

2003 – 2004

Continuous Roll Update

A report from the CRU Implementation Steering Committee to
the Electoral Council of Australia

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1 Introduction

This report is of the 2003-2004 Continuous Roll Update (CRU) program undertaken by the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) and state and territory electoral authorities (SEAs). It has been prepared for the Electoral Council of Australia (ECA) by the CRU Implementation Steering Committee (CISCO).

The report provides a description of the AEC's data-matching, mailing and fieldwork activities and of the complementary programs managed directly by the SEAs. Statistics for each of the activities are included as national summaries in the body of the report with detailed statistics covering each jurisdiction provided at Part 7.

1.1 Executive Summary

The 2003-2004 CRU program was relatively stable. At the national level it met the performance standards set out in the AEC Strategic Plan and the ECA/AEC CRU Strategic Plan. The program was made up of the three linked activities described below:

- The regular AEC CRU program of mailing based on external change of address (COA) and electoral roll data. This resulted in the mailing of 3.2 million review letters (including 470,000 reminders) and follow up fieldwork at 320,000 non-responding addresses.
- A background match of the roll against authoritative external data that took place in May 2004. This confirmed the continued accuracy of the enrolment details of 6.6 million electors at 43% of enrollable addresses nationally. The background match was followed in June 2004 with the mailing of 1.95 million supplementary review letters. The supplementary review and the regular CRU mailing referred to above resulted in a total posting of 5.15 million letters during 2003-2004.
- The Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) CRU program and the various direct enrolment activities undertaken by the AEC and SEAs.

Separate to the CRU program, the AEC's Roll Integrity Unit (RIU) undertook audit fieldwork at 112,000 addresses nationally. The addresses selected were a sample of those normally subject to CRU mail and whilst the purpose of the fieldwork was to check the accuracy of the roll, the addresses contacted were recorded as reviewed and 22,000 enrolment forms were collected.

If all of the above activities are taken into account, an estimated 4.7 million addresses, or 65% of the enrollable addresses nationally, were reviewed at least once in the year. The AEC collected 1.2 million enrolments from the 2003-2004 CRU activities, including those from the unrelated RIU audit fieldwork. A further 200,000 enrolments were collected by the SEAs, plus 525,000 arising from pre June 2003 CRU activities. Additional replies and enrolments will be received after June 2004 due to the very large CRU mailing and other enrolment activities that took place late in the reporting year.

The CRU program made use of change of address data supplied by Australia Post (AP), Centrelink and state/territory agencies including motor vehicle licensing authorities (MV data). The external data was supplemented with information sourced directly from

the electoral roll. During the year, new data sources were added to the CRU program in WA (government housing renters and MV data) and in the ACT (school and MV license data). Negotiations took place in NSW for the monthly supply of MV data and it is anticipated that an agreement will be concluded for this to commence in 2005.

A majority of the CRU activity took place in the period January to June 2004, boosted by the supplementary mail review in May-June 2004. Only minor interruptions to the program were caused by the Qld state and local government elections in January and February 2004 and the NSW Local Government elections in March 2004.

The most significant features of CRU in the reporting period were:

- The background match of the roll in May 2004 and the subsequent supplementary mail review,
- The very high level of CRU mailing in all jurisdictions (up by 50% on that in 2002-2003), particularly in the six months to June 2004,
- Activities in the NT to manage the roll in circumstances of constant population movement and limited mail delivery, and activities in the NT and WA to review the roll in remote communities.

1.2 AEC Roll Integrity Unit

The AEC's Roll Integrity Unit (RIU) was established in February 2003 to implement recommendations arising from the 2002 reports of the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) and the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters (JSCEM). During 2003-2004 the following RIU initiatives were undertaken:

- A habitation review of all enrollable residences in the Division of Isaacs.
- The first round of the Sample Audit Fieldwork (SAF) conducted in February 2004. The next round of sampling is scheduled to commence in March 2005.
- Development of an Enrolment Management Information System (EMIS). EMIS will allow reporting on performance indicators and assist in the management of the electoral roll. It is planned for implementation in the 2005/2006 financial year.
- The AEC commenced reporting on several of the revised enrolment performance indicators in the 2003/04 Annual Report.
- An enrolment Electoral Fraud Control Plan was developed covering fraud in the areas of enrolment, elections and funding and disclosure. Fraud awareness sessions were held for staff involved in enrolment processing in May and June 2004. An enrolment fraud awareness e-learning package has since been prepared.
- As part of the CRU Strategic Plan implementation process, Australian Electoral Officers entered into Memorandums of Understanding with their state/territory counterparts setting out the agreed CRU activities undertaken in 2003-2004.

1.3 CRU – A joint Commonwealth, State and Territory Initiative

Joint roll arrangements are in place in all jurisdictions so that persons can enrol to vote at federal and state or territory elections by filling in a single enrolment form. AEC staff process completed forms into the national computerised enrolment system (RMANS) so that the federal, state and territory rolls can be kept up to date on a daily basis.

In accordance with electoral legislation and the current policy of all electoral authorities, the roll is reviewed to ensure that it is accurate and up to date on a continuous basis. In 1999 the CRU program was established as a joint AEC/SEA program with the aim of reviewing all addresses known to be enrollable over a two yearly cycle. This program is jointly funded by the AEC and the SEAs.

The key elements for achieving continued accuracy are the mailing of enrolment stimulation letters to persons 'on the move' and review letters to check existing enrolments at addresses where there are indications that the roll may not be up to date. The mailing is based on matching externally sourced data against RMANS, and data mining of elector and address information already held on the roll. Non-responding addresses may be subject to reminder letters and non-response fieldwork where it is practical to do so. A background review of current enrolments using authoritative external data is also undertaken with supplementary mail review to addresses where the matching indicates that the roll may not be up to date. Additional enrolment activities are undertaken by the SEAs, but remain complementary to the AEC's national program.

Sections 2 and 3 of the report covers the AEC CRU mailing program including those using SEA sourced change of address data e.g. that from motor registry and rental tenancy authorities. Activities undertaken solely by the SEAs are reported at Section 4. Irrespective of the sponsor of any specific CRU activity, all enrolments and deletions to the roll arising are processed through RMANS and reflected in the joint roll.

1.4 Mailing of CRU Letters and Processing Replies

CRU relies on mail as the prime means of contacting householders. The AEC uses information provided by a range of external agencies to notify electors who have moved address but who may not have transferred their enrolment and to persons not already enrolled whether they have changed residence or not. Where possible, CRU letters include a schedule of persons enrolled at the address so that the roll can be reviewed.

The CRU letters request that the addressee(s) or resident(s) complete the enclosed enrolment forms if they are eligible, check the schedule of enrolled electors, complete the reply section and mail back the completed letter and any forms. Enrolment and other information received back is processed by AEC staff into RMANS. Replies can include advice from the current resident that electors no longer live at the address and, in the absence of fresh enrolments or advice, these electors may be removed from the roll.

The number of replies from residents and other information collected such as enrolment forms and endorsed unclaimed returned mail determines the amount of useful information that can be applied to the roll. Even if a reply does not result in a change to elector or address details, it can provide confirmation that the roll is accurate and up to date i.e. the roll has been reviewed for that address.

During 2003-2004 changes to the wording of CRU letters were undertaken to meet ANAO recommendations. The revised letters will be used in 2005 with the aim of improving responses and reducing the volume of reminders and follow-up fieldwork.

1.5 AEC CRU activities in 2003 – 2004

1.5.1 National Summary

As part of the 2003-2004 CRU program 5.15 million letters were posted. This total was made up of 2.73 million first letters, 471,000 second or reminder letters and 1.95 million supplementary mail review letters. In addition, follow-up fieldwork was undertaken at 320,000 non-responding addresses.

An analysis of the 2.35 million replies to mail and fieldwork received by 30 June 2004 gives an estimated response of 50% at addresses targeted. Responses include all replies to mailing, adjustments for reminder letters and subsequent contact made via non-response fieldwork. Note this is a national estimate, with variations between jurisdictions depending on the mix and timing of CRU activity and whether any follow-up fieldwork was undertaken at the non-responding addresses. The background matching process confirmed enrolment details at a further 2.8 million addresses.

If all CRU activity and the RIU audit fieldwork is taken into account, an estimated 4.67 million addresses (over 66% of total enrollable addresses) were reviewed once in the year and a further 830,657 addresses more than once.

The number of responses will rise when account is made of replies received after 30 June, especially to the 1.95 million supplementary review letters posted in June 2004 and account is made of the large volume of data and enrolments collected at the NSW fieldwork in late June 2004 that could not be entered into RMANS until early July. Based on letters mailed, responses and enrolment forms received, the 2003-2004 CRU program was split evenly between the use of external COA data for data matching and RMANS data mining (including the supplementary mail review), backed up with direct enrolment initiatives undertaken by the AEC and SEAs.

