

2004 – 2005

Continuous Roll Update

A report of the Enrolment Steering Committee to the Electoral
Council of Australia

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1 Introduction

This report is of the 2004-2005 Continuous Roll Update (CRU) program undertaken by the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) and state and territory electoral authorities (SEAs). It has been prepared by the Enrolment Steering Committee (ESC) for the Electoral Council of Australia (ECA).

The report provides details of the AEC's data-matching, mailing and fieldwork CRU activities and of the complementary programs managed directly by the SEAs.

1.1 Executive summary

The main CRU activities undertaken by the AEC in 2004-2005 were:

- The processing of 4.1 million change of address (CA) and new client or potential electors (PE) records provided by external agencies, the largest number being from Australia Post, Centrelink and state and territory motor vehicle licensing (MV) authorities. An additional 3 million records were extracted from the AEC's Roll Management System (RMANS) for checking and possible address review.
- The posting of 3.1 million enrolment and roll review letters (including 670,000 reminder or second letters) based on the external CA and PE data and RMANS electoral roll and address information. Follow up fieldwork was concluded at 350,000 addresses where no reply had been received to CRU mail and an additional 58,000 addresses were reviewed as part of the AEC's Roll Integrity Unit (RIU) audit fieldwork program.
- The commissioning of the Mail Review System (MRS) in January 2005. This major new computer system, supported by revised divisional procedures and letters, replaced a range of separate RMANS modules. Since its introduction the MRS has demonstrated efficiencies in data processing, mailing and the recording of replies.

In addition to the AEC's data matching, mail review and fieldwork program, direct enrolment activities were undertaken by all authorities. This included enrolments collected along with civic transactions such as completing high school, gaining citizenship, registering rental agreements and transferring motor licenses.

During 2004-2005 the AEC's CRU program was suspended for three months for the federal election and then for the introduction of the MRS in January 2005. Only minor interruptions to the program were caused by elections in the ACT, WA and the NT.

The results of 2004-2005 CRU activities at the cut-off for replies at 30 September 2005 included:

- The receipt and processing of 1.4 million address replies to mailing and fieldwork from the 2.57 million targeted for CRU activity, an address responses rate of 55%.
- The review of the enrolment details of electors at 1.7 million habitations or 20% of enrollable addresses nationally.

- The objection from the roll of 266,000 electors who had apparently moved address.
- The collection of 1.06 million enrolment forms including 175,000 from SEA managed activities. Not included in this total are 534,000 enrolments received in 2004-2005 that were in response to the previous year's CRU mailing.
- The collection and processing into the RMANS Address Register of a large volume of non-enrolment information relating to addresses and mail delivery.

There was a lower amount of CRU activity in 2004-2005 than for the previous year. AEC mailing volumes and fieldwork were reduced by 35% and there was no background match of the roll to external data. Consequently, the number of enrolments received and addresses reviewed was lower than in the previous year.

The subdued 2004-2005 performance is partly explained by the suspension of activities from September 2004 for the federal election and the absence of subsequent major electoral events to stimulate responses to CRU mail. Note that most CRU enrolments prompted by the 2004 federal election were in reply to 2003-2004 mailing (see the 534,000 'carried-over' enrolments referred to above). From the beginning of 2005 there was a marked reduction of enrolments from AEC CRU mailing (not including non-response fieldwork) with only 405,000 recorded against the 2.2 million letters posted in the period January to June 2005. It is recommended that investigation be made into the possible reasons for the decline in enrolments in this period. A comparison of variations in enrolments from CRU sources over the last five years is set out at Section 1.6.

Despite the drop in enrolments, the 2004-200 CRU program was relatively stable between jurisdictions with enrolment activity and responses roughly in proportion to total population, elector movement and election activity. The main reasons for this were the standardisation of the CRU mailing schedule with the introduction of the MRS and the conduct of non-response fieldwork nationally in early 2005.

As part of the 'evening-up' of performance between jurisdictions, activities in the ACT, the NT and WA were brought forward to meet the requirements of state and territory elections. In Victoria there was also a significant increase in enrolments, a result of very high returns to activities initiated in the previous year and the continuation of the effective VEC CRU program. Conversely, enrolments processed in Qld declined by 24% due to a cut back in CRU in the first 6 months of the reporting period due to the high level of enrolment activity resulting from the February 2004 state election.

It is apparent that there is now a stable and comprehensive set of external data available for CRU purposes in each jurisdiction. The most important data source nationally remains MV data motor licenses as it has the potential to supply an estimated 2.75 million CA and PE records annually, subject to current supply problems in Qld and the NT.

In summary, the 2004-2005 CRU program was stable but the volume of mailing, fieldwork undertaken and enrolments received was at a lower level than in 2003-2004.

1.2 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 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 continual basis. In 1999 the CRU program was established as a joint AEC/SEA program to review addresses known to be enrollable consistent with the timing of major electoral events. The program is jointly funded by the AEC and SEAs.

The key element of CRU is the mailing of enrolment stimulation letters to persons 'on the move' based on externally sourced information, and data mining of RMANS to identify addresses where there are indications that the roll may not be up to date.

The external data provided is matched against the current roll and action commenced if the person(s) named in the data has not already updated their enrolment details or other CRU correspondence has been sent to the address in the previous 90 days. A similar process is followed with RMANS Address Register data to check if the enrolment profile at an address is consistent. When data matching and culling is complete, a mailing file is created and CRU letters are posted with two enrolment forms for reply. Non-responding addresses may be subject to reminder letters and if still no reply non-response fieldwork is undertaken at the address if it is practical to do so.

Where possible the accuracy of the roll is confirmed by matching against authoritative external data to avoid mailing or fieldwork to addresses where there is no external evidence of change. As part of the MRS a rolling approach has been adopted where addresses are targeted for review by mail where no background match can be made or where there has been no CRU or enrolment activity over the previous two years. But 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.

Section 2 of the report covers the AEC CRU mailing program based on external data and Section 3 covers RMANS Address Register sourced data and mailing. Activities undertaken by the SEAs and AEC direct enrolment initiatives are reported at Section 4. Future Directions are set out at Section 5 and a summary of enrolments received from all CRU activities is provided at Section 6.

