



**Appendix A – Status Report on AEC’s
Implementation of Recommendations from
Audit Report No. 42**

Table A: Funding requirements and time frame for the implementation of the ANAO recommendations

Rec No	Subject	AEC Response	Status
1	<p>To achieve a consistent approach across all States and Territories in managing the electoral roll, the ANAO recommends that the AEC develop a strategic plan from the CRU that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sets out national standards for updating the electoral roll; • identifies and addresses gaps in the existing CRU program; and • sets a timetable for implementation of a consistent national CRU program. 	Agreed	<p>The AEC has identified enrolment and CRU as strategic priorities in the current AEC strategic plan. The first priority is to develop a CRU strategic plan in consultation with the Electoral Council of Australia (ECA). Work on this plan will commence in August/September with an aim to complete it by the end of 2002 subject to agreement by the ECA. The development of the plan is not expected to incur additional costs. However, the implementation of the plan will incur costs. The costs for implementation will not be known until the plan is developed and proposed work is scoped.</p>
2	<p>To maximise the benefits of its data-matching activities in maintaining the electoral roll, the ANAO recommends that the AEC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • determine an optimal suite of data required to implement an effective national CRU program; • monitor data sources used for CRU to ensure the most effective sources are identified and used; and • monitor enrolments obtained from non-CRU activities to identify potential gaps in data-matching coverage. 	Agreed	<p>The proposed CRU strategic plan will address the issue of maximising the benefits of data matching activities to ensure an optimum suite of data is sourced and used to obtain the most effective results in implementing an effective CRU program.</p> <p>Evaluation of the current data sets has not identified sufficient overlap to conclude which data sets are optimal at the exclusion of others. As each new data source comes online further evaluations are undertaken. It is expected that it will take about 18 months to identify, source and evaluate the different data sources for this activity. It is proposed that the Management Information Systems will be enhanced to streamline this process. However, until system enhancements are specified it is not possible to identify the likely costs of implementing this process.</p>

3	<p>To improve the effectiveness of the CRU program, the ANAO recommends that the AEC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify more effective arrangements to progress negotiations with States and Territories for access to relevant data; and • actively pursue access to all data sets that it considers essential to ensure efficient and effective management of the Commonwealth roll. 	Agreed	<p>These initiatives will be pursued by the AEC during renegotiation of the Joint Roll Arrangements with the States and Territories and during the development of the CRU strategic plan. It is not expected that there will be costs in managing the negotiations. However, the significant costs that are likely to occur in obtaining the data are not known at this stage.</p>
4	<p>To improve the effectiveness of its correspondence with electors, the ANAO recommends that the AEC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • review and revise, as appropriate, CRU correspondence to electors; and • include in future correspondence reference to a citizen's legal obligations to enrol to vote and the penalties that apply for non-compliance. 	Agreed	<p>Funding has already been allocated for a review of all Enrolment and CRU forms and letters to commence in August this year with an expected completion by mid 2003.</p> <p>Consideration will be given to including information about a citizen's legal obligation to enrol and vote, the penalties that apply for non-compliance, and access to roll data, on the relevant forms and letters during the planned review. The costs associated with this initiative will not be significant.</p>
5	<p>To enhance AEC ability to use its existing information on the electoral roll better and manage the roll more efficiently and effectively, the ANAO recommends that the AEC upgrade its management information systems to enable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • measuring and reporting of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the accuracy, completeness and validity of the electoral roll; - the accuracy of the address register; and - the cost of its various enrolment activities; and • monitoring of the implementation and impact of initiatives, such as CRU. 	Agreed	<p>The AEC has identified the enhancement of its management information systems as a priority for this financial year. Work has commenced on developing the specifications with the first stage of the development expected to be completed by mid 2003. The full cost of the enhancements will not be known until the specifications have been completed and the scoping undertaken.</p>