During 2003-2004 the AEC received 4.3 million COA records from external agencies with the main sources being AP and Centrelink (national), motor licensing authorities (in Qld, SA, Tas and NT only), plus rental authorities and utility companies in a number of jurisdictions. Whilst it is not possible to accurately determine which of the external sources is the most important at the national level (due to the priority in processing that has been given so far to AP data), it is evident that in those jurisdictions where license data is available it is clearly the most important, generating up to 40% of all replies and enrolments.

It was evident in all jurisdictions that the CRU program was responsible for an increasing percentage of all enrolments – from 65% in 2002-2003 to 80% in 2003-2004. This may indicate that electors are waiting to be prompted before enrolling, or that more enrolments are attributed to CRU than may be the case. It is planned that commencing in 2005 enrolment forms will contain a code to allow the collection of statistics on the main sources of enrolment forms.

In 2003-2004 155,000 electors were objected off the roll based on CRU advice, both mail and fieldwork. It is recommended that analysis be made of these objections to determine if the persons removed come back onto the roll (and when) and the extent to which they cast provisional votes at a subsequent election.

1.5.2 Variations in the CRU program at the jurisdiction level

The CRU program is national but due to differences in demography, available data sources and operational constraints between jurisdictions, there are some variations in the activities undertaken, their timing and the overall results achieved. And as in all business activities, there are resource constraints. Detailed information on the volume of mail and fieldwork by jurisdiction and responses is provided at Section 7.

The summary by state/territory below is focused on the AEC's monthly CRU mailing and the non-response fieldwork. No account is made of RIU managed audit fieldwork or for replies carried over from 2002-2003 (25% of all AEC CRU enrolments in 2003-2004) as this cannot be attributed to different activities.

The most effective CRU programs took place in the ACT and Tasmania. This is a consequence of the relatively stable population in these jurisdictions, reasonably complete RMANS Address Registers and access to a large volume of external change of address data. In Tasmania 50% of all mailing other than the supplementary mail review was sourced from Motor Vehicle (MV) COA data. In the ACT MV data was not available for regular use, instead rental bond and electricity connection information was the core external data used. In both jurisdictions non-respondents were followed up where possible with reminder letters and non-response fieldwork.

In Qld the AEC managed very large mailings of CRU letters based mainly on local COA data and followed up with extensive non-response fieldwork. The Qld mailing was 35% higher than the national average (based on the number of electors on the roll by jurisdiction) and reflects on the large amount of movement in the Qld community generally and the range of CRU data available. Due to Qld state election in February 2004, much of the CRU activity was undertaken in the first half of the financial year.

In NSW there was limited access to state based COA data on a regular basis, however this was made up for by the use of whole of file MV data for targeted mail review in January 2004 and a large non-response fieldwork program covering 230,000 addresses undertaken in May-June 2004. After taking expected fieldwork results into account, the NSW responses were at the national average.

The WA program was based on AP COA data and RMANS Vacant addresses as the main source of data and enrolments as MV data was not available for regular mailing. The final response rate to addresses targeted was relatively low, if the supplementary mail review is not included. A roll review and enrolment stimulation program was conducted in WA remote areas in the 6 months leading up to the federal election. Non-response fieldwork was not undertaken in the state.

In SA, there was a large volume of mailing, however almost half of this related to the supplementary mail review that took place after the background match, with other CRU

activities being at a relatively subdued level. Motor vehicle data formed the main component of the regular mailing, being responsible for 40% of all CRU enrolments. Non-response fieldwork was not undertaken.

An assessment of the AEC's program in Victoria is complicated due to overlap with the extensive CRU activities undertaken separately by VEC and the whole of division fieldwork in the Division of Isaacs. Also, Victoria has a lower level of population movement compared to Qld, WA and NSW so fewer changes of address are likely to be notified by external agencies. With no access to state COA data, AEC mailings were not large with only 500,000 addresses targeted in the monthly CRU program, and non-response fieldwork was not undertaken. In the absence of Victorian state data for the background matching in May 2004, the supplementary mail review was very large with over 1 million letters posted to 830,000 addresses in the state. Details of the VEC program are provided at section 4.1.

With the small area covered by postal delivery in the NT, the normal CRU mailing is restricted. Accordingly, the AEC and the NT Electoral Commission engaged in a range of direct enrolment stimulation activities including enrolment drives in the main centres, roll reviews in regional and remote areas (in support of Regional Council and Community Council elections) and roll review fieldwork on Cocos (Keeling) and Christmas Islands. What CRU mailing that did take place was followed up where possible with non-response fieldwork in the urban areas of Darwin and Palmerston.

1.5.3 Response rates to CRU mailing

Difficulties in measuring the number of replies to CRU mailing activities and determining response rates has been discussed in previous reports, to which refer. Whilst most of the operational and RMANS statistical issues that resulted in the under-reporting of replies have now been adjusted, a problem remains in accounting for replies received after the 30 June cut-off for the extraction of statistics. Currently, any replies whether letter or enrolment form received within six months of the original posting are counted. This means that responses for mailing that takes place between January and June will be understated at 30 June of the same year. To partly cover this problem enrolments received in the next reporting year from previous year's mailings have been shown as a 'carry-over' in the statistics.

To give a full picture on responses, details of all replies and the final response rate are now shown in this report for the previous year mailing i.e. 2002-2003, for each of the CRU activities. For 2003-2004 mailings, the responses received up to 30 June 2004 are also shown, but subject to update in the next report for receipts after 30 June.

The updated response rates for 2002-2003 show a significant improvement on that reported previously. Similar improvements are likely for 2003-2004 when full reporting for replies received after 30 June is available.

2 Data Matching Activities

2.1 Change of Address (COA) and Residents (RE) Mailing

During 2003-2004 data was provided by the external agencies set out at Table 2.1 below. With the exception of Centrelink and Australian Post (AP), the data was made available to the AEC by the relevant SEA, or with their agreement. In Victoria, state data is supplied to the VEC for use in their separate CRU program (see Section 4.1 for details).

The AEC uses the external data to remind electors to enrol by sending a letter to persons who have moved address (a COA letter) or persons currently not enrolled but who have not necessarily changed their residence (a Resident or RE letter). This latter group includes eligible young person, new citizens and previously enrolled electors removed from the roll by objection action. Wherever possible the COA letter includes a schedule of electors currently enrolled at the address so that all enrolments can be reviewed.

Prior to any mailing, the AEC matches the current electoral roll to the externally supplied name, date of birth (if available) and address details including date of change. If the elector has already updated their enrolment details or other CRU correspondence has been sent in the previous 90 days, no further action is taken. The balance of records are subject to further checks to establish if a review letter needs to be mailed e.g. mailing is not conducted for recent death deletions, certain special category enrolments, persons who have notified they are temporarily overseas and areas where there is no postal delivery. A mailing file is created and CRU letters are posted out with two enrolment forms and a business reply paid envelope.

The culling process to date has been a combination of automatic matching on RMANS with some follow up manual checking by AEC staff. With the implementation of the new Mail Review System (MRS) in 2005, external data will be combined with AEC data to generate a single monthly mailout covering all sources. Automatic matching and culling will be conducted with minimal pre mailout processing by divisions. Replies will be automatically recorded against addresses and sources of data on processing back into RMANS. In accordance with the CRU Strategic Plan minimum frequencies have been established for various enrolment activities to apply in 2004-2005.

During 2003-2004 the AEC received 4.3 million records from external agencies (both federal and state/territory) covering persons changing address or coming onto the respective database for the first time. Note that this total includes duplicates between separate agencies' databases e.g. the same change of address may appear separately in AP and motor license data. After matching against the roll and previous mailing files, this data was used for the mailing of 1.4 million enrolment reminder and review 'first' letters, giving an overall culling rate of data of 67%. This analysis does not include reminder letters and fieldwork based on the same data, or the 21 million records provided by external agencies in 'full client files' for the Background Match (see Section 5.1), or the SEA managed CRU programs using local COA data.

The difference in the amount of culling between jurisdictions was in direct proportion to the number of data sources, the quantity of data received and how up to date the roll was at time of matching. At the margins, 75% of the external data was culled in Qld, SA and the ACT, whilst in NSW and Victoria 50% of external data was culled.