1.3 AEC Roll Integrity Unit (RIU)

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). It has continued the implementation of recommendations arising from the 2002 ANAO and JSCEM reports on the electoral rolls. The following activities took place in 2004-2005:

- The second round of Sample Audit Fieldwork (SAF) conducted in March 2005. The AEC checked enrolment and address details at a sample of addresses across Australia to test whether the CRU process was effective in maximising accuracy and completeness of enrolment and address data.
- Development of an Enrolment Information System (EMIS) progressed during the year. A contractor (Space-Time Research) for the supply of a web-based statistical software tool (SuperWEB) was chosen and extensive testing undertaken. RIU staff are currently providing training on SuperWEB to Head Office and Divisional staff throughout Australia. A compatible reporting tool (Actuate) will be introduced once SuperWEB has been fully implemented. EMIS is an analysis tool to measure the effectiveness of enrolment initiative and resource management. It will allow reporting on performance indicators, targets and results, and assist Divisions with management of the electoral roll.
- The AEC continued to improve and expand on the performance indicators presented in the 2004-05 Annual Report.

1.4 RMANS Mail Review System (MRS)

In January 2005 the AEC commissioned the MRS to replace existing RMANS CRU systems. The major change has been to bring all CRU data processing and mailing into a single national system covering both external and RMANS Address Register sources from which standard monthly (SM) review mailing events, reminder letters and fieldwork are extracted. All data irrespective of source is combined so that it can be processed by data type and with the most useful records given priority e.g. those with the latest date and date of birth included. Final culling takes place to remove records that do not require further action (enrolment has taken place), or are duplicated across sources, or where there are address reasons for not mailing e.g. silent electors, non-residential addresses or where there is no mail delivery.

The benefits of the MRS include:

- A systematic and hierarchical data sorting and selection process ensuring that the best use is made of both external and RMANS information,
- Significant improvements in address matching with the use of new software that allows matching to RMANS where locality names are different or abbreviations used in street types in the external data,
- The inclusion on all letters, except those to potential electors, of a schedule of currently enrolled electors to allow a review of all enrolments at the address,
- The expansion of Reminder letters to cover most data sources, including mailing based on RMANS data e.g. to addresses where the enrolment limit is exceeded,
- Expansion of the data mining potential of the RMANS Address Register,
- Provision for the inclusion of supplementary loads of data covering for example general postal voters, or addresses by landuse code or election specific,

- The inclusion of review letters on a monthly basis to addresses that have not been reviewed by other CRU activities over the previous 2 years,
- The need for only minimal checking by Divisional staff of mailing events, other than to check addresses where no match could be made with RMANS,
- Automatic recording against addresses and sources of data when replies are processed back into RMANS,
- Enhanced reporting facilities,
- Improved efficiency in RMANS processing and mailing.

The data-mining potential of RMANS has been significantly developed with new extracts developed and existing mail review formats expanded. Details of the changes to RMANS data-mining is provided at Section 3.

Since the commissioning of the MRS benefits have been evident in the operation of the CRU program. The standardization of activities with set monthly mailings and fieldwork has for the first time resulted in performance that is comparable across jurisdictions. Secondly, the need to resolve miss-matches between RMANS and external data has focused Divisional staff on the need to update the Address Register with new enrollable addresses and to maintain land use codes and record areas with no street mail delivery. Thirdly the improvements in matching and prioritizing of data now in place has allowed a more effective examination of the usefulness of external sources and in particular of the potential elector (PE) information.

The MRS has considerably reduced the need for Divisional staff to review and manually cull all mailing as addresses are automatically culled if review is not required. This has resulted in more efficiency in the use of data and national consistency in processing.

1.5 Accounting for replies to CRU mail and fieldwork

To be effective any roll review activity needs to confirm the accuracy of the roll at enrollable addresses. Up to 1998 the roll was reviewed by a door-knock of all habitations where possible, backed up with mail review in rural areas and at difficult addresses in urban areas e.g. security access buildings.

The CRU program replaced direct contact with electors with a system of matching against external data to confirm enrolment detail. If the roll details match the information provided in the external data, then no follow-up with electors is required. CRU is cost-effective as it cuts down on the need for fieldwork by using a mix of background data matching, mail review and direct enrolment activities.

For the majority of electors the only formal contact they have (and need) with electoral authorities is at time of enrolment and transfer of address, the receipt of an enrolment acknowledgement and at elections time e.g. postal voting and polling day information. The key documents for the CRU program are the enrolment form and mail review

letters. During 2004-2005 the enrolment form was redesigned to allow for automatic data capture and all mail review letters were reviewed to improve readability and to include information regarding electors' legal requirements. However, the acknowledgement remains as a basic postcard with minimum information. It is recommended that a review of the acknowledgement card be made to improve its durability, to allow for the provision of additional information, and to recognise the importance of timely enrolment by boosting the image conveyed to electors.

Of the 2.4 million addresses sent a first letter, a reply was received or some other form of resolution was made at 1.4 million, giving an address response rate of 55%. Response includes resident replies to first or reminder letters including any enclosed enrolments forms, other enrolments recorded for the address, amendments to the RMANs Address Register, non-response fieldwork and RTS mail. This last category is significant and to some extent falsely boosts the resident response rate, unless the reason for RTS provides useful information e.g. the addressee has left, postal delivery problems or that the address is not properly described. It is recommended that an examination of RTS mail is undertaken to determine the extent to which it adds to useful replies or falsely records addresses as 'reviewed'.

The 1.4 million address responses do not give a full picture of the amount of useful roll data received as the statistics only record the number of responding addresses, not the total separate pieces of information received. Aside from enrolments, details of electors who had 'left address' were received, plus information regarding the address itself e.g. mail delivery address, whether it was empty, a holiday house or business, or that the residents were ineligible. From the range of information routinely collected and applied to RMANs, it is apparent the CRU program is wider than a review of the eligibility of electors - it is also an enrolment stimulation campaign and a check on a range of non-electors information. A review of the way the CRU statistics are captured is currently being undertaken to allow more detailed reporting through the new EMIS system.

Whilst the 55% response rate may appear low, consideration needs to be given to the reasons found for non-reply when some of these addresses were finally visited by a review officer. Information provided at Table 3-5 (see Section 3.4) covering the results of NSW fieldwork indicates that there are many reasons why CRU mail may not be answered, with almost 50% of the addresses visited not requiring any changes to the roll and in some cases it was clear why a reply would be most unlikely e.g. the address was empty. Any checking of the roll by data matching and large scale mailing needs to take into account the mobility of residents, problems with address descriptions and street mail delivery arrangements and the increasing regard for privacy by residents, that can include not responding to official mail.

1.6 Enrolments received in response to the CRU program

The continuous nature of the program and the frequency of change of address by highly mobile sections of the population creates difficulties in matching replies and enrolments to particular CRU activities, estimating total replies generally for the whole program and accounting for replies carried over from the previous year. Despite this enrolments received remain a good measure of the effectiveness of the CRU program.

