



RESEARCH in the national interest - enabling the future

  
 Australian Government  
 Australian Research Council

ARC/NHMRC Research Administrators' Seminar  
in association with ARMS

Monday 7 Nov 2011

Research



RESEARCH in the national interest - enabling the future

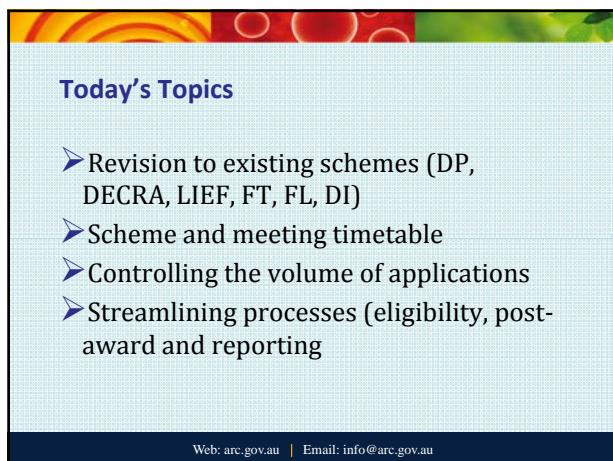
  
 Australian Government  
 Australian Research Council

**Improvement and Innovation in the ARC**

Monday 7 Nov 2011

**Professor Andrew Wells**  
 Deputy CEO  
 Australian Research Council

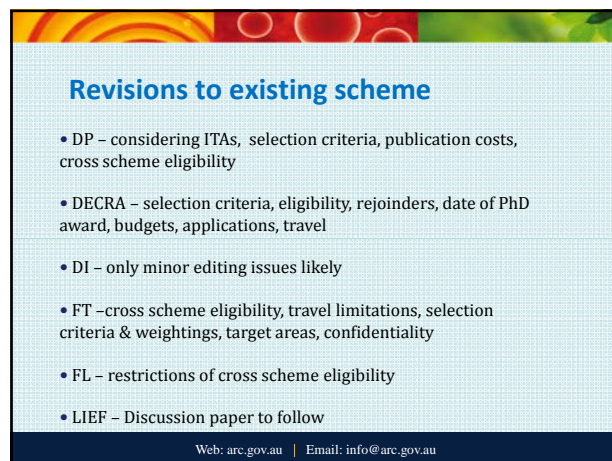
Research



**Today's Topics**

- Revision to existing schemes (DP, DECRA, LIEF, FT, FL, DI)
- Scheme and meeting timetable
- Controlling the volume of applications
- Streamlining processes (eligibility, post-award and reporting)

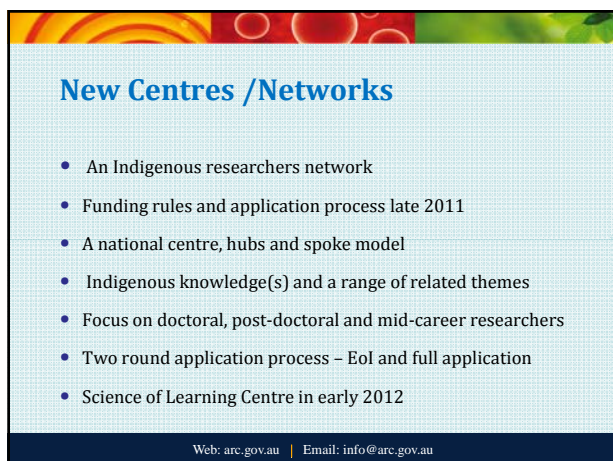
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**Revisions to existing scheme**

- DP - considering ITAs, selection criteria, publication costs, cross scheme eligibility
- DECRA - selection criteria, eligibility, rejoinders, date of PhD award, budgets, applications, travel
- DI - only minor editing issues likely
- FT - cross scheme eligibility, travel limitations, selection criteria & weightings, target areas, confidentiality
- FL - restrictions of cross scheme eligibility
- LIEF - Discussion paper to follow