Table 2-1 Data sources used by the AEC in 2003-2004

State	Data Source	Data Type	Frequency	Event Type
NATIONAL	Australia Post (COA data only)	Change of Address	4 weekly	COA
	Centrelink (COA and 17, 18 & full client file)	Clients Turning 17	4 weekly	RE
		Clients Turning 18	4 weekly	RE
		Full Client File	Annually	Background Review
ACT	ACTEWAGL	New Clients	Quarterly	COA
		Full Client File	Annually	Background Review
	ACT Road Traffic Authority	Change of Address	Monthly	COA/RESIES
	ACT Office of Rental Bonds	New Clients	Quarterly	RE
	ACT Board of Studies	New Clients	Quarterly	RE
NSW	Road and Traffic Authority of NSW	Full Client File	Up to 10 P/y	Background Review
		New Clients	Monthly	COA/RE
QLD	Qld Transport Authority	Change of Address	Monthly	COA
		New Clients	Monthly	RE
	Qld Residential Tenancy Authority	New Clients	Monthly	COA
		Old Address Changes	Monthly	COA
		Forwarding Address Changes	Monthly	COA
SA	South Australian Motor Registry	Full Client File	One Off	Background Review
		Change of Address	Monthly	COA
		New Clients	Monthly	RE
TAS	Tasmanian Motor Transport	Full Client File	One Off	Background Review
		Change of Address	Monthly	COA
		New Clients	Monthly	RE
NT	Northern Territory Motor Transport	Change of Address	Suspended	
		New Clients	Suspended	
WA	Dept Housing & Works	New Rental Clients	Monthly	COA
	Department of Planning and Infrastructure	Full Client File	Annually	Background Review
		New Clients	Monthly	COA/RE

COA = Change of Address letter with review schedule included if data available

RE = Enrolment letter without a review schedule.

Background Review = Data matching between RMANS and a range of external authoritative databases

2.2 Australia Post Change of Address (COA)

2.2.1 Background

The use of AP COA data extends back to the commencement of CRU in 1999 and to trials in 1996-1997. The procedures for its use has changed little since 1999 other than the inclusion of a roll review schedule in the letter sent to movers. Due to its early place in the CRU program, the AP data has been given preference in the matching to RMANS ahead of other external data sources i.e. it is not culled first against say Centrelink or MV, rather the other way round. This has resulted in mailing volumes and replies that overstates AP's importance in the full CRU program. Also the AP data is supplied with a 'from' or vacated address which has boosted the apparent number of records received.

Due to concerns as to the cost effectiveness of the AP data its purchase was suspended at the end of 2003. This left over 7 months of change of address information for processing in the year and with reminders letters, mailing continued well into 2004.

2.2.2 Mailing and Responses

For the period up to December 2003, approximately 700,000 COA records were provided by AP, giving an estimated 1.34 million 'to' and 'from' addresses for loading into RMANS. The culling process resulted in 65% of the data being discarded, a slightly lower rate than in the previous year. A total of 495,000 first letters and 175,000 reminders were posted to the person who lodged the AP redirection notice, or to the current resident in the case of 'from' addresses. Generally 'to' address letters were posted within a month of receipt from the effective date. A delay of 90 days for postings to 'from' addresses was made to allow for incoming residents to enrol without being prompted. If a reply was not received, a reminder was posted. Details of AP mailing are shown below.

Table 2-2 Summary of Australia Post COA National Mailing

	Records received	Letters posted	Replies	Response rate	Enrolments received
2003 -2004	1,340,000 (est)	1st 478,221	204,611	*43%	205,156
		2nd 170,981	63,650	*37%	52,631
2002-2003	1,620,356	1 st 397,230	184,564	45%	198,891
		2 nd 149,987	60,605	39%	50,955

* Note: Responses are provisional and subject to further replies after 30 June 2004, see Section 1.5.3

Despite the suspension of the program, the volume of mailing increased by 25% over that in the previous two years.

2.2.3 Importance of the AP data in the COA program

An analysis of the AP data in 2003 indicated that 90% was duplicated in other sources but with the preference given to AP in the RMANS matching, approximately 35% was used for mailing in 2003-2004. The lowest usage was in Qld with 20% mailed, but in NSW, WA and Victoria up to 44% was useful. In Victoria AP data has been the mainstay of the AEC's CRU program, accounting for 30% of all CRU mail and

enrolments if the 'one-off' May 2004 background review supplementary mailing is excluded. The ECA determined in late 2003 to suspend the purchase of AP data so that discussions could take place with AP. It is anticipated that its use will recommence in early 2005 under a revised contract.

2.3 Centrelink

The Centrelink data provided to the AEC contains details of clients who have notified a change of address and of new clients at their current addresses. However, no details are provided of 'from' addresses. A separate set of the data covers Centrelink clients that have turned 17 or 18 years old in the previous month. The Centrelink file of all clients' names and addresses is also available to the AEC for the purposes of undertaking a background match against the roll to confirm the enrolment details of current electors.

2.3.1 Centrelink COA

The Centrelink COA data was managed in 2003-2004 in the same way as in previous years, with monthly mailings subject to operational requirements and election activity. The COA program generated the same volume of outward mail as in the previous year. However, there was little carryover of data received prior to June 2003 and with significant volumes of mail posted late in the reporting period.

Table 2-3 Centrelink COA mailing and responses

	Records received	Letters posted	Replies	Response rate	Enrolments received
2003-2004	818,100	1st 320,667 2nd 182,837	98,437 46,723	*30% *25%	91,192 33,961
2002-2003	827,201	1 st 283,841 2 nd 256,697	101,479 72,782	36% 28%	108,686 59,433

* Note: Responses are provisional and subject to further replies after 30 June 2004, see Section 1.5.3

During 2003-2004 there was an increase in the number of first letters posted and a reduction in the number of reminder letters, but responses showed little difference to previous years. As there were significant postings in Jan to June 2004, a large number of additional replies are likely to be received after the cut off for statistics at 30 June 2004.

2.3.2 Centrelink 17 and 18 year old mailing

In addition to COA data, the AEC is provided with details of persons aged 17 and 18 registered with Centrelink who are newly eligible to enrol but not necessarily moving address (RE data). The data was used in all jurisdictions continuously during the year. The data is treated in the same manner as for the COA programs, with records culled where a current enrolment already exists, and mailing to persons who may need to enrol. There is no reminder letter. A summary of records received, subsequent culling and mailing and responses for the last three years is set out at Table 2-3 below.

Table 2-4 Centrelink 17 and 18 year old Residents (RE)

	Records received	Letters posted	Replies	Response rate	Enrolments received
2003-2004	126,663	82,093	24,345	*30%	23,099
2002-2003	117,178	79,870	27,688	35%	19,654

*Note: Responses are provisional and subject to further replies after 30 June 2004, see Section 1.5.3

The volume of letters mailed and replies are not large, but the Centrelink RE program is effective. It is targeted at a segment of the 500,000 eligible persons in the 17 – 18 year old age group, almost all of who are likely to be first time enrollees and not necessarily in the school system or touched by other CRU activities. The culling rates indicate that two thirds of the data is used i.e. there is little cross over with other data sources.

2.3.3 Effectiveness of the Centrelink activity

Centrelink was the third largest CRU activity over the reporting period in terms of the volume of mail posted (600,000 letters). It generated 170,000 replies including 150,000 enrolments, and this will grow when responses after 30 June 2004 are included. It is the most useful of the national data sources as it is authoritative and a full file is available for background matching.

2.4 CRU Programs based on Motor Licensing Data (both AEC and VEC)

Over the 3 years to 30 June 2003, the AEC progressively gained access to motor transport authority license change of address data in most States and the Territories. During 2002-2003 the existing MV mailing programs in Qld, SA and the NT were consolidated and a new program came online in Tasmania in January 2003. During 2003-2004 negotiations took place in the ACT, NSW and WA to establish the necessary legal, administrative and technical arrangements to gain access and make best use of the data. The status of access by jurisdiction to motor licensing data at June 2004 is summarised below:

- In Qld, Tasmania, NT and SA matching and mailing using transport data took place for all of 2003-2004. The data was supplied regularly and matched to RMANS for the mailing of enrolment and mail review letters to persons needing to enrol or where there were indications that the enrolment details at an address were not up to date. However for 2004-2005, NT license data will no longer be made available to the NTEC/AEC for roll review purposes due to legislative changes in the Territory.
- In 2003-2004 WA and NSW motor transport authorities provided the AEC with full client files for background review purposes only. Arrangements have been made in both jurisdictions to establish regular access to the data.
- In the ACT technical issues covering the supply of license data were resolved during the year and it was first used for the background review in May 2004. Arrangements are in place for the regular supply of data to commence in 2004-2005.
- In Victoria the VEC has agreement for the use of motor licensing data for CRU purposes. However unlike the AEC COA mailing, the VEC VicRoads enrolment reminder letter only refers to the single person shown in the data and not others enrolled at the address, reducing its usefulness for review purposes.

During 2003-2004 motor licensing data and related programs were a major source of CRU enrolments and other replies, and this was without full national coverage. The well-established AEC programs in Tasmania, Qld and SA are now delivering 50% or more of all CRU enrolments from external data sources. In VicRoads component of the VEC program is responsible for 33% of all enrolments from the combined external data sources of the AEC and VEC.

The other benefits of the transport data to the CRU program is the volume of 1.5 million change of address and first time records received in 2003-2004 (from just jurisdictions with 30% of national enrolment) and its coverage of much of the community. In addition, the data is provided generally at the cost of extraction, it provides details of multiple electors at addresses and the persons shown have been subject to a formal proof of identity process.

As the data can be supplied as a whole file, that is all license holders, and with date of birth, it is a prime source of information for background matching to confirm the enrolment details of electors who have not notified a change of address. In May 2004, 14 million MV records from all jurisdictions with the exception of the NT and Vic were used in the background review data match (see section 5.1). Details of mailing and replies using motor transport data and other local sources are shown in the State and Territory summaries below.