In 2004-2005 1.06 million enrolments were received from activities commenced during the year, as at the cut-off for responses at 30 September 2005. This was made up of 175,000 from SEA activities, 106,000 from AEC fieldwork, 715,000 from AEC mailing and 67,000 from AEC direct enrolment activities (mainly citizenship ceremonies).

Table 1.1 below sets out enrolments received from the various components of the joint CRU program for 2004-2005 compared with the number received in the previous four years. The year shown in the header of the table is that in which CRU action was commenced and to which subsequent enrolments are linked, including those received into the following year. For the SEA and AEC direct enrolment activities this is not an issue as in most cases there is little delay in the receipt of forms, but for AEC mailing it is significant as there was a six month window (reduced to three months from January 2005) for linking mailing to subsequent enrolments. This is especially important as the last two federal elections fell early in the financial year, stimulating enrolments from addressees written to before 30 June of the preceding reporting year.

The following points are relevant in examining CRU enrolments over the last five years:

- SEA enrolments have shown a steady increases over the period after allowance for the peak in 2002-2003 that arose due to the Victorian election mailout to all electors,
- AEC direct enrolments have shown modest increases,
- AEC non-response fieldwork enrolments have shown a significant decline,
- Enrolments from AEC CRU mailing have shown significant variations, due partly to the timing of elections and the volume of mail,
- Total mailing volume has varied, but if review letters are discounted i.e. to addresses following background matching where the purpose of mailing was to check the currency of existing enrolments, there has been approximately 2.00– 2.8 million first letters posted each year based on external CA and PE data and RMANS data mining.

Table 1.1 Enrolments received from all CRU sources 2000-2001 to 2004-2005

	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
SEA enrolment	157,583	187,630	260,328	208,647	175,006
AEC direct enrolment	39,423	42,437	49,262	55,777	66,543
AEC fieldwork	278,136	28,232	157,215	141,016	106,497
AEC mailing	1,544,254	928,376	1,379,316	1,555,817	715,146
Total CRU enrolments	2,019,396	1,186,675	1,846,121	1,961,257	1,063,192
AEC first letters posted less mail review letters	2,800,000	2,400,000	2,000,000	2,800,000	2,400,000

From the above table it is evident that total enrolment from AEC CRU mailing in 2004-2005 has shown a decline on that in previous years, even after allowance is made for the reduction to 3 months for reporting enrolments from January 2005, and that from the evidence available in the MRS statistics, the decline was particularly marked from January 2005.

2 Data Matching and Mailing Using External Data Sources

2.1 Summary

During 2004-2005 the AEC received 4.1 million records from the external agencies set out at Table 2.1. The records covered persons changing address (CA data) or who appeared in external data for the first time as potential electors (PE data). With the exception of Centrelink and Australia Post (AP), the data was made available to the AEC through the relevant SEA. In Victoria, data from a range of state agencies was supplied to the VEC for use in their separate CRU program (see Section 4.1 for details).

Of the 4.1 million records received 70% was culled resulting in the mailing of 1.3 million enrolment reminder and review 'first' letters. A further 540,000 'second' or follow up letters were sent to non-responding addressees. Wherever possible, the CA letters included a review schedule of electors currently enrolled at the address.

A total of 605,000 replies were received to the CA and PE mailing including 440,000 enrolments. Based on enrolments received, the most important external data sources were state and territory Motor Vehicles licensing agencies (160,000 enrolments), Centrelink (146,000) and Australia Post (74,000). The importance of MV data is actually understated as additional MV enrolments from the VEC and other states direct enrolment activities need to be included (see 2.3 below), with total enrolments from this source estimated at 245,000 with the potential to be significantly higher. The balance of enrolments came from a range of state rental, school and utility supply data.

2.2 Features of the 2004-2005 data matching program

The major variations in the program during the year was the re-commencement of regular data supply from AP in early 2005 and the commencement of supply of MV data by licensing authorities in NSW, WA and the ACT. Access to Qld MV data was suspended in 2005 pending the negotiation of a new agreement and NT MV data was withdrawn indefinitely due to NT privacy legislation.

In contrast to experience in previous years, the culling of external data in 2004-2005 was at similar levels across all jurisdictions, being close to the 70% national average. This would indicate that there is now greater uniformity in the volume and quality of the data available nationally. A second reason for uniformity is that the roll was likely to have a relatively similar level of accuracy between jurisdictions due to the enrolment activity generated by the federal and state elections in 2004-2005.

However, the overall culling rate does mask significant difference between data sources. Of the large volume of 1.2 million AP 'to' and 'from' addresses, only 18% was useful, down from 36% in the previous year. By comparison 40% of the 950,000 Centrelink records were useful, the same rate as in 2003-2004. There were 1.5 million records provided by MV authorities (not including the VicRoads supply to VEC), and whilst only 30% was used for mailing, the balance was useful for background matching to

confirm existing enrolments. A further 500,000 external records came from rental tenancy, housing and utility authority data sources in a number of jurisdictions.

The changes in the relative culling and use of data between sources are a direct result of the implementation of the MRS, but the more important aspect is the amount and combination of data. Given the extensive coverage of data in most jurisdictions, it is likely that the addition of further sources would result only in duplicated information and more culling.

2.3 Use of Potential Elector (PE) data

With the introduction of the MRS, data relating to young persons not currently enrolled (PE data) was more readily identifiable. Across all external data sources there were 400,000 PE records supplied (30% by Centrelink) with a further 80,000 entered by AEC staff into RMANS from their local enquiries. After RMANS matching and culling 66% or 275,000 of the records were used for mailing, resulting in 110,000 replies and 75,000 enrolments (including replies to reminder letters). In addition to the above, data covering first time enrollees was made available to the VEC for CRU purposes from MV and school sources.

Given that youth enrolment is a priority, it is recommended that investigations be made into maximizing the value of the PE data sources e.g. by developing special letters more acceptable to young people or using alternative review strategies.

2.4 CRU programs based on motor licensing data (both AEC and VEC)

Over the last 5 years, the AEC has progressively gained access to motor transport authority license change of address data for CRU purposes in all jurisdictions with the exception of Victoria. In July 2004 NSW, WA and ACT data was introduced into the monthly CRU mailing. However, in mid 2004 access to NT MV data was withdrawn due to the introduction of privacy legislation in the Territory and access to Qld data was suspended in January 2005 pending a new data supply agreement. In Victoria the VEC has agreement for the use of motor licensing data for CRU purposes. During 2005 the AEC came to an agreement with the VEC for access to VicRoads data for the purpose of background data matching only.