6	<p>To improve accountability, and to provide greater assurance that the electoral roll is being managed effectively, the ANAO recommends that the AEC identify and implement a suite of performances indicators that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are relevant and appropriate for measuring enrolment activities; • contain both qualitative and quantitative measures; and • address the needs of the different stakeholders of the AEC. 	Agreed	<p>The AEC recognises the need for improved performance indicators and identified this need in Strategy 1 of the AECs 2001-2004 Strategic Plan. The review of the performance indicators and proposed measures will commence later this year with the aim to include them in the next budgetary cycle. The review will also look at integrating the measures into the proposed enhancements of the Management Information System. Costs associated with the collection of data for these future performance indicators could be significant. The AEC will advise the JSCEM of estimated costs in due course.</p>
7	<p>To improve and strengthen its relationships with key stakeholders, the ANAO recommends that the AEC give priority to consultation with, and obtaining feedback from, key stakeholders, and that it develop appropriate strategies and procedures for conducting, managing and reporting on these relationships through its corporate planning and performance reporting frameworks.</p>	Agreed	<p>The AEC's relationship with State and Territory electoral bodies is maintained by regular consultation and quarterly meetings with the ECA. A subcommittee of the ECA also meets regularly. Other meetings with our State/Territory counterparts are held to discuss Joint Roll Arrangements. The AEC also identified the need to conduct customer/stakeholder workshops when the AECs 2001-2004 Strategic Plan was developed. A number of customer workshops have already been held and a stakeholder workshop has been proposed for this financial year. These workshops will enable the AEC to obtain feedback on the AEC's performance as a service provider.</p>
8	<p>To assist in its management of the accuracy of electoral roll, the ANAO recommends that the AEC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop and introduce performance indicators to measure accuracy of the electoral roll; • develop measurable targets for roll accuracy; and • report those targets and indicators in its Annual Report. 	Agreed	<p>The AEC has already identified the need to improve its performance indicators and has planned to have the revised indicators completed by March 2003.</p>

9	To measure the accuracy of the electoral roll, the ANAO recommend that the AEC consider introducing a periodic review of a sample of the electoral roll.	Agreed	The AEC will examine appropriate methodologies for conducting a periodic review of a sample of the electoral roll to provide an assessment of roll accuracy. Costs associated with such a review could be significant depending on the type and size of the sample on which the review is undertaken.
10	<p>To improve the reliability and completeness of the electoral roll, the ANAO recommends that, in 2002-2003, the AEC focus its enrolment efforts on improving the completeness aspects of the electoral roll by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identifying groups where non-enrolment is most prevalent; and • developing effective strategies to improve enrolment by these groups. 	Agreed	The AEC has a focus on accuracy and completeness and is continually looking for methodologies to improve both. We expect to obtain relevant ABS demographic data by end 2002. Analysis of this data will then proceed with an aim to identify areas to be targeted by each Division. The AEC's Divisions are developing business plans, which will include strategies for improving enrolment participation in these areas. The enhancement to our Management Information Systems will streamline the analysis of the data to expedite the identification of areas to target. Costs are yet to be identified, but will be provided to the JSCEM when they are available.
11	To minimise the risk of enrolment fraud, the ANAO recommends that the AEC give high priority to finalising and implementing its fraud control plan specific to enrolment activities.	Agreed	The AEC has already identified this as a priority for 2002-03. The process will start with an examination of the current processes and procedures commencing in early August with an aim to finalise development of an enrolment fraud control plan by early 2003.
12	To assess and to minimise risks to the integrity of the roll arising from new technology and increased access to roll data, the ANAO recommends that the AEC give priority to completion of its review of ss89. to 92 of the <i>Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918</i> , recommended by the JSCEM, taking into account the extent of current electronic access to electoral roll data, and effectively assessing and treating the risks inherent in current development in computer technology.	Agreed	The review of ss. 89 – 92 has been included in the July 2002 submission to the JSCEM. No significant costs are envisaged if the recommended legislative changes are made.