AAA for IMOS: Australian Access Federation & related components

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Overview

- Middleware
- Trust Technology
- Shibboleth and the Australian Access Federation
- AAF and trusted services
- Suggested next steps

My Background

- Lead a research centre in IT infrastructure for the higher education and research sector (MELCOE)
  - Includes eResearch and eLearning
  - All outputs are freely available as open source/open content
- Member of NCRIS 5.16 Steering Committee
- Lead/collaborate on national IT infrastructure projects
  - MAMS for federated identity and access management ("trust federation") leading to Australian Access Federation (AAF)
  - Secure Repositories (using Fedora) based on access policies
  - Secure Workspaces/Virtual Organisations ("IAMSuite")
  - Workflow for collaborative activities ("RAMS")
- Involved in planning for the "Australian National Data Service" (ANDS)

Middleware

- Middleware is a layer of software services that sit above the network, but below individual applications
- Middleware helps connect disparate systems; it is the "glue" that overcomes the limitations of isolated systems
- Middleware relies on open standards

Core Middleware

- One of the core components of middleware is identity and access management
  - Particularly federated identity and access management
  - Essential precursor to secure workspaces and data sharing
- Put simply: “Who can get access to what?”
  - Identity side: Who are you, what are your attributes?
  - Service side: What is accessible? (given identity and attributes)

The Traditional Approach

- The traditional approach is that each application manages its own set of user accounts
  - Leads to the endless proliferation of names and passwords
- Problems include:
  - Growing IT support costs (especially helpdesk queries)
  - Poor security (users struggle to manage all their accounts)
  - Privacy concerns (difficult to preserve anonymity)
  - Wheel re-invention (failure to re-use existing work)
  - Reduced collaboration (it’s just too hard)

A Solution

- Recent innovations provide an alternative to the traditional approach of applications managing accounts
- Requires three components:
  - Identity Providers: (the part of) Organisations that can share who their users are and their attributes (eg, role)
  - Service Providers: Services (ie, applications) that are accessible by users from Identity Providers
  - Trust Federation: A trust framework (policy and technical) that connects Identity Providers and Services Providers
- A typical large research organisation (eg, university) contains one Identity Provider (the directory) and may have many Service Providers

The Process

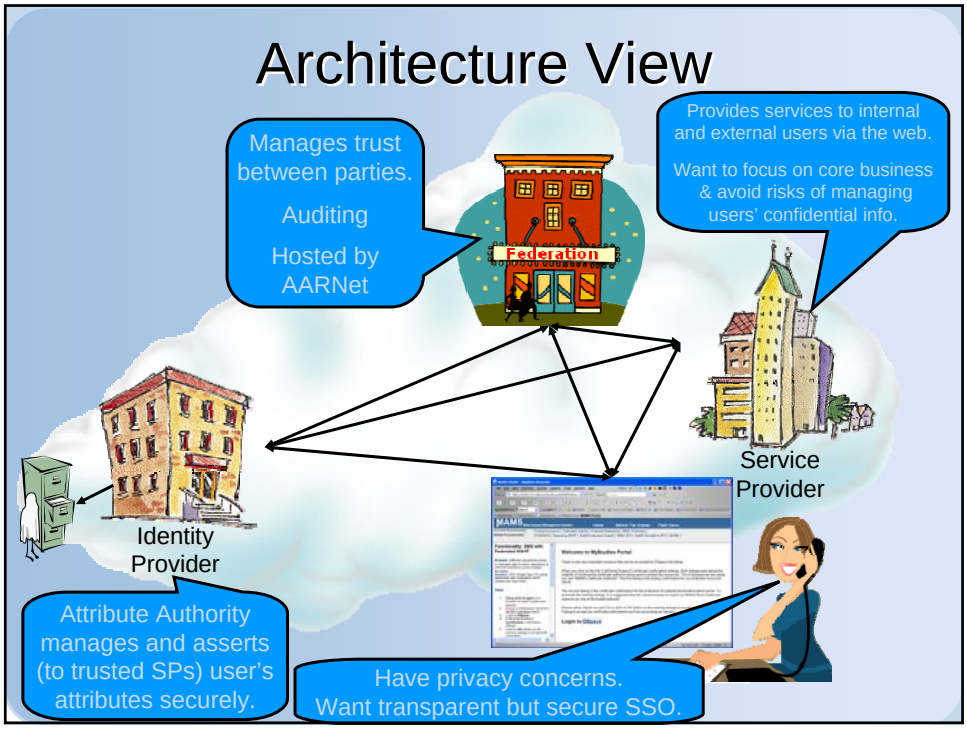
- Prior Requirements:
  - Identity Provider establishes the identity and attributes of its members (users)
  - Identity Provider joins trust federation, shares attributes
  - Services Provider joins trust federation, uses attributes for access
- Access Process:
  - A user logs in to their home organisation (Identity Provider)
  - The user attempts to access a service (eg, secure workspace)
  - The service requests/uses attributes about the user so as to make a decision about granting/denying access