In 2004-5 a total of 1.55 million change of address and 'first time' records were provided to the AEC by MV authorities. If allowance is made for the additional records supplied to VEC, and for the records withheld in Qld and the NT the total potential for supply could reach 2.75 million per year.

The MV change of address data remains the most important in the whole CRU program. It is responsible for 35% of all enrolments from CRU mailing from both external and RMANS data sources, and this proportion will rise when access to the Qld MV data is regained. In addition, MV data is the prime source of information for background matching to confirm the enrolment details of electors. The AEC and VEC programs based on MV data delivered 200,000 enrolments in 2004-2005 or almost 50% of all enrolments from external data sources, with a further 45,000 forms received from direct enrolment initiative in Qld and Tasmania based on MV license renewals and change of address transactions.

Table 2-1 Data sources used by the AEC in 2004-2005

State	Data Source	Data Type	Frequency	Event Type
NATIONAL	Australia Post(CA)	Change of Address	4 weekly	CA
	Centrelink (CA and 17, 18 & full client file)	Clients Turning 17	4 weekly	PE
		Clients Turning 18	4 weekly	PE/CA
		Clients New	4 weekly	Background Review
	Full Client File	Annually		
ACT	ACTEWAGL	New Clients	Quarterly	COA
	ACT Road Traffic Authority	Full Client File	Annually	Background Review
		Change of Address	Monthly	CA/PE
	ACT Office of Rental Bonds	New Clients	Quarterly	PE
ACT Board of Studies	New Clients	Quarterly	PE	
NSW	Road and Traffic Authority of NSW	Full Client File	Up to 10 P/y	Background Review
		New Clients	Monthly	CA/PE
QLD	Qld Transport Authority	Change of Address	Suspended in early 2005	CA/PE
		New Clients		
	Qld Residential Tenancy Authority	New Clients	Monthly	CA
		Old Address Changes	Monthly	CA
	Forwarding Address Changes	Monthly	CA	
SA	South Australian Motor Registry	Full Client File	One Off	Background Review
		Change of Address	Monthly	CA
		New Clients	Monthly	PE
TAS	Tasmanian Motor Transport	Full Client File	One Off	Background Review
		Change of Address	Monthly	CA
		New Clients	Monthly	PE
NT	Northern Territory Motor Transport	Change of Address New Clients	Suspended	
WA	Dept Housing & Works	New Rental Clients	Monthly	CA
	Department of Planning and Infrastructure	Full Client File	Annually	Background Review
		WA Motor Registry	New Clients	Monthly

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

PE = Potential elector, not currently on roll. No review schedule included.

Background Review = Data matching between RMANS and a range of external authoritative databases - not undertaken in 2004-2005.

2.5 Australia Post Change of Address (CA)

The use of AP CA data extends back to the commencement of CRU in 1999 and earlier trials. Due to the need to re-negotiate supply arrangements, AP data was not available in 2004 but the program re-commenced with full data supply from the beginning of 2005 including some accumulated records. Under the MRS processing rules, the AP data is no longer as valuable despite the large number of records supplied. Generally if the same information is notified by Centrelink or an MV authority, these sources will take precedence where the data contains a change of address and date of birth. Also, it is more likely that the AP CA notification will be matched with a new enrolment as enrolment forms are available at AP outlets.

For the six months to June 2005 approximately 600,000 COA records were provided by AP, giving an estimated 1.2 million 'to' and 'from' addresses for loading into RMANS. The culling process resulted in 82% of the data being discarded, twice the rate for the previous year with only 216,000 first letters posted. Details of mailing is shown below.

Table 2-2 Australia Post CA national mailing

	Records received	Letters posted	Replies	Response rate	Enrolments received
2004-2005	1,200,000	1st 212,369	83,553	39%	61,016
	(est)	2nd 33,624	14,036	42%	11,517

2.6 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 address. However, no details are provided of 'from' addresses. The Centrelink file of all clients' names and addresses is also available to the AEC for background matching purposes. Total enrolments from the Centrelink program was 146,000 making it the second largest CRU source.

The Centrelink CA data was managed in 2004-2005 in the same way as in previous years, with monthly mailings subject to election activity. The extent of culling was little changed with 40% of the records received being useful. The CA program generated slightly more mail compared to the previous year but with fewer reminders.

Table 2-3 Centrelink CA mailing and responses

	Records received	Letters posted	Replies	Response rate	Enrolments received
2004-2005	832,837	1st 336,386	112,863	34%	101,042
		2nd 160,410	40,245	25%	28,150

In addition to CA 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 (PE data). A summary of records received, subsequent culling and mailing and responses is set out at Table 2-3 below.

Table 2-4 Centrelink 17 and 18 year old first time clients (PE)

	Records received	Letters posted	Replies	Response rate	Enrolments received
2004-2005	121,904	1st 76,445 2nd 5,816	24,115 1,338	33% 23%	15,928 641

The volume of letters mailed and replies is not large, but the Centrelink PE 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 duplication with other data sources.

2.7 Queensland - MV and rental tenancy data

Mailing using Queensland MV CA and PE information commenced in early 2001, covering license holders who have changed address or who have come onto the MV file for the first time. During 2004-2005 only 366,000 records were received (down by 65%) due to the suspension of supply in early 2005. The culling rate of 75% is high due to the operation of a separate direct enrolment program in which persons changing their Qld MV license address can complete an enrolment form printed on the back of the amended license receipt. When this form is mailed back to the AEC and the enrolment entered into RMANS, it results in the relevant record being culled at the matching step.

Table 2-5 Qld MV CA and PE mailing

	Records received	Letters posted	Replies	Response rate	Enrolments received
2004-2005	351,260	1st 94,519	41,977	44%	24,540
(CA letters)		2nd 75,667	25,457	34%	13,234
(PE letters)	14,807	10,002	3,017	30%	2,978

In July 2000, mailing commenced using Queensland Rental Tenancy Authority CA information and has continued each month for the ensuing 5 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. Total enrolments from this one source were almost 60,000 for the year.

Table 2-7 Qld Rental Tenancy – CA and PE letter mailing

	Records received	Letters posted	Replies	Response rate	Enrolments received
2004-2005	365,018	1st 165,502	50,183	30%	34,027
CA letters		2nd 74,316	18,572	25%	7,683
PE letters	128,000	1st 96,676 2nd 44,843	27,853 10,798	30% 25%	12,555 3,097

2.8 South Australia - MV data

CRU mailing using SA Motor Transport data commenced in January 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 (70% 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. Reminder letters were included in the mailing program as part of the MRS, but results would indicate the response is marginal with only a small number of enrolments received.

