

RITS Session Extension Arrangements

Requests to extend any sessions, RITS or Austraclear, must be made **at least 10 minutes** before the scheduled session close time. Any requests received after this will be dealt with on a 'best endeavours' basis. This rule also applies to subsequent extensions.

Session extension arrangements distinguish between requests to extend settlement sessions that arise from operational incidents and those where the delay to completion of normal operations are caused by avoidable operational inefficiencies. Requests for extensions will not automatically be granted where the request is the result of operational inefficiencies, such as the late arrival or processing of client payment instructions, delays in obtaining securities for delivery, or inadequate staffing on the day.

If a Member becomes aware of an emerging issue of any kind that is likely to require a session extension, it should keep the RITS Help Desk (1800 659 360) and, as appropriate, the Austraclear Service Desk (1300 362 257) informed in a timely manner. System-related problems or other operational issues that affect normal RTGS settlement capability must be reported to the RITS Help Desk immediately they are discovered. Refer to the [RITS Member Reporting Arrangements](#) for further information.

Extension Requests - Operational Incidents

Where an operational incident has occurred that affects processing, the following arrangements apply:

(a) The RITS Help Desk will **automatically grant a (minimum) 15-minute extension to the settlement session** if requested and where practicable depending on the notice given by the Member. Members must advise the RITS Help Desk or the Austraclear Service Desk of the likelihood of the problem being rectified within this first 15-minute period. An email detailing the nature of the operational incident must be provided to the Reserve Bank (rits@rba.gov.au) by the end of the following business day.

(b) Subsequent requests for extensions will only be granted if the value of outstanding transactions is greater than \$150 million. Any total extension granted for 30 minutes or more will require a formal incident report in accordance with the guidelines outlined in RITS Member Incident Reporting Arrangements.

(c) If normal processing has not resumed after 1 hour, further extensions will be granted at the discretion of the RITS Help Desk and only if there is judged to be a reasonable expectation of imminent recovery (see below).

In the event that a Member experiences a prolonged outage that causes, or is likely to cause, **session extensions of an hour or more**, the Reserve Bank expects senior management of the Member to contact the RITS Help Desk, and to be available for discussions with senior management of the Reserve Bank. Extension requests of more than an hour will be considered by the Reserve Bank taking account of other criteria, including:

(i) the effort being made to prevent disruptions to market liquidity;

(ii) the degree of confidence that the problem will be resolved within a reasonable timeframe (and allowing for suitable time to complete outstanding transactions); and

(iii) the Reserve Bank's judgement of the impact on the market. One consideration in this will be the number and value of transactions outstanding (as a guide: at least \$1 billion or 500 payments outstanding).

Extension Requests - Operational Inefficiencies

The Reserve Bank expects that settlement activity will occur within scheduled sessions and that Members' operational practices and staffing are consistent with this. Some requests for extensions arise from operational inefficiencies such as staff unavailability or the late unwinding of securities trades, including 'loops' involving several parties. These would not normally be considered grounds for an extension unless there is evidence of widespread industry dislocation or of system liquidity being significantly impacted. Accordingly, requests for **extensions not related to operational incidents** will only be considered where:

(a) the RITS Help Desk or the Austraclear Service Desk is convinced of the likelihood of the situation being rectified within the first 15 minutes; and

(b) trades of \$250 million or more are outstanding; or

(c) the Reserve Bank is convinced of significant market disruption.

Where extensions are granted under these conditions, the Member(s) must provide the Reserve Bank with a written explanation. This explanation, which may be sent via email, must be provided by the end of the following business day.

Requesting a Session Extension

When requesting an extension, Members must inform the RITS Help Desk or the Austraclear Service Desk of the likelihood of the situation being rectified within the first 15 minutes. Requests for extensions arising from operational inefficiencies (or further extensions for operational incidents) will not normally be granted unless outstanding transaction details (number, value and status) are provided.

Requests for extensions should be directed either to the RITS Help Desk or the Austraclear Service Desk, depending on the session, as follows:

- **Daily Settlement Session - Austraclear Transactions**
Requests relating to outstanding transactions involving a non-bank counterparty in the Austraclear System and not yet on the RITS queue must be made to the Austraclear Service Desk. Requests are judged against the criteria outlined above.
- **Daily Settlement Session - SWIFT Transactions**
Requests must be made to the RITS Help Desk. Requests are judged against criteria above in terms of total outstanding transactions (MT103/pacs.008/pacs.004 customer payments and transactions involving a non-Evening Agreed Member counterparty only).
- **Settlement Close, Evening Settlement and Reports Sessions**
Requests must be made to the RITS Help Desk and are assessed by the Reserve Bank on a case-by-case basis.

Notice of any extension and its duration will normally be posted on RITS immediately after the cut-off time for extension requests. The notice will also be posted on the

Austraclear System, if applicable. The first extension of the Daily Settlement Session will normally be for a minimum of 15 minutes.

For further details, refer to **RITS Advice 03/2020** sent to Members on 26 March 2020.