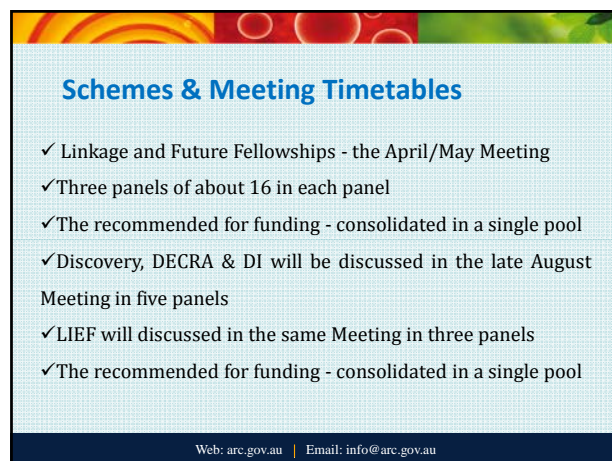
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**New Centres /Networks**

- An Indigenous researchers network
- Funding rules and application process late 2011
- A national centre, hubs and spoke model
- Indigenous knowledge(s) and a range of related themes
- Focus on doctoral, post-doctoral and mid-career researchers
- Two round application process - EoI and full application
- Science of Learning Centre in early 2012

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**Schemes & Meeting Timetables**

- ✓ Linkage and Future Fellowships - the April/May Meeting
- ✓ Three panels of about 16 in each panel
- ✓ The recommended for funding - consolidated in a single pool
- ✓ Discovery, DECRA & DI will be discussed in the late August Meeting in five panels
- ✓ LIEF will be discussed in the same Meeting in three panels
- ✓ The recommended for funding - consolidated in a single pool

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### Controlling Applications volume

- A complex, controversial but necessary issue
- Reaction to the vast wasted effort by applicants, ROs, the ARC and assessors
- DECRA has brought this issue to a head
- Tighter control over cross scheme eligibility, number of applications held and applied
- Possible adjustment to the EO co-contribution to salaries in DECRA (already required)

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- Larger cash contribution to LP applications
- Published profile of successful grant-holder track records
- Better feedback on uncompetitive grants – starting with DECRA
- Thinking about nominal quotas for each institution
- Breaking the nexus between the number of applications and success rates
- Your suggestions would be welcome!

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### Eligibility, Post-award & Reporting

- We have revised and are further revising and simplifying FRs
- Funding Agreements have been similarly revised
- Clearly ineligible proposals will be removed and not assessed
- Our eligibility processes are much improved, refined and more consistent

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### Eligibility, Post-award & Reporting

- Our revised Medical and Dental definition will be published on our web-site soon
- The FAQs will give you a clear idea of how we interpret eligibility issues
- Post-award - simpler, quicker and more consistent
- We will be redesigning, simplifying and reducing our reporting requirements

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*The ARC is committed to working with institutions to support careers in flexible and innovative ways in order to maximise opportunities for our talent.*

**Professor Andrew Wells**  
Deputy CEO, Australian Research Council

*Research*

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## The Assessment Process

Prof Richard Coleman  
Executive Director, Physical, Mathematical and Information Sciences

ARC Research Administrators Seminar, November 2011

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Assessment

### Discussion Points

- ARC Peer Review Changes
- ROPE/Assessment
- Feedback
- RMS/IT to come
- Questions

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Assessment

### ARC Peer Review Changes

- ARC consultation paper in Sept 2009, 5 week consultation period; workshops; trial of A-E for FT10, then used for all schemes in 2011
- Major elements
  - Panel structures (currently 3-5 disciplines)
  - Assessor structure (hierarchy and database)
  - Assessment process
- Philosophy – from “expert review informed by peers” to ‘peer review informed by experts’

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Assessment

### Assessment of Proposals

- Qualitative assessment (grades (A-E) + comments by specialist assessors); rejoinders; focus on ROPE for assessors
- Moderation and ordering at Panel Level (based on ~3-5 assessments, confirmation and recommendation of A-C ranking); ability to assess interdisciplinary projects across sub-Panels
- Comparative overview of all recommended proposals and final recommendations and funding at ARC College

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Assessment

### ROPE (Research Opportunity and Performance Evaluation)

- Focus is on candidate's description of career opportunities relative to opportunity – research-only, research and teaching, teaching-only, teaching/admin, etc.
- Allows for career interruptions (child-rearing, parental leave, misadventures, etc.)
- Continuing education of assessor's to make qualitative judgements, not simply on metrics

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Assessment

### Summary of where we are at

- In transition phase from the old ‘expert’ review, numerical, inflexible system to an internationally-credible, open and robust peer review system – reduced panel manipulation
- ROPE is working well
- Moving to flexible panel structures for 2012
- Better applicant feedback – FT/DECRA
- Initial steps made for assessing assessors, picking up issues (applications/assessors)