Table 2-9 SA MV CA and PE mailing

	Records received	Letters Posted	Replies	Response rate	Enrolments received
2004-2005 (CA letters)	267,441	1st 73,762	26,404	36%	19,122
		2nd 24,597	6,827	28%	2,938
2004-2005 (PE letters)	37,743	1st 20,354	6,014	36%	4,823
		2nd 4,167	829	20%	379

2.9 ACT – MV, utility connections and rental tenancy data

In 2003 the ACT Electoral Commission obtained access to ACT government agency and utility company whole of customer file and change of address information. This included Road Traffic Authority, Rental Bond Board and ACT Electricity, Water and Gas (ACTEWAGL) data. As in South Australia the combination of a range of high quality authoritative data sources has resulted in a stable CRU mailing program, with high culling rates (up to 85%) and effective responses. With the introduction of the MRS in early 2005 PE mailings were introduced using Road Traffic Authority data.

Table 2-11 ACT Utility Connections (ACTEWAGL) – CA letters only

	Records Received	Letters Posted	Replies	Response rate	Enrolments Received
2004-2005	39,710	1st 6,505	4,731	73%	3,735
		2nd 2,235	955	43%	1,559

Table 2-12 ACT Rental Bonds – CA letters only

	Records received	Letters posted	Replies	Response rate	Enrolments received
2004-2005	21,845	1st 8,885	3,177	42%	2,754
		2nd 2,796	1,178	68%	678

The response to both ACTEWAGL and rental bond CA letters is high compared to similar mailings in other jurisdictions and if all replies are matched against the initial first letter mailing, the response rate rises to 87% and 64% respectively, with the two data sources generating 25% of all CRU enrolments in the ACT. However the cost effectiveness of the reminder letters needs to be assessed given the very small volumes and the obvious cross-over between data sources.

The use of ACT Road Traffic Authority re-commenced in 2004-2005 with both CA and PE letters. As with other ACT sources the CA data showed a high level of culling (75%) and high levels of response to letters mailed. The PE mailing however indicates over half of the data was useful i.e. that young drivers were less likely to be enrolled but even when a reply is received back it did not add significantly to enrolments.

Table 2-13 ACT MV data – CA and PE mailing

	Records received	Letters posted	Replies	Response rate	Enrolments received
2004-2005 (CA letters)	44,088	1st 11,104 2nd 2,497	6,269 783	56% 31%	3,840 297
2004-2005 (PE letters)	5,990	1st 3,370 2nd 132	2,166 35	64% 38%	967 12

2.10 Tasmania – MV data

Use of Tasmanian transport data commenced in January 2003 and has continued on a monthly basis since, subject to suspension for elections. The program is very stable with the volume of mailing, responses and enrolments close to that in previous years.

Table 2-15 Tasmanian MV CA and PE mailing

	Records received	Letters posted	Replies	Response rate	Enrolments received
2004-2005 (CA letters)	123,210	1st 43,690 2nd 9,671	18,737 3,593	43% 37%	10,070 1,122
(PE letters)	1,899	1,059	325	31%	197

The overall response rate to the Tasmanian CA mailings is 52% (if reminder letters are included) and the program along with the complementary Service Tasmania combined enrolment/MV license renewal form provides an estimated 30% of all CRU activity in the state. As in other jurisdictions, the introduction of reminder letters for PE mailing has had only minimal impact on responses and enrolments.

2.11 New South Wales – MV data

The only NSW specific external change of address data currently available is that covering motor licenses. In 2004-2005 MV CA and PE data became available on a regular basis for the first time, with the bulk of mailing taking place from the beginning of 2005. The volume of data received was less than for a full year, but the response rate for the mailing that did take place is very similar to that in other jurisdictions ie. 50% when all replies including those to 2nd letters are compared to the number of first letters mailed. The number of enrolments received makes up a relatively small number in the total received from all CRU activities in the state, but will grow significantly with the use of a full year of data.

Table 2-16 NSW MV CA and PE mailing

	Records received	Letters posted	Replies	Response rate	Enrolments received
2004-2005 (CA letters)	428,061	1st 121,791 2nd 16,764	52,677 6,782	43% 40%	42,621 1,334
(PE letters)	29,041	22,548	7,366	33%	6,438

2.12 Western Australia – MV data

During 2004-2005 a range of WA State supplied data was made available to the AEC for CRU purposes including that relating to motor licenses, public housing tenants and training and apprenticeship. The latter two data sources were small in volume and resulted in the receipt of 4,000 enrolments, almost all from the WA training and apprenticeship data mailed prior to the WA election.

The WA MV data was most important with over 210,000 CA and PE records provided with the majority of letters posted in 2004 prior to the February 2005 state general election. Response to the 2004 mail was very high at 65% due to the election, but post election mailing showed a corresponding fall off in replies, especially pronounced with the PE mailing.

Table 2-17 WA MV CA and PE mailing

	Records received	Letters posted	Replies	Response rate	Enrolments received
2004-2005 (CA letter)	208,671	1st 59,061 2nd 16,514	33,250 4,682	56% 28%	20,693 2,821
(PE letter)	29,704	16,587	5,685	34%	7,160

2.13 Other jurisdictions

Access to Northern Territory motor license data was terminated early in the reporting period resulting in a very small volume of mailing and the receipt of only 411 enrolments from this source. To some extent the loss of the motor license data was made up for by additional enrolment stimulation activities undertaken by the AEC's Darwin Office and the NTEC. These activities were undertaken in the first half of 2005 in preparation for the NT election, and they are covered elsewhere in this report.

In Victoria the VEC undertakes a separate CRU program based on state government data and this is reported at Section 4.1.

3 AEC Data Mining Activities

The AEC undertakes a range of checks against current enrolment and Address Register data held on RMANS to identify for review those addresses where there are apparent roll anomalies. With the introduction of the MRS major changes were made to data mining procedures and new categories of mail review letters were brought into production. The MRS has significantly improved the data mining potential of RMANS as it has allowed a more refined approach to data extraction and better targetting of mail review letters.

