Objectives of ERA

• Establish an **evaluation framework** that gives government, industry, business and the wider community assurance of the excellence of research conducted in Australia’s institutions;

• Provide a **national stocktake** of discipline-level areas of research strength and areas where there is opportunity for development in Australia’s higher education institutions;

• Identify **excellence** across the full spectrum of research performance;

• Identify **emerging research areas** and opportunities for further development;

• Allow for **comparison** of Australia’s research nationally and internationally for all discipline areas.
General ERA Principles

1. Unit of Evaluation is the four-digit ANZSRC Field of Research code (ie. 157 possible Units of Evaluation); evaluation occurs at the two-digit level too.

2. Evaluation by Research Evaluation Committees in discipline clusters; eight clusters in total.

3. There is a minimum level of output to be considered ‘research active’ for evaluation in ERA.


5. Some peer review of outputs accessed through institutional repositories in some disciplines.
# The ERA Clusters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cluster 1</th>
<th>Physical, Chemical &amp; Earth Sciences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cluster 2</td>
<td>Humanities and Creative Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cluster 3</td>
<td>Engineering and Environmental Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cluster 4</td>
<td>Social, Behavioural and Economic Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cluster 5</td>
<td>Mathematics, Information and Computing Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cluster 6</td>
<td>Biological and Biotechnological Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cluster 7</td>
<td>Biomedical and Clinical Health Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cluster 8</td>
<td>Public and Allied Health Sciences</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ERA Development 2008-2010

• Several major rounds of consultation
• Indicator Development Group (specialist sub-groups)
• Ranked journals and conferences consultation
• Discipline specific indicators
• Full trial in 2009 of PCE and HCA
  – test of systems, processes
  – feedback from sector, RECs, peer reviewers
• Esteem indicators
The ERA Unit of Evaluation

• The baseline - the Discipline in an institution = Four-digit Field of Research Code (ANZSRC) eg., 2101 Archaeology

• The higher perspective – the division in an institution = Two-digit Field of Research Code (ANZSRC) eg., 21 History and Archaeology

• The ERA Unit is not about the department nor the individual researcher
ERA Process Overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Volume &amp; Activity</th>
<th>Ranked Outlets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Citation Analysis</td>
<td>Esteem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Income</td>
<td>Applied Measures</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Peer Review

International Benchmarks

Research Evaluation Committees
Why a matrix approach to indicators?

• Not all indicators are suitable for all disciplines

• Pick and choose what is right for each discipline

• The indicator suite must ensure comparable quality across a range of indicator types

• Journal Rankings are not THE indicator
ERA 2010 Reviewers

- Expert review and specialist disciplinary knowledge were essential – not a mechanical process

- 8 Research Evaluation Committees

- 149 Australian and international REC members

- 500+ Peer Reviewers from Australia and overseas

- REC members also conducted peer review
Stages of evaluation

• Every UoE evaluated by at least three REC members (plus peer reviewers)

• Independent evaluation in the first instance followed by exchange of views

• All evaluations were advice to the full Committee

• All UoEs discussed at the final evaluation meeting

• All final ratings decisions of the Committee as a whole
## The ERA 2010 Rating Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Descriptor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The Unit of Evaluation profile is characterised by evidence of outstanding performance <strong>well above world standard</strong> presented by the suite of indicators used for evaluation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The Unit of Evaluation profile is characterised by evidence of performance <strong>above world standard</strong> presented by the suite of indicators used for evaluation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The Unit of Evaluation profile is characterised by evidence of average performance <strong>at world standard</strong> presented by the suite of indicators used for evaluation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The Unit of Evaluation profile is characterised by evidence of performance <strong>below world standard</strong> presented by the suite of indicators used for evaluation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The Unit of Evaluation profile is characterised by evidence of performance <strong>well below world standard</strong> presented by the suite of indicators used for evaluation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ERA

Background Statement

Volume and Activity
Ranked Outlets
Peer Review
Citation Analysis
Esteem Measures
Research Income
Applied Measures
ERA 2010 at a glance

• All 41 eligible institutions participated

• 2435 units of evaluation assessed at the two- and four-digit level

• Over 330,000 research outputs and 55,000 researchers represented
Research outputs by 2-digit code
UoEs by 2-digit code
ERA 2010 – the results....
ERA 2010 outcomes: context

- ERA is a **retrospective** evaluation of research performance: 2003-2008 for research outputs, 2006-2008 for other data

- The ERA unit of evaluation is the discipline within the institution, **not** individual researchers or institutional units

- ERA does not rank institutions or units; each UoE is evaluated on its merits against the rating scale
The National Report


- National profile of research activity
- Evaluation outcomes by FoR and institution
- Searchable results on-line by institution and by FoR
Reading the national results

86% of assessed UoEs received a rating at or above world standard (i.e. rating of 3 or above).

Of all assessed UoEs at the four-digit FoR code level (58 UoEs), the average rating is 3.4. See Section 1 for two-digit FoR code average rating.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mathematical, Information and Computing Sciences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01 Mathematical Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% assessed UoEs rated at or above world standard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FTEs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research outputs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research income $</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UoEs assessed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Esteem count(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patent(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research commer. income $</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average National Rating</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distribution</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There were seven UoEs which received a rating of 2.

A total of 58 UoEs were assessed for Mathematical Sciences at the four-digit FoR code level.
2010 results – where to from here?

• Great deal of information in the National Report
• Citation and benchmark information provided in confidence to institutions
• Extra SRE funding was contingent upon ERA 2010 participation
• ERA is informing mission-based compact negotiations between the Government and institutions
ERA 2012

• A new ERA 2012 section has been added to the ARC website – developments will be posted there

• Ranked journal and conference lists public consultation undertaken – see ARC website – includes tender process to involve peak bodies in Stage 2

• Public consultation in March-April on indicators and other issues
Some issues under consideration

- Low volume threshold – including both number and type of outputs
- Eligibility of fractional staff
- Reference period for income, applied, esteem
- Discipline matrix and cluster structure
- Reporting of outcomes
- Expanding peer reviewer pool
- Other issues raised by sector during consultation
Further information?

• www.arc.gov.au/era

• Email: era@arc.gov.au

• Hotline: 02 6287 6755