2.5 Queensland

2.5.1 Qld Motor Transport

Mailing using Queensland Motor Transport COA and Resident (RE) information commenced in early 2001. It covers license holders who have changed address or who have come onto the MV file for the first time. During 2003-2004 the mailing remained at a high level with over 1 million records processed and 270,000 first and reminders letters mailed. The level of culling appears very high, but this is due to the operation of a separate CRU program in which persons changing their MV license address can complete an enrolment form printed on the back of the receipt for their amended license. When this form is mailed back to the AEC it results in the relevant record being culled at the data matching step on RMANS.

Table 2-5 Qld Motor Transport COA

	Records received	Letters posted	Replies	Response rate	Enrolments received
2003-2004	1,034,983	1st ltrs 223,814 2nd ltrs 44,157	82,278 13,387	*37% *30%	61,763 11,079
2002-2003	1,322,501	1st ltrs 267,277 2 nd ltrs 79,405	112,820 25,257	42% 32%	72,889 19,975

*Note: Responses are provisional and subject to further replies after 30 June 2004, see Section 1.5.3

In addition to COA data, Qld Motor Transport provides details of persons mainly aged 17 to 20 who were issued with licenses and permits for the first time, but not necessarily moving address (Resident or RE data). Details of this mailing are set out Table 2.6 below.

Table 2-6 Qld Motor Transport 17 and 18 year old RE (Residents) mailing

	Records received	Letters posted	Replies	Response rate	Enrolments received
2003-2004	47,838	27,411	7,652	*28%	8,657
2002-2003	55,901	37,711	11,220	30%	10,078

*Note: Responses are provisional and subject to further replies after 30 June 2004, see Section 1.5.3

2.5.2 Qld Rental Tenancy Authority

In July 2000, mailing commenced using Queensland Rental Tenancy Authority COA information and has continued each month for the ensuing 4 years subject to suspensions during elections. The records received are subject to the normal RMANS matching and culling, with mailing taking place on a regular timetable. Details of the mailing are set out at Table 2-7 below.

Table 2-7 Qld Rental Tenancy – both COA & RE mailing

	Records received	Letters posted	Replies	Response rate	Enrolments received
2003-2004	353,148	1st ltrs 78,573 2nd ltrs 37,336	24,387 6,328	*33% *17%	26,355 7,663
2002-2003	143,171	1 st ltrs 121,711 2 nd ltrs 21,466	40,650 6,776	33% 32%	34,967 5,560

*Note: Responses are provisional and subject to further replies after 30 June 2004, see Section 1.5.3

2.6 South Australia

CRU mailing using SA Motor Transport data commenced in Jan 2000 and has continued since with regular monthly postings. The program is stable and the results demonstrate the effectiveness of targeted mailing based on high quality data. The statistics show a high level of culling (65% discarded), evidence that the range of national and state sources of CRU data available in SA and the separate state authority rental tenancy enrolment activity is overlapping in coverage. Details of the program are shown below.

Table 2-8 SA Motor Transport COA and RE mailing

	Records received	Letters Posted	Replies	Response rate	Enrolments received*
2003-2004	263,056	91,243	32,557	*36%	29,553
2002-2003	256,610	102,615	41,533	40%	31,599

*Note: Responses are provisional and subject to further replies after 30 June 2004, see Section 1.5.3

Separate mailing based on SA Land Services Group land transfer data commenced in September 2001 and continued to October 2003. Due to problems in relating the property transfers to possible changes on the roll, extensive manual culling of the data took place, resulting in only small mailings. In the period July to October 2003 2,000 letters were mailed and 1,000 replies received.

2.7 Australian Capital Territory

During 2003 the ACT Electoral Commission undertook negotiations with ACT government agencies and utility companies for the supply of whole of customer file and change of address information. This resulted in access to ACT Rental Bond Board and ACT Electricity, Water and Gas (ACTEWAGL) data that was used for first mailings late

in 2002-2003. This mailing was consolidated in 2003-2004 to become the most important external data used in the ACT. The very high level of culling (80% discarded) is significant as it indicates the effectiveness of other CRU strategies in the ACT and the level of compliance by the electorate with compulsory enrolment.

Table 2-9 ACT Utility Connections (ACTEWAGL)

	Records Received	Letters Posted	Replies	Response rate	Enrolments Received*
2003-2004	38,438	6,003	2,771	*46%	3,452
	2nd letter	2,461	947	*39%	879

Table 2-10 ACT Rental Bonds

	Records received	Letters posted	Replies	Response rate	Enrolments received*
2003-2004	22,623	6,101	2,537	*42%	2,904
	2nd letter	2,279	796	*35%	746

*Note: Responses are provisional and subject to further replies after 30 June 2004, see Section 1.5.3

The ACTEWAGL and Rental Bonds data sources have a high response rate. At 30 June 2004 the combined response to first letters was 44%, which will rise when account is made of replies received after 30 June. This mailing resulted in the receipt of 7,300 enrolment forms received in the year for both without allowance for any carry-over after 30 June 2004 and the reminder letters. These two mailings generated 25% of all CRU enrolments in the ACT.

Due to the development of a new IT system by the ACT Road Traffic Authority it was not possible to use license data for regular change of address mailing during 2003-2004, but it was available as a whole file for the Background Review.

2.8 Northern Territory

Access to Northern Territory transport data was obtained in 2001 with mailing of letters commencing in July 2002. This has continued on a monthly basis through 2003-2004. Details of the program are shown below.

Table 2-11 Northern Territory Motor Transport COA and RE mailing

	Records received	Letters posted	Replies	Response rate	Enrolments received
2002-2003	38,319	10,966	3,662	33%	4,093

*Note: Responses are provisional and subject to further replies after 30 June 2004, see Section 1.5.3

Based on the responses, this program has been most effective in a jurisdiction with high levels of movement in the community and limited coverage by regular mail services. However, due to the introduction of privacy legislation in the Northern Territory, access to the motor transport licensing data has been terminated for 2004-2005.

2.9 Tasmania

Use of Tasmanian transport data commenced in January 2003 and has continued on a monthly basis since. Second or reminder letters have been introduced into the program but with few postings at 30 June 2004. Since its first use, the motor transport data has accounted for an estimated 33% of all CRU enrolments in Tasmania and if combined with the 'over the counter' change of address form, which is linked to MV license change of address, up to 50% of all enrolments in the state are generated from these sources.

Table 2-12 Tasmanian Motor Transport COA and RE mailing

	Records received	Letters posted	Replies	Response rate	Enrolments received
2003-2004	115,832	40,553	17,035	*40%	12,893
	2nd ltrs	1,428	330	*23%	153

*Note: Responses are provisional and subject to further replies after 30 June 2004, see Section 1.5.3

2.10 New South Wales

NSW state COA data has not been available on a regular basis for CRU purposes, however in January 2004 a match was made between the roll and NSW motor licensing data. The matching process was similar to that used for the background match (see Section 5.1) and follow up was undertaken by mail review at addresses where the match indicated persons may need to update their enrolment. A total of 126,500 mail review letters to 80,000 unique addresses were posted in a single batch in late January 2004. The mail review was most effective as it was targetted, with responses received from 50% of the total letters sent (or 65% of the addresses under review) and 35,500 enrolment forms collected. It is anticipated that NSW MV license data will be available for regular CRU mailings commencing in 2005.

3 AEC Data Mining Activities

The AEC undertakes a range of checks against roll data held on RMANS to target mail review at addresses where enrolment update may be required. All addresses mailed to are held on the RMANS Address Register.

During the reporting period the regular mailing of letters to Vacant addresses and Multiple Enrolment/Surname Limit Exceeded (MELimit) addresses continued in all jurisdictions. As well, mail sourced from RMANS was used to check the continuing entitlement of federal General Postal Voters and Silent Electors and enrolment at addresses where official mail had been returned undelivered by AP (RTS mail).

3.1 Vacant Address Mailing

The Vacant address mailing is targeted at addresses valid for enrolment but with no electors currently enrolled. With the high mobility of the population and the release of new dwellings into the market, there is a constant 'pool' of addresses with no enrolment. In addition, there are an estimated 1.5 million resident non-citizens occupying houses that are marked as valid for enrolment on RMANS. Other vacant addresses include residences which are uninhabited or occupied on a temporary basis such as holiday houses and serviced apartments. The vacant mailing is important as aside from enrolments, it provides valuable non-enrolment information covering non-eligible occupiers, address details and potential mail delivery problems.

The Vacant mailings take place generally each 3 months subject to operational constraints. The letters are targeted at those addresses from which electors have transferred and without new enrolments since the last vacant mailing or which have vacant (without an enrolment shown on RMANS for the address) for more than 12 months. In 2003-2004 the number of letters posted was double that of the previous year due in part to increased CRU activity disclosing more vacant addresses and the general lift in review activities. Details of mailing and responses are provided below.