The MRS based mail review extracts (with abbreviations) include the following:

Extract and letter types generated automatically from RMANS on a monthly timetable:

- VM - Vacant house (an existing system targeting enrollable addresses without current enrolments),
- EN - New Enrolments, (a new letter type triggered by enrolment at addresses)
- FE - Former Enrolled address (the 'from' address, where applicable, of EN data),
- EL - enrolment limit exceeded (part of previous Multiple Enrolment/Multiple Surname ME letter type)
- MS - multiple surname (see note at EL above)
- NR - not reviewed by other methods over previous 2 years (previous Supplementary mail review).

Letter types extracted by Divisions based on specific information and local requirements:

- MI - manual input or entry by AEC staff (review of specific addresses for possible PE action),
- LU - review by landuse code e.g. review of address types such as hostels, caravan parks etc)
- GB - review by geographic area e.g. remote communities in the NT.

The changes to RMANS data mining commenced with the introduction of the MRS in January 2005 but for the six months prior, responses to the existing review letters of Vacant (VM), Supplementary Mail Review (MR) and Multi Enrolment/Surname (ME) mailings continued. As the volume of mail of the superceded letter types was not large in the six months to January 2005, the volume is combined in the reporting with the new letters.

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 that are not already identified on RMANS by landuse code. 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. For this mailing to be managed efficiently, address register information needs to be as complete and up to date as possible e.g. street mail delivery addresses (not being box numbers) and addresses identified that are holiday house or serviced apartments.

The Vacant mailings now take place monthly using vacancies on RMANS that occur three months prior (as previously enrolled electors transfer to a new address). Aside from the increased frequency of mailings, a reminder letter has been added with the introduction of the MRS to apply in certain circumstance.

During 2004-2005 a total of 540,000 first and 210,000 second Vacant house letters were mailed. This is only 60% of the first letter mailing in the previous year, but as with other mailings in the reporting year, a greater uniformity in volume between jurisdictions is evident. The drop in mailing is partly a consequence of the overall reduction in CRU activity in the year and a consequent drop in enrolment transfers, the key reason for enrollable addresses found to be 'vacant'. Details of activity is provided below.

Table 3-1 Vacant Address Mailing

		Letters mailed	Replies	Response rate	Enrolments received
2004-2005	1 st letter	539,268	190,127	35%	130,841
	2 nd letter	211,455	46,670	22%	39,566

Overall, the response rate to vacant mail went up compared to the previous year, in part due to improvements in the Address Register to identify unenrollable addresses, but addresses with mail delivery problems remain and continue to be mailed to. This latter group are almost all in rural areas and have the potential to overstate the response rate as mail returned RTS is counted as a reply. The treatment of RTS mail remains an issue across all CRU mailing and it is recommended that current Australia Post mail delivery addresses (not being Box numbers) be added to the Address Register wherever this information is available.

If replies to first and second letters is combined, the response rate rises to 45%, subject to the note above regarding RTS mail. This is a major improvement on responses in the previous year.

3.2 Enrolment Limit Exceeded (EL) and Multiple Surname (MS) letters

A combined extract and letter type covering these two data source has been part of the CRU program since its commencement. With the introduction of the MRS this data was split to allow a more refined and targeted mailing program. The new mailing system covers (i) addresses where it was apparent that the enrolment limit has been exceeded (EL letters) and (ii) addresses with enrolments under different surnames (MS). Whilst the description of letter category is general, the actual business rules are complicated to ensure that known address and domestic circumstances that would otherwise appear as

apparent roll inconsistencies are culled from the mailing. Examples include enrolments at the same time with different surnames, enrolments at hostels, nursing homes and certain rural addresses and at those addresses where AEC staff have already undertaken investigations. Reminder letters have been included in the program.

The main purpose of the program is to confirm the accuracy of the roll at the targeted address. Enrolment stimulation is not the prime purpose, however forms are included to assist eligible new residents. Details of letters posted in 2004-2005 and responses and enrolments collected are shown below.

Table 3-2 Enrolment Limit Exceeded (EL) & Multiple Surname (MS)

		Letters mailed	Replies	Response rate	Enrolments received
2004-2005	ME (to Dec 04)	16,811	6,780	40%	3,247
	EL (from Jan 05)	18,345	9402	51%	2008
	EL 2 nd letters	3470	1376	40%	301
	MS (from Jan 05)	9735	5954	61%	894
	MS 2 nd letters	1387	571	41%	92

Total volume of mail was slightly down on the previous year due to cross over with the new EN mailing type described below, but the address response remains at 62% if reminders are included. Mailing was spread roughly proportional across all jurisdictions confirming the regulation and structure that the MRS has imposed on CRU mailing. This is a most effective review program that contributes to the accuracy of the roll by identifying for removal those electors no longer living at their enrolled address.

3.3 Review following transfer of enrolment at 'old' and 'new' address

Transfers of enrolment highlight addresses where the roll may not be up to date. At the transferee's new address it is possible that there are departing residents who have moved out but not transferred their enrolment, and at their old address new residents are likely to have moved in. This set of review letters is sent to the former enrolled address (FE letters) and the new address (EN letters) and targets persons who may need to update their enrolment. The business rules are complicated to avoid overlap with other letter types e.g. vacant house letters, and to give a reasonable time for residents to submit fresh enrolments.

Table 3-3 New enrolment address (EN) and former enrolled address (FE) letters

All from Jan 2005		Letters mailed	Replies	Response rate	Enrolments received
2004-2005	EN 1 st letters	183,443	114,528	62%	23,340
	EN 2 nd letters	10,624	5,474	52%	1,023
	FE 1 st letters	50,010	21,229	40%	6,669
	FE 2 nd letters	2763	1,051	38%	381

The volume of mail generated under this program is considerable, being the second largest sourced from AEC data mining after Vacant house letters and this is only for 6 months of production. The response rate of 65% with reminders makes it most effective. Part of the success arises from the timing of mail as it targets addresses 1 month after the initial transfer of enrolment, enough time to allow subsequent transfers to take place but to catch new residents while they are in the 'moving' mode.

A further category of targetted mailing introduced in 2004-2005 is that to addresses from which official mail had been received back RTS. This includes mail passed on from MPs and returns from SEA postal ballot mailing. It is entered into RMANS events by divisional staff and culled against transfers of enrolment. Total volume was 55,000 in the year.

3.4 AEC Supplementary Mail Review

Mail review at all addresses in an area or to those addresses not touched by CRU activity i.e. the CA and PE letters or fieldwork, has been undertaken since the commencement of the program in 1999. The standard mail review letter is mailed to the oldest enrolled elector in each family group and requests that the details on enrolled electors be confirmed, any changes noted and the letter returned with any completed enrolment forms. Mailings under this program have been large e.g. after the background data match in May 2004 two million mail review letters were sent. This mailing extended into early 2004-2005 with a further 135,000 review letters posted, almost all in the ACT and WA. An examination of the replies to the very large 2004 mailings received back after 30 June 2004 show an average response of 60% but the number of enrolments received was relatively low, indicating that the review was mainly effective in confirming the accuracy of existing enrolment details.

