



Update for ARC Stakeholders – April 2022

On 28 April 2022 the Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation (JTISI) invited stakeholders to attend an update regarding the Animal Resources Centre (ARC). The update was coordinated by JTISI on behalf of WA State Government agencies.

Background

- The WA Government has undertaken a review of the ARC and found that change is needed for the capability to be continued.
- Based on strong interest shown through market sounding, the WA Government is progressing a 'Single Stage Limited Request' process, the outcome of which will be the identification of an independent provider to acquire the ARC's assets and continue its operations.
- The WA Government and the ARC appreciate that stakeholders need confidence that the ARC's services will be maintained through the transition, ensuring research continues without disruption.
- The WA Government is aiming to exit ownership and operational control of the ARC in a way that retains the capability in Western Australia, secures a sustainable future with a new independent provider, and minimises disruption to the ARC's stakeholders.

Updates since ARC Stakeholder briefing in March 2022

- On 5 April 2022 the legislation that amends and will repeal the *Animal Resources Authority Act 1981* was debated and passed through the Western Australian Legislative Council.
- On 14 April 2022 the *Animal Resources Authority Amendment and Repeal Act 2022* received Royal Assent.
 - This legislation is an administrative step that will allow assets to transfer from the WA Government to a third party entity.
- The WA Government's 'Single Stage Limited Request' process is progressing well.
 - The WA Government has provided a short extension to the deadline for submissions, to allow respondents additional time to finalise their offers. Submissions are due in early May 2022.
 - The evaluation of offers will then commence, led by an evaluation panel which will seek advice as required from probity, commercial and other expert advisors.
- The WA Government still expects to identify a new independent provider by about mid-2022.
- Once a successful proponent is identified, the ARC will work with them to ensure they are in an excellent position to continue to deliver services with minimal disruption. This will include working with the new independent provider to confirm and extend contracts and other service arrangements where possible, to provide certainty to customers and suppliers.
- Staff are critical to the operations of the ARC, and every effort is being made to support them. ARC staff will be provided further detail in the coming months on their three options:
 - 1) redeployment within the public sector, 2) voluntary severance, or 3) potential transfer of employment to the new provider (noting this is dependent on the provider's requirements).
- On 6 April 2022 the Australian Government released the final *2021 National Research Infrastructure Roadmap*, which recognises the importance of national facilities supporting preclinical and clinical research, including animal model provision. The Roadmap will inform the development of the Australian Government's *2022 Research Infrastructure Investment Plan*.

Next steps

- The WA Government will continue to provide regular updates.