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**AUSTRALIA: BASIC DATA**

- GEOGRAPHY** Australia has a total land area of 2,970,000 square miles (7,700,000 kilometres), with approximately 40 percent of the land mass within the tropics. Mainland Australia is mostly a flat and low-lying land, the center of which consists of vast, arid desert.
- CLIMATE** The capital cities and coastal areas of the temperate zones, where most of the population lives, enjoy pleasant climates with long hours of sunshine and mild winters. However, Darwin, Brisbane and Sydney tend to be hot and humid in summer.
- POPULATION** 17.8 million (1993)
- STATE FIGURES**
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|------------------------------|-----------|
| New South Wales              | 6,005,000 |
| Victoria                     | 4,544,000 |
| Queensland                   | 3,129,000 |
| Western Australia            | 1,769,000 |
| South Australia              | 1,598,000 |
| Tasmania                     | 511,000   |
| Australian Capital Territory | 291,000   |
| Northern Territory           | 171,000   |
- TIME** Western Australia is 8 hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time; South and Northern Territories are 9.5 hours ahead of GMT; and other states are 10 hours ahead.
- MEASURES** The metric system is used throughout Australia.
- LANGUAGE** English.
- CURRENCY** The currency is the Australian dollar (A\$), and is divided into 100 units (cents,¢). As at 30 September, 1994, the rate of exchange was \$CDN1 = 1.028\$AUD.
- HOLIDAYS** The number of statutory holidays varies from state to state. Holidays observed throughout Australia are as follows: January 1, Australia Day (January 26), Good Friday, Easter Monday, April 25, Queen's Birthday, December 25 and 26.