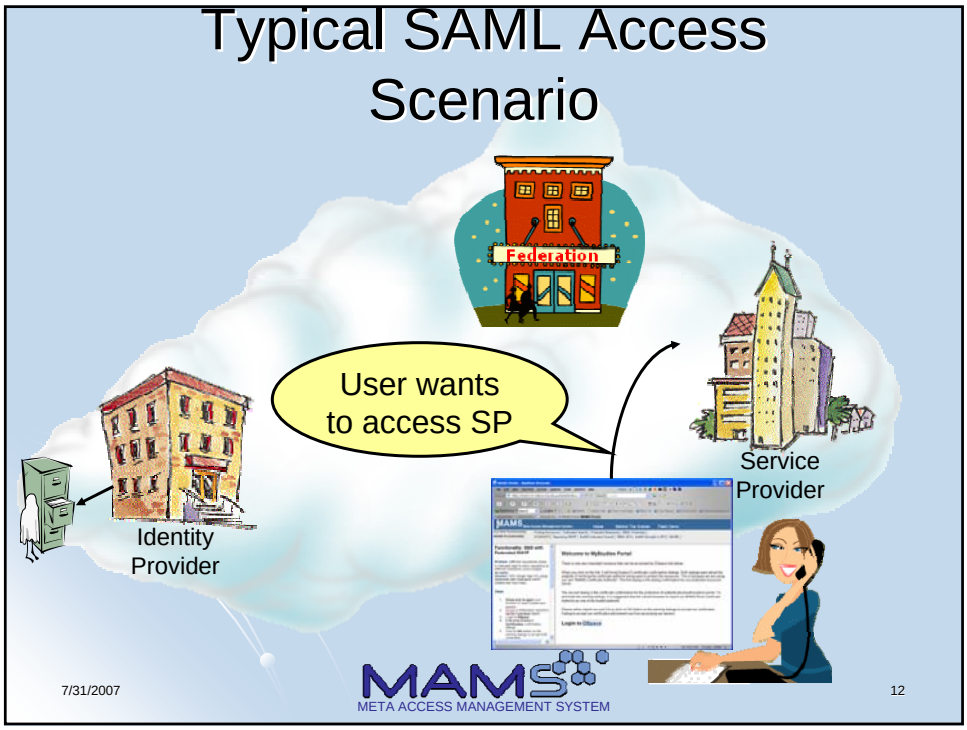
Trust Technology

- There are a number of technologies that support trust federations
  - PKI (Public Key Infrastructure)
  - Shibboleth/SAML (Security Assertion Markup Language)
- At a high level, trust federation policy can be independent of specific technologies
  - Although implementation details generally involve a complex mix of technology and policy

Shibboleth

- Shibboleth is an open source implementation of the OASIS “SAML” open standard
  - Focus on trust federations for education and research
- Development led by Internet 2 in the US, with contributions from around the world
  - Including from Australia via the MAMS project
- Rollout of Shibboleth trust federations in the USA, UK, Australia, Switzerland, Finland, France, Germany, etc


Architecture View
Manages trust between parties.
Auditing
Hosted by AARNet
Federation
Provides services to internal and external users via the web.
Want to focus on core business & avoid risks of managing users' confidential info.
Service Provider
Identity Provider
Attribute Authority manages and asserts (to trusted SPs) user's attributes securely.
Have privacy concerns.
Want transparent but secure SSO.


Typical SAML Access Scenario
Federation
User wants to access SP
Service Provider
Identity Provider
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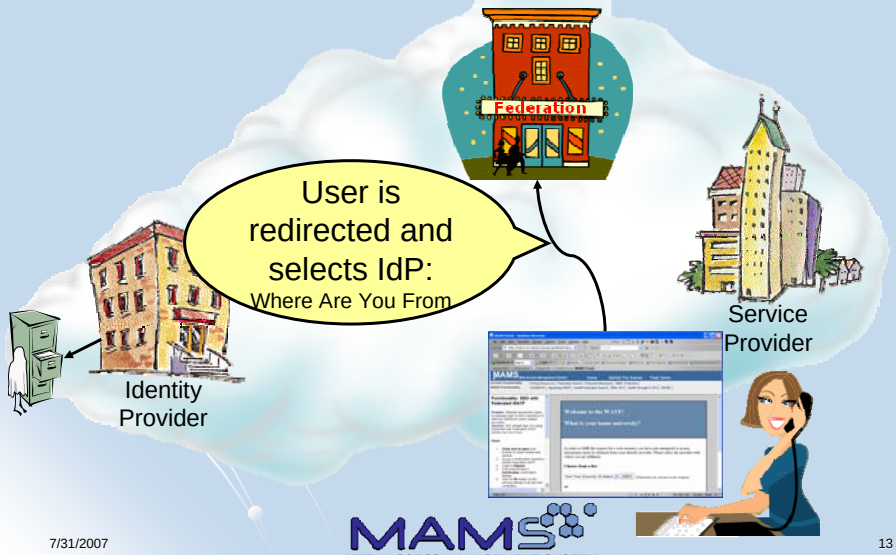
MAMS
META ACCESS MANAGEMENT SYSTEM
12