Partly to overcome the problems created with the size of the 2004 supplementary mail review postings, the program was extensively overhauled with the introduction of the MRS. Rather than post very large batches of letters after the background data match, new procedures have been developed to allow data mining and the posting of mail review (NR letters) on a rolling basis to those addresses not reviewed by the regular CRU program in the previous two years. The new procedures were implemented late in the reporting cycle (with the MRS in Jan 05) so volumes are not large, with a total of 60,000 letters posted nationally with a response rate of 60% including 6,000 enrolments .

Additional changes to the mail review program were introduced with the MRS to provide flexible arrangements for divisions to target specific addresses (MI or Manual Input letters) within the standard monthly mailout, or to review all addresses selected by landuse code or geographic area (LU and GB) as separate events. A total of 58,000 MI letters were posted in the 5 months to June 2005, spread evenly through jurisdictions with most letters sent being enrolment reminders or PE letters. The response rate has averaged 30% with 12,000 enrolments received. A follow-up letter is available but postings were small in the short period available.

3.5 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.

Non-response fieldwork took place during February and March 2005 at 372,000 addresses in all jurisdictions with the exception of the NT. The number of addresses targetted was comparable to the previous year, and while the contact rate remained at 80%, the number of enrolments collected was halved.

Table 3-4 Non response fieldwork for 2004-2005

	Addresses visited	Contact rate	Total enrolment forms collected
NSW	175,384	75%	39,392
Qld	76,993	80%	26,968
Vic	78,033	89%	17,918
WA	13,267	80%	5,444
SA	4,914	85%	1,461
Tas	9,267	94%	2,302
ACT	8,819	89%	1,805
NT	na		
	372,096	79%	95,290

Whilst the table above shows that contact was made at an average of 79% of the addresses targetted nationally, there is a spread of 19% in the contact rate between jurisdictions. Based on the information shown at Table 5-3 below of the circumstances found at the 134,000 NSW addresses where contact was made, two features are apparent:

- Fieldwork is becoming more difficult with increasing numbers of security access addresses (even in semi-rural areas), more householders are refusing to provide information (running at 1.5% across the country) and there is an unwillingness by eligible persons to complete forms at the time of visit. In the ACT the proportion of eligible persons at addresses visited who completed enrolment forms on request averaged 50%, and in other jurisdictions it was lower. Some forms left were subsequently completed and returned by mail, but overall there would seem to be increasing difficulties in getting enrolments from eligible persons.
- A significant proportion of the fieldwork responses to fieldwork relates to addresses and not electors, with 17,000 of the NSW responses requiring amendment to the RMANS Address Register.

Note that the circumstances found at the NSW addresses set out below are not representative of addresses and eligible persons/electors generally in NSW. The residences visited are the exceptions, refined down by the CRU process to the 'problem' addresses. For most addresses there is no need for CRU action as the external data,

RMANS data mining and the background matching process has confirmed the continued accuracy of the roll or has prompted updates.

Table 3-5 Targetted fieldwork in NSW – results of address visits

Reason Code	Addresses	%
No contact could be made	36,309	21
All enrolment details correct	36,963	21
Enrolments/amendments made	30,976	18
Enrolment forms left to be returned	9,633	5
Residents ineligible (non-citizens)	15,438	9
Residents temporary address	3,113	2
Business address	2,390	1
Holiday house	5,070	3
Refused	2,178	1
Vacant address on roll found to have no resident ie empty	15,850	9
Address description problem	5,083	3
Security access	3,868	2
Other – mainly no initial contact made but non-attendance card left and subsequently returned completed	8,513	5
	175,384	

However, the fieldwork results above illustrate the need for an accurate and up to date address register and the increasing difficulties staff face in undertaking fieldwork. It is recommended that a review be made of the targetted non-response fieldwork program to assess its effectiveness and to examine ways of cutting down on the addresses to be visited and to improve strategies for field officers to be more effective. For example, if original correspondence to addressees was improved it may result in a reply that avoids the need for costly fieldwork such as in the case of non-citizens residents or at the 20% of addresses visited where all residents are already correctly enrolled.

Separate to the CRU program the AEC RIU undertook fieldwork at 58,000 addresses nationally. The AEC has reported separately on the RIU activities and the results are not included in Table 3.4 above. It is recommended that the results of the audit fieldwork be used to assess the effectiveness of CRU, as at the very least there must be overlap in the addresses targetted by each program, and the difficulties in fieldwork are likely to be common.

4 State and Territory Specific Programs and other AEC activities

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 a range of strategic arrangements with Victorian authorities for the supply of data in electronic format covering electors changing address and persons who may be eligible but not enrolled. The main sources of data are VicRoads, Victorian Tertiary Admittance Authority, Rental Bond Authority, Victorian Curriculum Authority and TXU (an electricity supply company). The Curriculum Authority program uses data covering school students turning 17 to send a 'birthday card' styled offer to enrol. It is the most effective of all youth programs nationally, providing 17,000 enrolments in the year. The data received is matched against the VEC roll and enrolment reminder letters sent where required. Replies to all programs 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 2004-2005 the VEC managed CRU program resulted in the receipt of 105,000 enrolments, slightly down on that for the previous year due mainly to the effect of the federal election in stimulating enrolment with forms being sent directly to the AEC. The major source of enrolments was from VicRoads (40% of receipts) with approximately 15% each from rental bond, school student and university admission programs. A particular feature was the significant increase in the number of enrolment received over the internet, which more than doubled to 7,000.

4.2 Queensland

In January 2005 Waste Connection Data was sourced from various councils and used by Divisional Offices to update the Address Register for the Division. As the data comes from councils in various formats, the data isn't yet suitable for loading into MRS. Set formats will be investigated between AEC and ECQ and related to councils for future data collection.

With the permission of the Qld Board of Studies enrolment forms are included in the mailing of school year 12 examination result notices. This resulted in the receipt of 3,763 forms, down by 2,000 on that for the previous year due mainly to the timing of the federal election prior to the end of the school year that brought forward enrolments.

Commencing in July 2000 a blank enrolment form has been printed on the back of the Qld Transport motor vehicle license change of address form and mailed out with the Electoral Council of Australia – CRU Report 2004-2005

amended license. This is a most effective and least cost process and in 2004-2005 there were 38,504 enrolments received from this source.

