity characterised by originality. R&D should have investigation as its primary objective, and an outcome of gaining new knowledge, or new or improved materials, products, services, or processes. R&D includes buying technical knowledge or information, both from within New Zealand and from overseas. R&D excludes market research, efficiency studies, or style changes to existing products.
Rolling mean employment (RME)	Rolling mean employment (RME) Is a 12-month moving average of monthly employment figures. We obtain employment figures from tax data.

Staff	Includes those temporarily absent from work (eg sick, on leave, strike, or temporary lay-off), casual staff, all managerial and executive staff (eg Chief Executive). Does not includes contractors (eg temporary staff paid by employment agencies), working proprietors not actively engaged in the operation of the business
Technicians and associate professionals	Technicians and associate professionals perform complex technical or administrative tasks, often in support of professionals or managers (eg technical officer, building inspector, legal executive).
Tourism sales	Includes the sale of goods and services indirectly related to tourism but purchased by tourists (eg retail sales of food, alcohol, and clothing). Includes the sale of goods and services directly related to tourism (eg accommodation, transport, and recreation services).
Tradespersons and related workers (including apprentices)	Tradespersons and related workers perform tasks requiring trade specific technical knowledge. Includes all apprentices and trade supervisors (eg electrician, mechanic, hairdresser, baker).
Websites or web presences	Includes a presence on another entity's website if the business has substantial control over the content of the page. Does not include listing in an on-line directory
Workplace safety regulation	Includes Health and Safety Employment Act - commonly known as Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) 1992, Accident Compensation Act 2001.