



January, August & Final Reports

REPORTS

Part 1 - Summary Details

Please use your TAB key to complete part 1 & 2.

CRDC Project Number: **CSP108C**

January Report: Due 29-Jan-01
August Report: Due 03-Aug-01
Final Report: Due within 3 months of project completion

Project Title: **ACRI Computer Network Support**

Project Commencement Date: 01/07/1998 Project Completion Date: 30/06/2002

Research Program: **Human Resources**

Part 2 - Contact Details

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Researcher 2 (Name & position of additional researcher or supervisor).

Organisation:

Postal Address:

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Signature of Research Provider Representative:

Part 3 – Final Report Format

1. Outline the background to the project.

CRDC has for many years supported the development and maintenance of computer systems at The Australian Cotton Research Institute, Narrabri (previous project CSP77C). These computer systems have benefited all research programs through their use in data processing, storage, statistical analysis, modeling and the development of end-user packages. In addition the network services located at ACRI provide printing services and communication which includes e-mail.

The development of the Internet in recent years has provided a means of communication and also dissemination of information. A dedicated World Wide Web server that support the Australian Cotton CRC's website is now located at ACRI. This has enabled information and systems developed at ACRI to be made available immediately to the Cotton Industry (e.g. updates to CottonLOGIC). Data published on this server includes daily weather data downloaded from weather stations in the cotton growing regions as well as research publications produced by the CRC.

With the increase in computing power and staff at ACRI, the need for sustained technical support directly to the user has expanded. Support for these services is imperative to the proper functioning of the research station.

~~Plans at the beginning of this project were being finalised to completely re-cable the Myall Vale site to CSIRO saturation cabling standards. Both CSIRO and NSW Agriculture are providing funds for this project.~~

2. List the project objectives and the extent to which these have been achieved.

The aims of the project were:

- To provide full time support for computer hardware and network services at ACRI, Narrabri.
- Facilitate the connection of industry users to on-line services developed by the CRC.
- To provide support and assistance to researchers and other users of the ACRI computer network.
- To facilitate the introduction of new technology to improve communication and information management among the cotton research community and Industry users.

Objectives that were to be achieved in each year of the grant were:

Year 1

- Conduct day-to-day monitoring of network performance, and respond to problems reported by users.
- Check computing hardware and software is Year 2000 Compliant.
- Re-cable Myall Vale site to CSIRO saturation cabling standards.
- Assist users in improving communication and information management in their research projects.

Year 2

- Conduct day-to-day monitoring of network performance, and respond to problems reported by users.
- Facilitate the adoption of new technology to improve access by researchers and industry users.
- Assist users in applying information technology to research and extension projects.

Year 3

- Conduct day-to-day monitoring of network performance, and respond to problems reported by users.
- Facilitate the adoption of new technology to improve access by researchers and industry users.
- Assist users in applying information technology to research and extension projects.
- Evaluate the need to upgrade facilities in line with changes in technology and the changing needs of researchers and industry.

All these objectives have been achieved with a high degree of success. This project is supporting a reliable and functioning computer network and general computing services at ACRI which is benefiting all research and extension staff. Specific achievements for the past three years include:

- Upgrading the uninterrupted power supplies for the network;
- Increasing the speed of the ISDN link to the site at no additional cost;
- ~~Identifying a new server for purchase with improved backup capabilities;~~
- Improved dial in capabilities for travelling researchers;
- Increase in overall security of the network;
- Installation of video conferencing facilities;
- Installation of cabling for new ACRI weather station; and
- upgraded network operating system to Windows 2000 server.
- Enabled secure Internet services via the Cotton CRC web site.
- Increased backup processes from weekly to daily for e-mail.
- Upgrading tape backup capabilities
- Installation of two new computer servers to enhance data storage, communication, and web capabilities.

The installation of a new ACRI network was completed during the life of this project and is functioning at full capacity. It has gained Krone 20/20 certification which is presently the highest standard that can be gained for a network. The new network has provided reliable performance with increased capacity and flexibility for the staff at ACRI. Tony Pfeiffer the network manager funded by this project was instrumental in the planning and installation of the network.

- 3. How has your research addressed the Corporations three outputs: Sustainability, profitability and international competitiveness, and/or people and community?**

This project assists all research and extension activities conducted at ACRI which ultimately contribute to all outputs nominated by the CDRC.

This project assists all research and extension activities conducted at ACRI which ultimately contribute to all outputs nominated by the CDRC. In fact researchers at ACRI have access to computing facilities that are of the highest standard available.

- 4. Detail the methodology and justify the methodology used.**

Not Applicable

- 5. Detail results including the statistical analysis of results.**

Not Applicable

- 6. Discuss the results, and include an analysis of research outcomes compared with objectives.**

Not Applicable

- 7. Provide an assessment of the likely impact of the results and conclusions of the research project for the cotton industry. Where possible include a statement of the costs and potential benefits to the Australian cotton industry and future research needs.**

This project will continue to directly support the activities and operation of researchers located at the Australian Cotton Research Institute.

- 8. Describe the project technology (eg. commercially significant developments, patents applied for or granted licenses etc).**

Not Applicable

- 9. Provide a technical summary of any other information developed as part of the research project. Include discoveries in methodology, equipment design, etc.**

Not Applicable

- 10. Detail a plan for the activities or other steps that may be taken;**

(a) to further develop or to exploit the project technology.

(b) for the future presentation and dissemination of the project outcomes.

This project ceased in June 2002. A new project titled 'ACRI computing support' has been funded by the CRDC which aims to maintain the important and crucial computing support at ACRI.

11. List the publications arising from the research project.

Not Applicable

12. Are changes to the Intellectual Property register required?

Not Applicable

Part 4 – Final Report Plain English Summary

CRDC has for many years supported the development and maintenance of computer systems at Australian Cotton Research Institute, Narrabri (previous project CSP77C). These computer systems have benefited all research programs through their use in data processing, storage, statistical analysis, modeling and the development of end-user packages. In addition the network services located at ACRI provide printing services and communication which includes e-mail.

The development of the Internet in recent years has provided a means of communication and also dissemination of information. A dedicated World Wide Web server is now located at ACRI. This has enabled information and systems developed at ACRI to be made available immediately to the Cotton Industry (e.g. updates to CottonLOGIC). Data published on this server includes daily weather data downloaded from weather stations in the cotton growing regions.

With the increase in computing power and staff at ACRI, the need for sustained technical support directly to the user has expanded. Support for these services is imperative to the proper functioning of the research station.

This project has achieved a wide array of objectives. Whilst providing excellent IT services to the staff at ACRI which is fundamental to the cotton research effort, there have been also significant improvements in the computer network infrastructure at ACRI. One noticeable improvement was the installation of a new ACRI network ~~was which has gained Krone 20/20 certification which is presently the highest standard that can be gained for a computing network.~~ The new network has provided reliable performance with increased capacity and flexibility for the staff at ACRI. Tony Pfeiffer the network manager funded by this project was instrumental in the planning and installation of the network.