Table 3-1 Vacant Address Mailing

	Letters mailed	Replies	Response rate	Enrolments received
2003-2004	944,746	280,487	*30%	230,659
2002-2003	427,462	156,195	37%	124,489

*Note: Responses are provisional and subject to further replies after 30 June 2004, see Section 1.5.3

There were 230,650 enrolments received nationally from vacant address mailing but there were differences between jurisdictions with large mailings (and responses in NSW) but only one batch for the year in Victoria with 158,000 letters mailed in October 2003. For this activity to be effective it needs regular mailing as there is a constant flow of new vacant addresses on RMANS arising from persons transferring their enrolment. The national response rate at 30 June 2004 was 30% which is likely to rise closer to the 37% result in 2002-2003 when account is made of late responses.

3.2 Multiple Enrolment/Surname Limit Exceeded (MELimit) Letters

This program identifies addresses where there are multiple enrolments, possibly arising as electors move out but not update their enrolment at their new address, combined with later enrolments by new residents. Addresses are targeted based on the combination of the number of electors enrolled, the enrolment dates and enrolments with more than one family name. Hostels, nursing homes and certain rural addresses are removed from investigation, as are addresses where AEC staff have already undertaken investigations and are aware of specific family or community circumstances.

The main purpose of the program is to confirm if electors are still living at their enrolled address and to identify for removal from the roll those electors who are no longer resident. Enrolment forms are generally not expected from these addresses, however they are included in the mailing to cover cases where eligible new residents have not already updated their enrolment. The review uses a personalised letter posted to the oldest elector of the most recent family group enrolled listing all persons on the roll at the address and requesting confirmation of the details. Details of letters posted in 2003-2004 and responses and enrolments collected are shown below.

Table 3-2 MELimit Mailing

	Letters mailed	Replies	Response rate	Enrolments received
2003-2004	57,858	36,186	*63%	9,063
2002-2003	56,677	34,057	61%	9,005

*Note: Responses are provisional and subject to further replies after 30 June 2004, see Section 1.5.3

This most effective review letter achieves a high response rate. As well, the replies are generally swift as new electors are keen to have persons no longer resident at their address removed from the roll. Postings were spread through the year but with relatively high postings in Victoria with 36% of the national total.

3.3 AEC Mail Review

In previous years some mailing of review letters took place without there being evidence on RMANS or in external data that the roll may be out of date at the address. Addresses were selected by Census Collection District for review or in perceived 'high turnover' areas. Replies to such mailing has consistently shown that the majority are 'no-change' resulting in little useful data being added to the roll other than confirmation that the roll was in order at the address. In 2003-2004 no discretionary mail review on a CCD or high turnover area basis was undertaken. A targeted mail review based on motor license data was undertaken in NSW in early 2004. Details are provided at Section 2.10.

The AEC undertook mail review to check the continued entitlement of federal electors to General Postal Voters (GPVs) and Silent status, plus a review of addresses where official mail e.g. MPs letters to constituents, was Returned to Sender (RTS) unclaimed. The GPV/Silent review covered 90,000 first letters and 20,000 reminders with an initial response of 80%. The RTS mail letters were low in volume and only commenced in 2004.

Separately, a very large mailing of letters took place as a supplementary review following the background datamatch. This covered 1.95 million letters posted in late May and early June 2004. This mailing is reported on as part of the background match process at Section 5.1.

4 State and Territory Specific Programs

A number of CRU programs rely on assisting eligible persons to enrol without the need to send a COA letter or other form of follow-up, usually by providing enrolment forms and a low key prompt as part of documentation associated with moving home or for other life events requiring official notification. Enrolments from these sources are the least intrusive for electors, are cheap to collect and are usually lodged promptly. The local CRU programs have been managed by the SEAs or jointly with the AEC.

4.1 Victoria

The VEC has arrangements with a range of Victorian authorities for the supply of data in electronic format covering electors changing address and persons who may be eligible but not enrolled. The data received is matched against the VEC roll and enrolment reminder letters sent where required. The VEC letters do not include a schedule of persons already enrolled so there is no review of the roll at the address (as is possible with the AEC COA letters). Replies are processed by VEC with enrolment forms forwarded to the AEC for entry into RMANS. As in other jurisdictions, the VEC is active in distributing enrolment forms through state agencies and local government shop fronts and promotes enrolment as part of elections.

During 2003-2004 the VEC managed CRU mail out programs in conjunction with five partner organizations including VicRoads, Victorian Tertiary Admittance Authority, Rental Bond Authority, Victorian Curriculum Authority and TXU (an electricity supply company). Mailing of 439,000 enrolment reminder letters took place to persons moving address or appearing for the first time in the external data. Of particular importance is the use of the school data to encourage first time enrolment by 17 year old students, this program maintaining participation by young people at a relatively high level compared to the other jurisdictions. Results of VEC CRU activities, including enrolments received from display in public outlets, are set out below..

Table 4-1 VEC CRU Activities and Enrolments

VEC CRU Activities 2003-2004	Enrolments
VicRoads	52,170
Rental Bond Authority	20,062
School Curriculum and Assessment Authority	13,663
Vic Tertiary Admission Council	3,817
Electricity connections (TXU)	3,706
Liquor Licensing	2,971
VEC Office	14,407
VEC Internet site	2,926
Coles supermarkets	1,254
Councils	918
Other	1,717
Total	117,611

A total of 117,611 enrolment forms were collected by VEC, this being 25% of all joint enrolments from CRU activity in the state. For further information on the operation of the program refer to the VEC 2003-2004 Annual Report.

The VEC mailing files are not cross matched with RMANS or AEC CRU mailing resulting in some duplication and the receipt of repeated or 'no-change' enrolments i.e. a second enrolment form is received which matches the details exactly on a previous form already processed into RMANS. In 2003-2004 there were 55,000 no-change enrolments processed in Victoria or 10% of all enrolments. Whilst some repeated enrolments are inevitable and not always arising from duplicated CRU activities, the number in Victoria would be significantly reduced if cross matching of data took place between the AEC and VEC. It is planned that the feasibility of cross matching will be examined in 2005. Aside from the 'no-change' enrolments, the two CRU programs have the potential to be complementary as they use different data sources.

4.2 Queensland

With the permission of the Qld Board of Studies enrolment forms are included in the mailing of school year 12 examination result notices. In 2003-2004 this resulted in the receipt of 5,602 forms of generally first time enrolments by 17 and 18 year old students with most received prior to the close of rolls for the Qld state election.

Commencing in July 2000 a blank enrolment form has been printed on the back of the Queensland Transport motor vehicle license change of address form and mailed out with the amended license. This is a most effective and least cost process and in 2003-2004 there were 46,957 enrolments received from this source (refer to Section 2.5.1).

4.3 Western Australia

In 2000 the Western Australian Electoral Commission (WAEC) established a school-based enrolment program. Schools are responsible for collecting completed enrolments and forwarding them to the WAEC. In 2003-2004 5,961 enrolment forms were collected, this being approximately 20% of the eligible 18 year olds in the state.

Over the last 3 years the WAEC participated in a whole of government internet based change of address system (Life Events). In 2003-2004 5,866 enrolment forms were received from this source. While Life Events does not provide an on-line enrolment system, it allows persons to lodge their details with WAEC so that enrolment forms and a reply paid envelope can be mailed out to the applicant.

4.4 South Australia

The SA State Electoral Office (SEO) arranges for enrolment forms and a reply paid envelope to be included with Residential Tenancies Tribunal notices sent to new leaseholders. This program commenced in 2000-2001 and over the last 4 years has been responsible for approximately 12% of all CRU enrolments in the state. In 2003-2004 13,561 forms were collected from new leaseholders. A school enrolment program is managed by the SEO similar in operation to that in WA. In 2003-2004 2,374 enrolments were collected from SA school leavers.

4.5 Tasmania

The Tasmanian school enrolment program was established in 2000 and relies on the assistance of secondary college principals. In 2003-2004, 1,274 enrolment forms were collected. The number of enrolments from this source is not large, but is significant given that there are only an estimated 6,200 eligible 18 year old persons in the state. When enrolments from other sources are included, it gives Tasmania a rate of youth enrolment consistently higher than the national average.

Separate to the AEC managed CRU program of data matching and mailing, the Tasmanian Electoral Office collects enrolments from Service Tasmania's multi-purpose change of address forms and forwards them to the AEC for entry into RMANS. This is a most effective 'point of sale' enrolment activity with approximately 9,200 forms collected in 2003-2004, being 15% of all enrolments processed in the year.

4.6 Australian Capital Territory

In 2003 the ACT Electoral Commission arranged for access to change of address information from ACTEWAGL (electricity, water and gas connections) and the ACT rental tenancy agency. This data was supplied to the AEC in 2003-2004 for processing in the wider CRU system. Agreement for access to ACT motor vehicle license change of address data was also obtained and after the resolution of technical issues, it will be brought into production during 2005.