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Assessment

### Where to next

- More selection criteria: better granularity
- Likely greater emphasis on project quality
- Rejoinders for all schemes/applicants
- Use of FOR codes, keywords – looking to move to ‘structured keywords’
- Look to increase international assessor database
- Improved assessor search engine and use of Panel expertise -> aim for min. assessor number

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Assessment

### Assessment Issues

- Selection criteria: seek to make these consistent with scheme objectives
- Rejoinders for all schemes/applicants – they do count!
- Use of FOR codes, keywords for both applicants and assessors – better matches, clever algorithms
- Less text required – DECRA is 6pp, FT is 8pp

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Assessment

### Feedback Issues

- To applicants – rejoinders, feedback form
- To assessors – assessor ranking (within discipline group), acknowledgement of reviews
- To ROs – selection outcome/feedback forms

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Assessment

### RMS/IT to come

- Offline application form – modular format
- Offline assessor form
- Personal data module – CV, pubs, grants -> to allow auto-population of proposals
- Tracking of Cols, assessor history/behaviour
- 'Structured keywords' project -> better matching of proposal and assessors
- Ability to hold remote sub-panel meetings

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Assessment

### Questions?

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**ARC/NHMRC Research Administrators' Seminar**  
**The Application Process**  
 National Convention Centre, Canberra  
 7 November 2011

Research

Application

### Program Operations

- Discovery Projects
- Linkage Projects
- Fellowships
- DECRA
- LIEF/IN

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Application

## Funding Rules in 2011

- New format in 2011
- Reduced duplication
- Rules are not to be bent
- Changes in minimum and maximum level of funding
- Changes in duration of a project

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Application

## Eligibility

- Pre-eligibility submissions (LP and FT)
- Eligibility checks at every stage of the assessment process
- Issues raised by assessors/College members
- The Eligibility Committee meets multiple times for a scheme round
- Final recommendations made by the CEO to the Minister

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Application

## Common Eligibility

- CI eligibility
- Fellow/Awardee eligibility
- Partner Organisation eligibility/contributions
- Proposal limits
- Proposal compliance
- Medical/dental research

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Application

## Changes: Discovery Indigenous

- DIRD was renamed *Discovery Indigenous*
- Scheme Objectives were refined:
  - to develop the research expertise of Indigenous Australian researchers;
  - support fundamental research and research training by Indigenous Australian researchers as individuals & teams;
  - support and retain established Indigenous Australian researchers in Australian higher education institutions;
  - expand Australia's knowledge base and research capability.

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Application

## Changes: Discovery Indigenous

- Project Leader was required to be an Indigenous Australian
- Only Chief Investigators - no Mentors or Supervisors
- One Chief Investigator was required to hold a PhD
- Chief Investigators could be Doctoral Students
- New DIA's (Like the new DORAs and DECRA's)
- DIA funding can be used in the Project in exceptional circumstances

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Application

## Inquiries

- Contact details are listed in Funding Rules
- No inquiries from researchers
- Making the right contact
- Workshopping questions
- Being polite
- Daily clearance process

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Application

## Varia

- Executing Funding Agreements
- Assessors' details
- Important dates page constantly updated

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Application

## Contacting the ARC

- [NCGP@arc.gov.au](mailto:NCGP@arc.gov.au)
- [arc-australianlaureatefellowships@arc.gov.au](mailto:arc-australianlaureatefellowships@arc.gov.au)
- [decra@arc.gov.au](mailto:decra@arc.gov.au)
- [arc-DiscoveryIndigenous@arc.gov.au](mailto:arc-DiscoveryIndigenous@arc.gov.au)
- [arc-discoveryprojects@arc.gov.au](mailto:arc-discoveryprojects@arc.gov.au)
- [arc-futurefellowships@arc.gov.au](mailto:arc-futurefellowships@arc.gov.au)
- [arc-lief@arc.gov.au](mailto:arc-lief@arc.gov.au)
- [arc-linkageprojects@arc.gov.au](mailto:arc-linkageprojects@arc.gov.au)

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## Excellence in Research for Australia

### ERA 2012

Research

ERA

## Consultations for ERA 2012

- ERA Public Consultation (March-April 2011) – open consultation on issues including reporting, indicators, eligibility, discipline matrix
- Outreach sessions with institutions and peak bodies
- Detailed feedback from ERA 2010 REC members and peer reviewers

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ERA

## Consultations for ERA 2012 (cont.)

- Feedback from institutions on submission processes
- Comment period on draft Submission Guidelines and Discipline Matrix
- Comment period on draft journal list