Typical SAML Access Scenario



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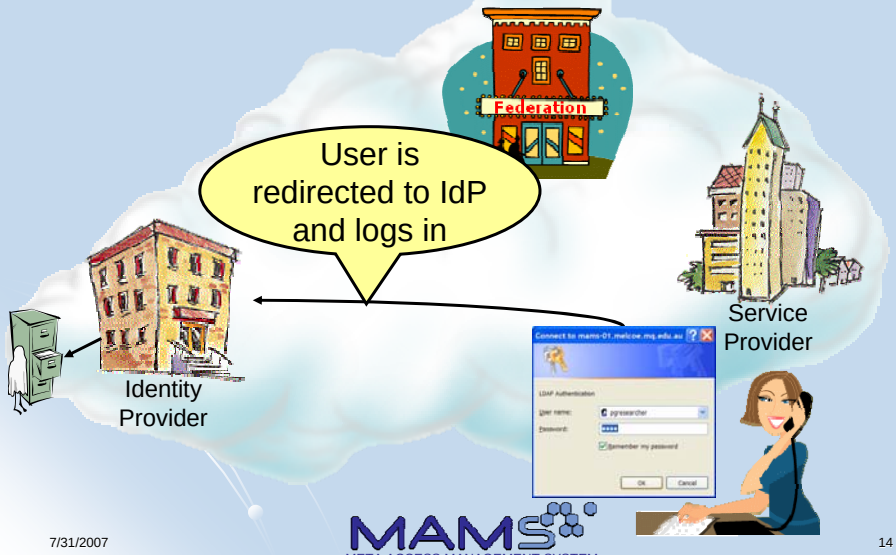
Typical SAML Access Scenario



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Typical SAML Access Scenario

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MAMS META ACCESS MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

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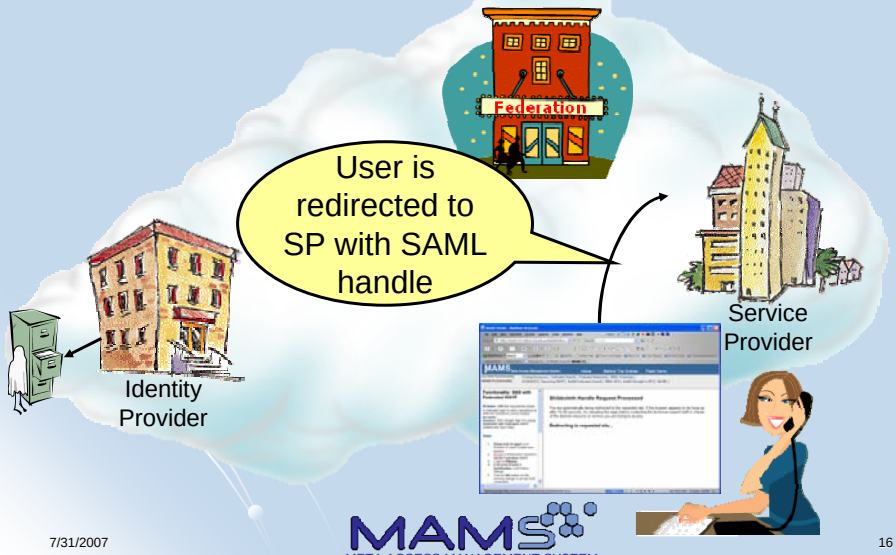

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MAMS META ACCESS MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