A similar schools enrolment program to that in WA has operated in the ACT since 2000. In 2003-2004 1,407 enrolments were collected from eligible 17 and 18 year old school leavers, with the majority timed for collection in the 2 months prior to the federal and ACT election close of rolls to maximise the program's effectiveness.

4.7 School and Youth Enrolment Programs

Details of the various school enrolment programs at the jurisdictional level are covered at 4.1 to 4.6 above. A total of 35,000 enrolments were collected from these programs in 2003-2004, this being approximately 15% of the population of eligible 18 year olds. However, there were significant differences between jurisdictions with 25% of the eligible 18 year olds being enrolled from the school based programs in Victoria, the ACT and Tasmania whilst in NSW and the NT there were no specific CRU activities undertaken at the school level other than the AEC and SEA's ongoing electoral education program. Other activities targeted at youth enrolment included the AEC's attendance at the Big Day Out concerts and university orientation days. These programs collected approximately 4,000 enrolments nationally. However, such targeted activities cannot engage with all young people, especially those over age 18, and while persons in the 20 - 25 year age group do continue to enrol (but at lower rates), it is not possible to separate them out of the normal CRU statistics at source.

To check the participation of young persons up to age 25 comparisons have been made between the electoral roll and ABS population estimates for each jurisdiction, adjusted for those residents not eligible (mainly non-citizens) using 2001 Census data.

Enrolment by those aged 18- 25 years at the federal close of rolls on 7 September 2004 is estimated at 82% of the eligible population - see Table 4.2 below. Whilst the absolute Electoral Council of Australia - CRU Report 2003-2004

number enrolled is accurate (being extracted from RMANS roll data), the percentage of the eligible 18-25 population enrolled is an estimate and subject to some variation depending on how the available data is interpreted. However, as the number of young people in each age group has been relatively stable for the last 5 years, a comparison of absolute numbers on the roll can give a reasonable measure of the effectiveness of measures to encourage enrolment.

For the 12 months to 30 June 2004 the number of young people enrolled increased by 10,000 to an estimated 79.6% of the eligible population (source: AEC Annual Report 2003-2004). If the comparison is extended to the 7 September 2004 federal close of rolls, then the number of 18-25 old year electors increased by 67,000 over the 14 months from 1 July 2003, with most of the increase coming in the 8 weeks leading up to the close of rolls. Almost all of the new enrolments were in the 18 - 20 year ages. It would seem that enrolment programs targeted at young people are reasonable effective at the lower ages, but a hard core of around 15% of the eligible population remain un-enrolled at age 25, with lower than average rates continuing up to at least age 30.

Table 4 - 2 Youth enrolment by age and percent of eligible population – 7 September 2004

Age	17		18		19		20		21-25	
	Enrolled	% of eligible pop'n	Enrolled	% of eligible pop'n	Enrolled	% of eligible pop'n	Enrolled	% of eligible pop'n	Enrolled	% of eligible pop'n
ACT	1,092	27%	3,822	86%	4,157	87%	4,432	85%	23,124	88%
NT	2,629	10%	1,263	45%	1,497	52%	1,803	65%	11,666	78%
NSW	10,326	13%	60,325	70%	67,827	80%	69,159	83%	338,747	83%
Qld	5,615	12%	35,969	70%	41,337	80%	42,435	83%	211,035	84%
SA	4,311	24%	14,908	74%	15,252	75%	16,087	79%	80,399	84%
Tas	1,577	25%	5,480	80%	5,684	83%	5,591	86%	25,805	91%
Vic	21,880	38%	49,826	80%	53,474	85%	54,702	87%	268,009	85%
WA	6,283	25%	19,940	74%	20,179	76%	20,571	80%	164,541	83%
NAT	51,336	22%	191,533	73%	209,407	80%	214,780	83%	1,062,636	84%

Note: Stated participation rates are estimates and may vary by a number of percentage points.

A comparison of the number of 18-25 year old electors on the roll at the 2001 and 2004 federal election close of rolls, indicates a growth by 2004 of 38,000 or an estimated 2% in the participation rate, with most of the increase being for 18 and 19 year olds. At the jurisdictional level almost all of the national increase took place in NSW, Qld and Tasmania with around 4% increase each.

In the absence of electoral events (other than the Qld state election) to stimulate enrolment, the CRU program has maintained levels of youth participation comparable with previous years, whether through the normal mailing or targeted activities such as school programs. An examination of the youth numbers on the roll at regular intervals during 2004 indicates that Qld remained stable (due to the state election in February 2004), NSW had a steady increase during the year. In the other jurisdiction, a rapid increase in enrolments took place in the 8 weeks leading up to the federal roll close. The fluctuation in participation between jurisdictions is due to the timing of non-response fieldwork, the May 2004 supplementary mail review (particularly in Victoria) and the slightly longer period between the announcement of the federal election and the close of rolls.

The reasons for the choices by young people to enrol have been the subject of research by an AEC/ Australian Research Council project (refer to AEC website for a progress report). In view of the fluctuations in youth enrolment during the reporting period and up to September 2004, it is recommended that analysis be made of these changes and particularly the number of young people who enrolled or updated their details in the 2004 federal election close of rolls period

4.8 Citizenship ceremonies

Since 1996 the Department of Immigration, Multi-cultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA) has provided information on enrolment to applicants for citizenship and printed a personalised enrolment form for use by new citizens that only requires checking, signing and witnessing at Citizenship ceremonies. AEC staff attend the larger ceremonies to assist applicants and to collect completed forms. As Councils undertake most citizenship ceremonies, the assistance of their staff is required and they regularly collect completed forms at the smaller ceremonies or where AEC staff cannot attend.

In 2003-2004 51,663 enrolment forms were collected through this program (a small increase on the previous year), mainly in NSW, Vic, Qld and WA as these states account for most new citizens. An estimated 75% of new citizens complete forms at ceremonies where the AEC is in attendance.

5 Other AEC CRU Activities

5.1 Background Review

The CRU change of address and RMANS data mining activities have been effective in boosting enrolments from electors on the move and in identifying addresses where review action is needed. As there is generally no movement at the majority of addresses, a complementary strategy has been introduced to check the continued accuracy of the roll.

In 2001 the AEC developed a background review process to check roll against the complete files of authoritative external sources i.e. not just the movers. It was first used in 2001 prior to the Qld state election and the federal election, then in 2003 in preparation for the NSW state election. The process was refined and used in May 2004 in all jurisdictions in preparation for the federal election.

The process requires that all current RMANS elector records be matched against authoritative external data plus other enrolment information arising from the CRU program for the preceding 2 years e.g. response to mail review letters. The external data used in the May 2004 match was supplied by motor registries in all jurisdictions (with the exception of Victoria and the NT) and Centrelink.

A total of 21 million external records were examined in the match, but even this number does not cover all electors as, at the very least, those who do not hold MV licenses or who are not clients of Centrelink will not be matched as they are not included in the external data. Further omissions and under-matching arises due to differences in the structure of files between computer systems and the accuracy and currency of the name and address details held, particularly with respect to address descriptions. In the case of RMANS, addresses are held in a highly accurate and structured form, but this is not necessarily the case with other computer systems as generally agencies hold only the information and the detail required for their business needs.

At the conclusion of the matching process, supplementary review letters were extracted from RMANS for those addresses where there was no match and there had not been other CRU review within the previous two years. The letters were sorted and addressed according to normal mail review procedures and posted to the oldest enrolled member of each family name group at the address under review i.e. more than one letter may be received at some addresses if different surnames or postal addresses were involved. The addressee was requested to confirm the continued enrolment of the persons listed and mail the schedule back.

In May and early June 2004 approximately 2 million review letters were posted covering all jurisdictions. Over half the letters were posted in Victoria due to the lower match rates compared to other jurisdictions as the only external data available was from Centrelink and the relatively subdued AEC CRU program in that state. Note that VEC results from their CRU activities are not included in the matching unless VEC action resulted in a subsequent RMANS transaction e.g. receipt of an

enrolment form. In all, review letters were sent to 50% of the enrollable addresses in Victoria.

Due to the large volume of mail, the supplementary review smoothed out differences between jurisdictions in on-going CRU activity and the identification of addresses where there had been no response to previous CRU action i.e. the supplementary mail review became a reminder letter, particularly in Victoria, SA and WA where non-response fieldwork had not taken place. Details of the supplementary mail review are set out below

Table 5-1 National Supplementary Mail Review 2003-2004

State	Letters	Unique addresses mailed to	Enrolment forms received	Replies by address including 'no further action'	Response rate %
NT	17,873	13,219	340	4,494	33%
Vic	1,002,968	830,138	66,166	329,075	38%
NSW	246,237	180,622	13,498	96,902	51%
TAS	56,266	46,593	3,399	33,298	53%
ACT	27,237	20,308	2,552	13,692	67%
SA	98,481	79,542	6,394	48,306	50%
WA	153,287	125,363	12,106	78,479	59%
Qld	340,464	270,570	15,303	156,602	58%
Total	1,942,813	1,566,355	119,708	760,848	51%

Note: Mail was posted in late May/early June 2004 with last mailing 17 June (to NT addresses). Due to mailing immediately before the extract of response data for all CRU activities, replies and response rates are not final, see Section 1.5.3.