➤ Refinements to indicators and processes, but same ERA architecture

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ERA

## Changes to journals and conferences

- Refined journal and conference indicator for ERA 2012
- Ranks will not be used, instead outputs profiled by most frequent journals and conferences in the UoE, with drilldowns available as in 2010
- ERA 2012 journal list includes FoR codes for citation analysis (data provider announced after approach to market: Scopus)
- Strong feedback that ranked lists were having negative consequences in the sector
- ARC analysis suggested a refined indicator would produce improved results while removing negative consequences

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### The refined journal indicator

Example of the draft refined journal indicator for ERA 2012 for University X


Journal Title	Papers	Contribution	Cumulative
1. Journal of Law and Medicine	1020	6%	6%
2. Public Law Review	1020	6%	12%
3. Australian Journal of Administrative Law	1020	6%	18%
4. Law in Context	1020	6%	24%
5. Australian Journal of Family Law	1020	6%	30%
6. Company and Securities Law Journal	1020	6%	36%
7. Sports Law Journal	1020	6%	42%
8. Contemporary Issues in Law	1020	6%	48%
9. Law and Policy	1020	6%	54%
10. International Journal of the Legal Profession	1020	6%	60%
11. Australian Journal of Corporate Law	1020	6%	66%
12. Australian Journal of Labour Law	1020	6%	72%
13. Journal of Judicial Administration	1020	6%	78%
14. Federal Law Review	1020	6%	84%
15. Australian Journal of Legal Philosophy	1020	6%	90%
16. Forensic Science International	1020	6%	96%
17. Legal Theory	1020	6%	102%
18. Revenue Law Journal	1020	6%	108%
19. ALA National Lecture Series on Administrative Law	1020	6%	114%
20. European International Law Review	1020	6%	120%
Total	485		

Please note that this is not based on any university's submission to ERA 2010

• NB similar tables for conferences, books, book chapters

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### Interdisciplinary and enabling research (the 'Clawback'...)



- Journal articles with ≥66% content in a discipline can be apportioned to that discipline (remainder must meet other rules i.e. match journal codes, minimum 20%)
- Approach was successfully trialled in 2010 for Mathematics
- Allows stronger recognition of interdisciplinary and applied research
- Aligns journals with other output types

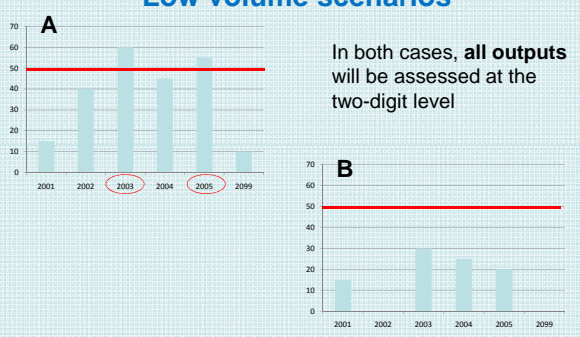
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### Raising the threshold

- Low volume threshold for peer review disciplines raised to 50 apportioned weighted outputs (maintaining the 5:1 weighting for books) – applies to Pure Mathematics and ICT disciplines (08 and some of 10)
- Threshold remains the same for citation analysis disciplines
- Aligns all disciplines at 50 outputs
- Recognises strong feedback from sector and from 2010 evaluators
- ERA units need sufficient volume

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### Low volume scenarios



In both cases, **all outputs** will be assessed at the two-digit level

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### Other changes for ERA 2012

- Eligibility of fractional staff – 40% rule
- Patents, plant breeder's rights and registered designs assigned to individuals now eligible for submission
- Cluster structure revised in the light of information from ERA 2010
- Some adjustments to indicator sets used in the discipline matrix
- Construction of the pool of outputs for peer review in repository (30%)

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### ERA 2012 – still to do



- Recruitment of Research Evaluation Committees (Chairs announced October 2011)
- Expansion of peer reviewer pool – EoI launched
- More submission documentation to be released (business rules, help)
- Submission and beyond

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ERA

## Further information

- Web: [www.arc.gov.au/era](http://www.arc.gov.au/era)
- Email: [era@arc.gov.au](mailto:era@arc.gov.au)
- ERA Hotline: (02) 6287 6755

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## Program Coordination and Post-Award

