

## **Commonly Asked Questions regarding the 2009 Annual Report Form (ARF)**

**Q1: Must the ARF be done online?**

A1: Yes, from now on, all ARFs must be completed and submitted online. The Program Director should go to [www.maerb.org](http://www.maerb.org) and log in, using the customized User Name and password that was provided via email from the MAERB. If there is a new program director and we are not notified, there will be no access to program's ARF.

**Q2: How long do I have to complete the ARF?**

A2: You will be given approximately 6 weeks (from date of notification) to complete the ARF. The deadline for the Fall (multiple cohort) ARF is Tuesday, December 3. The availability and deadline for the Spring (January) ARFs will be provided in December.

**Q3: What if I need an extension?**

A3: Once the stated deadline passes, access to your ARF will not be possible, and you will need to contact the MAERB in order to regain access to the online ARF. However, this will only be possible after paying a \$200 late fee. In the case of extreme emergencies, please contact the MAERB office at 800.228.2262 prior to the deadline for submitting the ARF.

**Q4: How can I get a copy of my 2008 ARF?**

A4: The MAERB staff can send a copy of your final 2008 ARF via email, upon request.

**Q5: How can I get a copy of my 2009 ARF?**

A5: You can print out a hard copy of each tab online. You can also convert the final 2009 ARF into a PDF format and save it to your computer. MAERB highly recommends this, so that you have a copy of your final ARF from year to year.

**Q6: What do I do if my ARF is due every spring, rather than the fall?**

A6: Some ARFs are available for completion in the fall of each year; others need to be completed in the first few months of the calendar year. Those with multiple admission cohorts submit in the fall; those with one or two cohorts per year submit in January/February. The process is the same for either group. You will be notified via email that your ARF is available online, and you will have 6 weeks to complete it.

**Q7: What if the figures in my ARF are incorrect or need to be revised? What do I do?**

A7: Every number in the ARF can be revised by the principal user. Simply click the "edit" button and change the numbers to what they should be.

**Q8: Is the program director the only one that can make changes to the ARF?**

A8: Yes, only one individual is granted full access to the ARF, with the ability to make edits. A second User ID and password is given to the program director, who may provide it to the appropriate individual/s. The second user will have "read-only" access to the document.

**Q9: Why are the "Graduate Analysis" and "Exam" tabs blank? I thought that the ARF included all of the final data from the prior year's report?**

A9: The tabs are purposely blank. On prior ARFs, the data for all tabs was based on the admission year for the given group of students (i.e. cohort); however, CMA (AAMA) exam results are now provided directly to the MAERB from the Certifying Board of the AAMA. These results are based on the student's graduation year, not the year of

admission. Therefore, the “Graduate Analysis” tab is blank so that the MAERB can have the appropriate figures flowing into the “Exam” tab.

**Q10: Where are my CMA (AAMA) and RMA (AMT) figures from last year’s report? Why are there only figures for CMA (AAMA), and why don’t they match my numbers from last year’s report?**

A10: The “Exam” tab is intentionally blank, since it is now based on a student’s year of graduation, not the year of admission into the program. You no longer need to keep track or report on CMA (AAMA) exam results, as these figures are already loaded into your ARF for you. However, the program director is still responsible to report on RMA (AMT) exam success, based on the student’s year of graduation.

**Q11: What if my program is newly-accredited? Do I have to fill out the entire report?**

A11: No, the MAERB asks that you only fill out the data for the most recent year listed on the ARF. To do otherwise could be potentially harmful to your program’s outcomes.

**Q12: What if my data (such as accreditation code number, school name, city or state) is incorrectly stated on the online ARF? What do I do?**

A12: Please contact the Accreditation Department of the MAERB at 1.800.228.2262, and they will rectify the situation.

**Q13: My ARF is done, but it won’t let me submit it online?**

A13: If you are unable to submit the report, it is either because some of your data cannot be reconciled with other data, or because you left questions or action plans unanswered.

**Q14: I didn’t get my password and User ID. Why?**

A14: You didn’t receive it because your ARF isn’t available to be completed until January 2010, at which time you will be given 6 weeks to complete it.

**Q15: Can I get the password early, so that I can start working on it?**

A15: I’m sorry, but every program must be given the same amount of time to work on the ARF. You can, however, begin to collect the data that you will need for the ARF.

**Q16: My “institution name” is abbreviated, or is not quite right? Can it be changed?**

A16: Yes, we can change it for you. However, please note that your name is correctly entered in our database. The name that appears on the ARF is the same as the name of the file that was given to your 2008 ARF.

**Q17: I don’t see room to enter data for 2008 admission cohorts on the Retention tab.**

A17: When you click on “Add admission entry (a green cross) near the top of the Retention tab, it will walk you through prompts to add your data for 2008. After saving data for a 2008 cohort, the 2003 data will automatically be dropped from the ARF.

**Q18: I see numbers for the CMA (AAMA) exam on the Exam tab, but I think that they are incorrect.**

A18: If your records for the CMA (AAMA) exam don’t match what is already posted in your 2009 ARF, please note that the number was downloaded in early October and is based on the number of students who graduated from your program in 2008 and passed the CMA (AAMA) exam. It does not reflect the number of graduates who passed the exam in calendar year 2008. If you have some students who recently passed the exam, they will be reported on your 2010 ARF. The MAERB will not be making any potentially

adverse recommendations based on failure to meet the new 70% threshold until five years worth of data is compiled.

**Q19: I'm on the web site, but I don't see the Annual Report tab anywhere.**

A19: You need to log in (upper right corner) with your User ID and password; upon doing that, the Annual Report page will appear.

**Q20: Why is the data in the last column ("overall positive response") blocked on the Graduate Survey and Employer Survey tabs? I remember filling in that information last year.**

A20: Unlike previous years, the "overall positive response" column is blocked because it is automatic calculation (i.e. the mean average) of the 3 prior columns (i.e. cognitive, psychomotor, and affective).

**Q21: I've met the 5-year threshold, but the questions and Action Plan still pop up. Why?**

A21: Unlike previous years, MAERB now also requires programs to complete the questions and Action Plan if they don't meet the threshold for the most recent year (i.e. 2008, in this case).

**Q22: I answered the questions and proceeded to the Action Plan, but, when I clicked on "Save Action Plan," I see that my answers to the questions are no longer there.**

A22: Unfortunately, those answers can't be retrieved. After you finish the answers to the questions, you must "Save Questions." Then you can proceed to complete the Action Plan, and "Save Action Plan."

**Q23: I thought that the new exam threshold of 70% didn't go into effect until 2010. If so, why is it on the 2009 ARF?**

A23: It is correct that the new threshold goes into effect with the 2010 ARF (i.e. with the admission cohort/s for 2009). It is included in the 2009 ARF so that we don't have to change the ARF template next year, and also as a way to prepare you for what to expect on next year's ARF.

**Q24: I'm concerned that I don't meet the new MAERB threshold that "70% of all graduates must pass one of the two nationally-accredited credentialing exams." What will happen to my program if I don't make the 70% exam threshold?**

A24: The first year that you are required to officially meet the new exam threshold is with next year's (i.e. 2010) ARF. The MAERB will not make any official recommendations regarding the new exam threshold until at least 5 years of data is reported by your program. Therefore, you have until the 2014 ARF to bring this threshold up to the required standard. At that point in time, if you are not meeting the exam threshold, the MAERB will initiate a dialogue with your program and provide you with suggestions for meeting the threshold. Eventually, if the exam pass rate continues to be below the threshold, it could result in an adverse recommendation from MAERB.