The supplementary mail review was effective in gaining responses in all jurisdictions. Based on the 51% address response at 30 June the final response rate over the following 2 months could be in the order of 60-70%. However, the large number of responses (estimated at 80%) that resulted in 'no further action' point to the need to further refine the background matching process, broaden the external data used and ensure that the data is up to date to cut down on mailing to persons already correctly enrolled.

The non-responding addresses to the supplementary mailing remain a concern. Given that a majority of responses were 'no-change', it is likely that the non-responding addresses are those at which the roll is not up to date. As many of the exceptions noted in the background match, and subsequently written to, had already been the subject of CRU mailing with no response, it may be more cost-effective to undertake non-response fieldwork at a proportion of these addresses rather than send more mail. It is recommended that when all replies have been received to the supplementary mail review an analysis be undertaken of the non-responding addresses to determine if they are the subject of frequent unanswered CRU mail.

5.2 Non-response fieldwork

In certain cases where there is no reply to CRU mail, fieldwork may be undertaken as a final follow-up at non-responding addresses. The extent to which fieldwork can be undertaken is determined by the number of addresses to follow up in an area (if there are too few it is not economic to review), remoteness, and whether access is possible. Continuing improvements by the AEC to the RMANS Address Register and to the CRU matching systems generally has cut down on duplicated mailing and on the number of addresses requiring fieldwork.

The non-response fieldwork is expensive at \$5.00 per residence resulting in its restriction to those areas where access is practical, distances are not great and the non-responding addresses are clustered. Within these constraints, the fieldwork has a high contact rate (78%) and is effective in resolving address problems and obtaining enrolments.

Since its first trial in Qld in 1999 and national implementation in 2001, non-response fieldwork has become a core part of the CRU process, but has proved difficult to fit into the HO and divisional timetable in the run-up to elections. The statistics covering non-response fieldwork indicate that at two-thirds of the addresses at which contact was made, enrolment or address details needed updating.

Since the implementation of CRU, the incidence of problems on the RMANS Register Register has significantly declined, particularly in those jurisdictions where addresses are relatively stable e.g. ACT and Tasmania, or where there has been a considerable amount of fieldwork as in Qld and NSW.

During 2003-2004, non-response fieldwork took place at 320,000 addresses in NSW, Qld, Tasmania, the ACT and NT. The only fieldwork undertaken in Victoria and SA was that required as part of the RIU activities. In WA there was a limited habitation review of addresses in a number of high growth areas.

Table 5-2 Non Response Fieldwork for 2003-2004

	Addresses visited	Contact rate	Enrolments collected	Notes
NSW	229,139	75%	51,839	May-June 04 (see note below)
Qld	88,374	83%	47,956	Sept – Oct 03
Tas	13,440	93%	7,126	March 04
ACT	4,626	87%	2,379	March 04
NT	1,693	na	761	Feb 04
	319,260	78% est	110,065	

Note: Enrolments arising from NSW fieldwork is understated by an estimated 15,000 as a proportion of enrolment forms already collected could not be entered into RMANS until after 30 June due to fieldwork taking place late in the reporting period.

The amount of fieldwork undertaken nationally was similar to that in 2002-2003 but only half of that which took place in 2001. Two thirds of all fieldwork took place in NSW.

The Qld fieldwork took place in the period July to Dec 2003 and was completed prior to the state election. In the ACT and Tasmania, the fieldwork was completed in March/April 2004. In NSW, the large fieldwork program commenced in May 2004 but was not completed or all results entered into RMANS until after 30 June.

In the NT, non-response fieldwork took place at 1,500 addresses in Darwin and Palmerston, but this does not include other fieldwork and related enrolment initiatives undertaken in the Territory to fit in with the unique geographic and demographic circumstances applying there. A full habitation review took place on Cocos Keeling and Christmas Island. Prior to the 2004 NT local government election the AEC undertook roll reviews by schedule in a number of regional and remote communities.

Separate to the CRU program the AEC RIU undertook audit fieldwork at 112,000 addresses including 58,000 in Victoria. The AEC has reported separately on the RIU activities and as this fieldwork was not part of the CRU program, the results are not included in Table 5.1 above. However, they are shown in the statistical reports at Section 7 and identified under the 'RR' code in the statistics for each jurisdiction.

The RIU fieldwork was undertaken for audit purposes only and not specifically to improve the quality of the roll. In the larger jurisdictions the impact on the roll was minor as the number of addresses reviewed averaging around 7,000 and for example in the case of NSW this represented only 0.25% of enrollable addresses. But in the Territories and Tasmania, the sample covered a significant number of all addresses due to the need to meet statistical requirements for a valid sample size. In the NT 7,600 addresses were visited as part of the audit fieldwork and contact was made at 80%, with the sample covering approximately 12% of the residences in the town areas of Katherine, Alice Springs and Darwin. In the ACT 8,751 addresses (7% of enrollable addresses) were visited and in Tasmania 7000 addresses (or 3.5%). Given the number of addresses contacted in these smaller jurisdictions, this fieldwork would have made a discernable improvement in roll accuracy.

6 Future Directions

The areas for investigation set out below are based on the performance of the national program for 2003-2004. As the outcomes were in accordance with the AEC's strategic plan and the AEC is already undertaking research into the quality of the roll through the activities of the Roll Integrity Unit, any review of CRU should concentrate on improvements to current activities and changes in detail only.

In order to assess opportunities for improvement, the following directions are put forward for consideration:

- Examining the effectiveness of CRU in providing an accurate roll for the 2004 federal election and the timing of specific activities to fit in with elections generally.
- Investigating the extent of enrolment by young persons in the close of rolls period and of participation by groups aged 25 to 40 years.
- Undertaking an analysis of the background match and the supplementary mail review process including the quality of the external data provided and the status of non-responding addresses.
- Examining the effectiveness of the non-response fieldwork, particularly in reaching eligible persons currently not enrolled.
- Further integrating the CRU activities of the AEC with those of the state and territory authorities including enrolment publicity campaigns.
- Assessing the consequences of objection action on subsequent re-enrolment/reinstatement and provisional voting.

7 Statistical Reports

Table 7.1 CRU enrolments received in 2003-2004 and other CRU activities

Table 7.2 CRU data source, mailing/fieldwork and responses by jurisdiction – 2003-2004.

Table 7.1 – CRU enrolments received in 2003-2004 and other activities

AEC CRU enrolments and source	NSW	Vic	Qld	SA	WA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total
AP Firsts	89,051	47,449	33,112	6,550	21,194	3,452	3,706	642	205,156
AP Reminders	20,750	15,384	7,321	1,430	5,897	561	1,075	213	52,631
C'link Firsts	37,281	22,123	14,920	3,784	9,369	2,460	807	448	91,192
C'link Reminders	13,842	9,357	4,625	1,214	3,640	661	353	269	33,961
CL 17 & 18	7,419	6,090	4,797	1,648	2,022	860	198	65	23,099
Mir Trans monthly- COA and Residents			81,499	29,553		13,046		4,093	128,191
WA Dept Lands (DOLA) or SA Lands Dept				494	377				871
Schools							414		414
Rental Tenants Data			34,018				3,650		37,668
Utilities							4,331		4,331
Vacants	86,848	36,075	49,704	13,121	36,703	3,142	4,218	848	230,659
MELimits	1,049	3,424	2,071	546	1,324	801	197	74	9,486
Mail Review	49,058	77,973	24,309	13,248	12,251	3,399	2,552	799	183,589
Silent Review Firsts	3,814	3,983	3,795	735	990	249	254	307	14,127
Silent Review Reminders	2,138	1,150	1,544	179		68	89	12	5,180
RTS	699	194	155	81	38			183	1,350
Audit Fieldwork	1,201	10,794	1,519	1,308	1,731	1,465	1,965	2,219	22,202
CRU Non-response Fieldwork	51,839		47,956			7,130	2,379	761	110,065
WA ERR					8,749				8,749
Citizenship Ceremonies	23,594	10,443	8,494	1,660	6,618	476	189	189	51,663
Youth Enrolment Promotion	1,451	331	529	368	994	41	80	9	3,803
Youth Enrolment Promotion Post Competition									311
Enrolments received July-Dec 2003 from events posted in Jan - June 2003 - (Overlap)	166,825	94,188	150,803	29,007	48,734	18,953	8,363	8,688	525,561
AEC Totals	556,859	338,958	471,171	104,926	160,631	56,764	34,820	19,819	1,744,259

State/Territory Authority CRU enrolments

VEC Programs		116,422							116,422
SA Enrol Form in Rental Tenancy Mailouts				13,561					13,561
WA Life Events					5,866				5,866
Qld Enrol Form in Qld Transport COA (with AEC)			46,957						46,957
Qld Exit Lines – school exam results (with AEC)			5,602						5,602
SA, WA, Tas & ACT Schools Programs				2,374	5,961	1,274	1,407		11,016
Tas Motor Registry - one form does it all						9,223			9,223
Totals for State/Territory Electoral Authorities	*	116,422	52,559	15,935	11,827	10,497	1,407	*	208,647

Total CRU enrol (AEC and State & Territory)	556,859	455,380	523,730	120,861	172,458	#67,261	36,227	19,819	1,952,906
Enrolment forms from all sources	670,035	531,277	673,357	173,365	213,532	66,414	44,144	29,069	2,401,193

Other CRU Activities

Electors Confirmed by Background Review	2,900,704	670,577	1,322,994	667,243	673,138	196,590	154,247	9,635	6,595,128
Objections Deletions	30,437	34,830	53,695	9,490	13,664	6,142	3,421	3,567	155,246
Total Habitations Reviewed	1,882,705	893,845	1,340,881	534,069	529,439	179,791	113,219	25,240	5,499,189
Unique Habitations Reviewed	1,650,659	834,101	993,581	439,917	475,349	155,332	98,119	21,474	4,668,532

Note 1. * Enrolments collected by NSW and NT SEAs are included in 'Enrolment forms from all sources'.