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 2004-2005 5,998 enrolment forms were collected, this being approximately 20% of the eligible 18 year olds in the state.

Over the last 4 years the WAEC participated in a whole of government internet based change of address system (Life Events). In 2004-2005 6,028 enrolment forms were received from this source, slightly up on the previous year. 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. In 2004-2005 7,195 forms were collected from new leaseholders, a significant drop on the previous year, due partly to the suspension of activities during the period of the federal election. A school enrolment program is managed by the SEO similar in operation to that in WA. In 2004-2005 1,079 enrolments were collected from SA school leavers, and as in other jurisdictions, this was down on the previous year due to enrolments by young people being brought forward by the federal election.

4.5 Tasmania

The Tasmanian school enrolment program was established in 2000 and relies on the assistance of secondary college principals. In 2004-2005, 898 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.

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 6,500 forms collected in 2004-2005.

4.6 Australian Capital Territory

A similar schools enrolment program to that in WA has operated in the ACT since 2000. In 2004-2005 241 enrolments were collected from eligible 17 and 18 year old school leavers. In addition to the school program, the ACTEC supplies the AEC with school data for targetted mailing to eligible young persons. In the reporting year 5,115 persons were sent enrolment reminders resulting in 2,850 enrolments.

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 31,000 enrolments were collected from these programs in 2004-2005, this being approximately 13% of the population of eligible 18 year olds. However, there were significant differences between jurisdictions with 20% of the eligible 18 year olds being enrolled from the school based programs in Victoria, the ACT and Tasmania. In NSW and the NT there were no specific CRU activities undertaken at the school level. Other activities targeted at youth enrolment included the AEC's attendance at the Big Day Out concerts and university orientation days, but these programs collected only small numbers of enrolments nationally.

Statistics showing youth enrolment by age group as at the 7 September close of rolls for the 2004 federal election were provided in the 2003-2004 report. Since that date youth enrolment has declined in all jurisdictions in the absence of election activities to prompt enrolment by young people (particularly for 18 year olds), with the exception of the NT and WA.

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).

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 2004-2005 66,000 enrolment forms were collected through this program (a 30% 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 Future Directions

The areas for investigation set out below are based on the performance of the national program for 2004-2005. As the AEC is to undertake a review of the CRU program generally the recommendations for investigation 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:

- Investigation be made into the possible reasons for the decline in enrolments from CRU mailing, particularly following January 2005.
- A review of the acknowledgement card be made to improve its durability, to allow for the provision of additional information, and to recognise the importance of timely enrolment by boosting the image conveyed to electors.
- An examination of CRU RTS mail is undertaken to determine the extent to which it adds to useful replies or falsely records addresses as 'reviewed'.
- The cost effectiveness of reminder or 2nd letters be assessed, given the significant increase in their use with the introduction of the MRS.
- The current Australia Post street mail delivery address (not being Box numbers) be added to the Address Register wherever this information is available to improve mailing in rural areas and to cut down on RTS mail.
- Examine the effectiveness of the non-response fieldwork, particularly in improving its effectiveness by removing address problems where possible from the extracts.
- The results of the audit fieldwork be used to assess the effectiveness of CRU, as there is overlap in the addresses targetted by each program and the difficulties in fieldwork are likely to be common.
- That investigations be made into maximizing the value of the PE data sources e.g. by developing special letters more acceptable to young people or by using alternative review strategies.

6 Summary of CRU enrolments received 2004-2005

Table 5.1 - Enrolments received in the 3 months following CRU mail/fieldwork

AEC CRU Activities	ACT	NT	NSW	Qld	SA	Tas	Vic	WA	Nat Total
AP CA 1st letters	831	516	22987	12500	1792	561	18034	3885	61106
AP reminders	94	32	4230	1324	184	38	4607	1008	11517
C'link CA 1st letters	1022	1323	32719	20537	5164	2929	26379	10969	101042
C'link CA reminders	291	60	10303	5525	774	304	8254	2639	28150
C'link PE incl reminders	137	59	6763	3334	1198	454	3256	1368	16569
Mtr Trans CA 1st letters	3840	294	42621	24540	19122	10070		20693	121180
Mtr Trans CA reminders	297	147	1334	13234	2938	1122		2821	21893
Mtr Trans PE incl reminders	979	56	6438	2978	5202	197		7160	23010
Vacants	1606	1797	48828	14756	3652	3511	44041	12650	130841
Vacant reminders	738	289	28978	2965	904	873	2962	1857	39566
Schools/TAFE	383							3380	3763
Rental Tenants CA and PE	2305			26058					28363
Rental Tenants PE incl reminders	1127			15652				506	17285
Utilities	4769							4912	9681
RMANS EL ME MS	144	86	1958	1072	285	46	1980	971	6542
RMANS EN	259	154	4591	6590	1259	649	7416	3497	24415
RMANS FE	57	51	1946	1307	271	105	2529	784	7050
Supplementary mail review	3895	393	1580	1674	466	13	1679	30425	40125
PE/Enrol reminders AEC Div input	337	171	5118	2908	580	189	2789	795	12887
RTS/ other divisional mailing		2968	502	1868	1564	70	281	2918	10171
Audit Fieldwork	1668	1732	946	1347	1422	957	484	1288	9844
Non resp & GDB & remote fieldwork	1805	1363	39392	26968	1461	2302	17918	5444	96653
Community awareness displays								336	336
Citizenship ceremonies	27510	15473	10346	2975	7513	662	1035	433	65947
Youth enrolment promotion								250	250
AEC Totals	54094	26964	271580	190112	55751	25052	143644	120989	888186
State/Territory Authority CRU activity	ACT	NT	NSW	Qld	SA	Tas	Vic	WA	
VEC Programs							104779		104779
SA Enrol Form in Rental Tenancy mail					7195				7195
WA Life Events								6028	6028
Qld enrol form with Qld Transport CA letter				38504					38504
School programs	241			3763	1079	898		5998	11979
Service Tasmania						6521			6521
State/Territory Authority Totals	241			42267	8274	7419	104779	12026	175006
AEC + State/Terr Totals	54335	26964	271580	232379	64025	32471	248423	133015	1063192

Abbreviations: A=Australia Post, C'link=Centrelink, Mtr Trans=Motor licensing authorities,
CA=change of address, PE=potential elector;
EL=enrolment limit exceeded, MS=multiple surname, EN=new enrolled address, FE=former address