Penny Bambrick  
Assistant Director, Program Coordination

Research

Post Award

## Program Coordination

- Established within last 12 months
- Team of 6
- We handle:
  - selection meeting logistics and liaison
  - ARC College and other NCGP committees
  - post-award

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Post Award

## Program Coordination – post-award

- 3 people handling post-award full-time
- New team members recruited to replace long-serving staff
- Responses to variations will take longer

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Post Award

## Post-award – some numbers

- Every year, the ARC processes:
  - over 1,500 variations
  - nearly 11,000 monthly financial transactions
  - nearly 6,500 financial transactions arising from End of Year Reports

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Post Award

## Post-award – what we need from you

- Specific grant information
  - Project ID
  - lead CI
  - issue/variation
- No hypotheticals

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Post Award

### Post-award – what we need from you

- Requests made in a timely manner
- Full and complete documentation
  - Variation of Funding Agreement form
  - Supporting documentation as required

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Post Award

### Post-award – where to from here

- New Variation of Funding Agreement form
- Submission of variations via email only
- Exception reporting on grant progress
  - for DP and LP projects commencing 2012
  - **not** retrospective

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Post Award

### Post-award – where to from here

- Revised End of Year Report information
  - reduce duplication
  - template for supporting documentation
- Period for Final Report submission
  - from 6 months to 12 months
  - for DP and LP projects commencing 2012
  - **not** retrospective

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Post Award

### Post-award – conclusion

- Critical part of grant management
- Continuing evolution
- Thank you

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### NCGP – Information Technology Update

Mike Mitchelmore  
November 2011

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IT Update

### Overview

- IT in support of ERA
  - SEER Improvements
- IT in support for NCGP
  - Performance to date
    - Improvements capacity and reliability
    - Browser Support
  - Final Reports and GAMS
  - CSV Reports
  - Planned RMS system enhancements.
- Questions

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IT Update

## SEER Performance and Improvements

- Improvements completed 2011:
  - Upgraded the known defects in priority order
  - Upgraded de-duplication process to allow improved processing through-out the submission process (what did take 10 minutes before is now sub 30 seconds)

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IT Update

## RMS System Enhancements

- Dual sites now operational. This has resulted in shorter outages for major system upgrades and improved availability.
- Upgrade of the database system. This has allowed for faster response times.
- Progressive migration of the RMS user interface to new ASP.Net code. This means modern browsers will cache your inputs, reduce the time-outs, and improve the user experience for responsiveness of the application.

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IT Update

## Browser Support

- New user interface works best with newest Browser IE, Firefox, Chrome, Safari.
- First thing the Helpdesk will ask you to do is upgrade to the most recent browser.
- The more modern browsers automatically cache your work so if you are disconnected for what ever reason (and you remain logged into the device you are using) the recovery of data when you reconnect will be more likely.

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IT Update

## Final Reports and GAMS

- Shortly we will release final reports in RMS
  - We will provide a 3 month period where users can access GAMS for recovery of any archived data
  - When RMS final reports is live access to final reports in GAMS will be closed
  - All existing GAMS data will be retained in ARC databases for any GAMS submitted proposals and approved projects.
- GAMS decommissioning
  - Current plan is for Final Reports to be live in RMS from January 2012.
  - Shut-down the service 3 months from date of Final Reports live in RMS.

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IT Update

## New RMS CSVs – key changes

- Faster Report Generation – under 90 seconds
- Real-time (only 15 minute lag)
- RMS no longer stores reports
  - Save your existing reports if needed
- Open new reports then save to your folder
- Switch to new CSV on 30 November 2011

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IT Update

## CURRENT REPORT MENU



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**IT Update**

### Reports Menu

### Select a Scheme Round

Web: [arc.gov.au](http://arc.gov.au) | Email: [info@arc.gov.au](mailto:info@arc.gov.au)

**IT Update**

### CSV Report – Ready to Open/Save

Web: [arc.gov.au](http://arc.gov.au) | Email: [info@arc.gov.au](mailto:info@arc.gov.au)

**IT Update**

### RMS Planned Upgrades

- Submission application will be upgraded to MBC.Net over the next twelve months.
- Move to a more people centric data – we will ask you to update your publications and other person specific information to allow for better auto population and assignment processes.
- Provide for limited offline and upload capability.
- Rationalisation of generic e-mail addresses

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**IT Update**

### RMS Help Desk

[rms@arc.gov.au](mailto:rms@arc.gov.au)      02 6287 6789  
(9am-5pm Canberra)

### Questions?

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