Note 2. # Double counting between enrolments collected by Tas EC and AEC activities inflates total, to be resolved in 2004-2005.

Table 7.2 - AEC CRU data, mailing/fieldwork and responses by jurisdiction - 2003-2004

State/territory & data source	Records loaded		Not mailed/ culled	Mailed/ fieldwork	Replies/ contact	Enrol after 3 months	Enrol after 6 months	Total enrolments
	matched	unmatched						
ACT								
A CA AE 1st	36927	1511	32435	6003	2771	3107	345	3452
A CA AE 2nd	3361	61	961	2461	947	745	134	879
A CA AP 1st	23390	1063	17548	6905	3444	3309	397	3706
A CA AP 2nd	3919	49	1521	2447	1008	920	155	1075
A CA AR 1st	21509	1114	16525	6098	2537	2557	347	2904
A CA AR 2nd	3113	24	860	2277	796	578	168	746
A CA CL 1st	6943	448	4602	2789	886	749	58	807
A CA CL 2nd	1854	16	285	1585	409	295	58	353
A ME	2328	0	863	1465	936	150	47	197
A MR	20308	0	6	20302	13692	2552	0	2552
A RE AS	1001	29	88	942	353	405	9	414
A RE CL	1223	44	470	797	212	167	31	198
A RR	8740	5	1	8744	3534	1743	222	1965
A RS 1st	1757	0	6	1751	1329	189	65	254
A RS 2nd	425	0	18	407	212	60	29	89
A TG	5663	56	1093	4626	3418	2166	213	2379
A VM 1st	21707	0	8800	12907	4064	3734	484	4218
Total	164168	4420	86082	82506	40548	23426	2762	26188

Northern Territory

D CA AP 1st	5561	623	4450	1734	657	529	113	642
D CA AP 2nd	1502	143	933	712	261	156	57	213
D CA CL 1st	5585	5454	9245	1794	513	358	90	448
D CA CL 2nd	2108	107	511	1704	407	189	80	269
D CA DM	6377	1938	5825	2490	1150	1093	232	1325
D ME	671	0	283	388	207	51	23	74
D MR	14363	0	4	14359	5075	660	139	799
D RE CL	373	507	638	242	56	53	12	65
D RE DM	16110	6541	14175	8476	2512	2130	638	2768
D RR	7664	31	0	7695	3663	1742	477	2219
D RS 1st	1150	0	2	1148	888	193	114	307
D RS 2nd	175	0	27	148	12	12	0	12
D RT	318	7	155	170	136	138	45	183
D TG	3865	67	2239	1693	1270	596	165	761
D VM	4535	0	2094	2441	907	650	198	848
Total	70357	15418	40581	45194	17714	8550	2383	10933

New South Wales

N CA AP 1st	477218	30888	283867	224239	91285	77310	11741	89051
N CA AP 2nd	132063	7263	69308	70018	25351	15294	5456	20750
N CA CL 1st	241862	28390	128928	141324	42314	33147	4134	37281
N CA CL 2nd	86796	6662	20204	73254	18736	9537	4305	13842
N ME	13342	0	7097	6245	4548	633	416	1049
N MR	301723	0	132	301591	157244	43722	5334	49056
N RE CL	36926	1708	11494	27140	7221	6368	1051	7419
N RR	6040	381	1	6420	2832	1123	78	1201
N RS 1st	49310	0	45	49265	37933	2752	1062	3814
N RS 2nd	11396	0	428	10968	4751	1477	661	2138
N RT	8624	91	3782	4933	2766	636	63	699
N TG	393148	3060	167069	229139	87204	51839	0	51839
N VM	440876	0	89923	350953	106972	73453	13395	86848
Total	2199324	78443	782278	1495489	589157	317291	47696	364987

State/territory & data source	Records loaded		Not mailed/ culled	Mailed/ fieldwork	Replies/ contact	Enrol after 3 months	Enrol after 6 months	Total enrolments
	matched	unmatched						

Queensland

Q CA AP 1st	290353	23873	247677	66549	30368	26433	6679	33112
Q CA AP 2nd	40207	3622	18219	25610	9046	6000	1321	7321
Q CA CL 1st	188233	29671	166326	51578	15272	11510	3410	14920
Q CA CL 2nd	30288	3680	8456	25512	6173	3594	1031	4625
Q CA QR 1st	318579	34569	274575	78573	24387	20327	6028	26355
Q CA QR 2nd	47173	4842	14679	37336	9340	6109	1554	7663
Q CA QT 1st	937886	97097	811169	223814	82214	47561	14176	61737
Q CA QT 2nd	89266	8558	53667	44157	13385	9016	2063	11079
Q ME	21430	0	9474	11956	6681	1482	589	2071
Q MR	456183	0	943	455260	264835	24309	0	24309
Q RE CL	24497	1634	10236	15895	4400	3735	1062	4797
Q RE QT	42212	5626	20427	27411	7652	5966	2691	8657
Q RR	7642	512	18	8136	3500	1440	79	1519
Q RS 1st	15277	0	250	15027	10878	2793	1002	3795
Q RS 2nd	4309	0	525	3784	2574	1280	264	1544
Q RT	939	24	422	541	151	132	23	155
Q TG	162068	8161	81855	88374	62195	36473	11483	47956
Q VM	242951	0	80679	162272	56672	38662	11042	49704
Total	2919493	221869	1799597	1341785	609723	246822	64497	311319

South Australia

S CA AP 1st	69362	4306	54633	19035	8281	5914	636	6550
S CA AP 2nd	11393	1305	5942	6756	2274	1173	257	1430
S CA CL 1st	48530	10974	41927	17577	5012	3524	260	3784
S CA CL 2nd	11742	1508	2690	10560	2295	951	263	1214
S CA SL 1st	28521	18065	45576	1010	481	220	40	260
S CA SL 2nd	1364	167	598	933	368	193	40	233
S CA SM 1st	98244	16290	85773	28761	10568	8560	156	8716
S CA SM 2nd	2619	299	1007	1911	352	232	0	232
S ME	11356	0	6430	4926	3005	381	165	546
S MR	196776	0	115	196661	115753	13248	0	13248
S RE CL	9631	1028	4210	6449	1951	1476	172	1648
S RE SM	127978	20544	87951	60571	21637	17864	2741	20605
S RR	7331	329	1	7659	3037	1203	105	1308
S RS 1st	7529	0	20	7509	5904	735	0	735
S RS 2nd	1607	0	67	1540	876	179	0	179
S RT	1092	29	437	684	373	69	12	81
S VM	132198	0	49224	82974	18968	10892	2229	13121
Total	767273	74844	386601	455516	201135	66814	7076	73890

Tasmania

T CA AP 1st	24658	746	17250	8154	3950	3091	361	3452
T CA AP 2nd	3806	176	2016	1966	775	471	90	561
T CA CL 1st	23710	2181	16837	9054	2956	2270	190	2460
T CA CL 2nd	4865	277	1427	3715	975	545	116	661
T CA TM 1st	56459	5158	42851	18766	8983	4860	173	5033
T CA TM 2nd	1862	153	587	1428	330	153	0	153
T ME	4626	0	2367	2259	1533	273	105	378
T MR	46593	0	21	46572	33298	3399	0	3399
T RE CL	4787	143	1699	3231	1005	750	110	860
T RE TM	50875	3340	32428	21787	8352	6718	1142	7860
T RR	7003	78	0	7081	2897	1362	103	1465
T RS 1st	1610	0	7	1603	1312	178	71	249
T RS 2nd	292	0	24	268	144	39	29	68
T TG	24706	378	11644	13440	8719	6565	565	7130
T VM	15054	0	4160	10894	5413	2480	662	3142
Total	270906	12630	133318	150218	80642	33154	3717	36871