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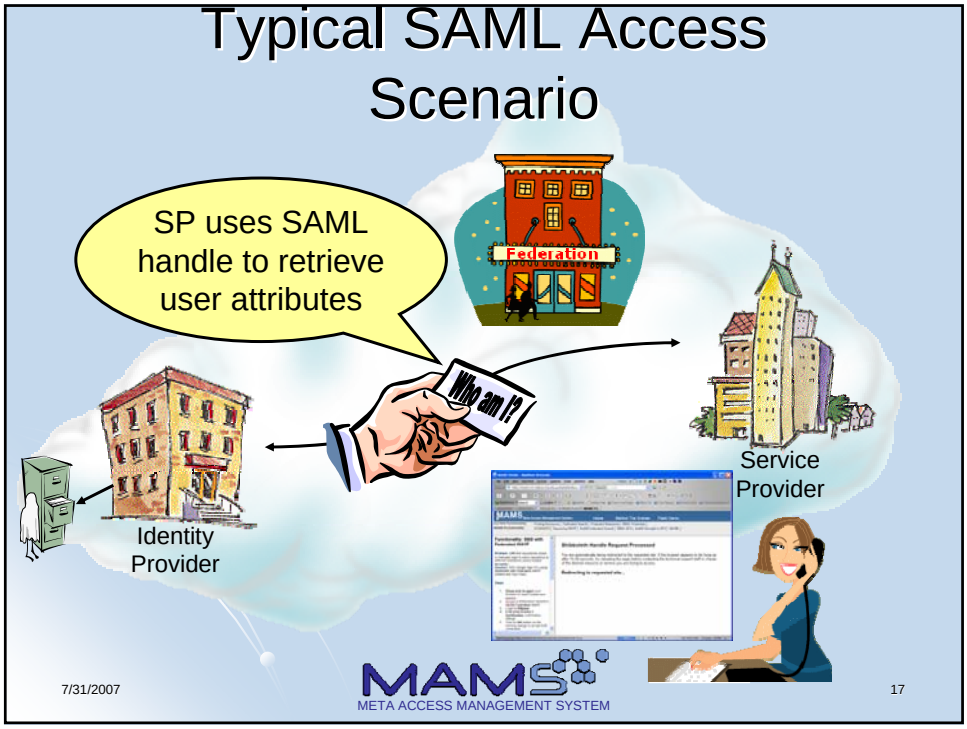

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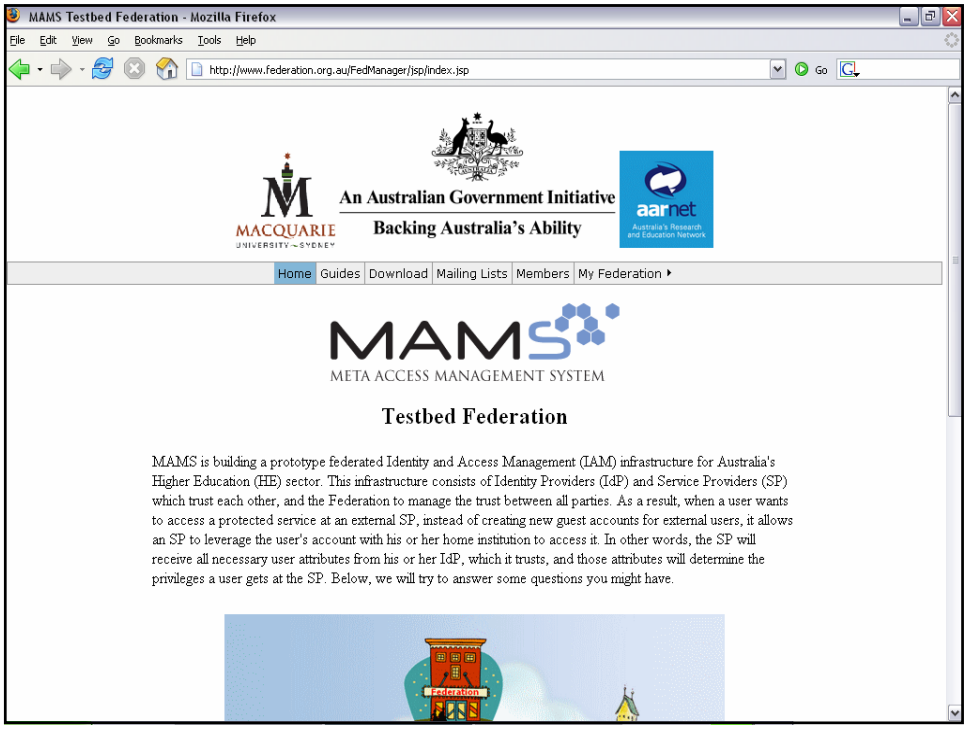
Benefits

- Enhanced collaboration via easy sharing of secure resources and services
- Potential for less duplication of research (and new discoveries building on existing data)
- Home institution login reduces account management, and home institutions can better manage user accounts and security
- Identity assertions are backed by trusted institutions
- Strong privacy management, including “trusted anonymous” option



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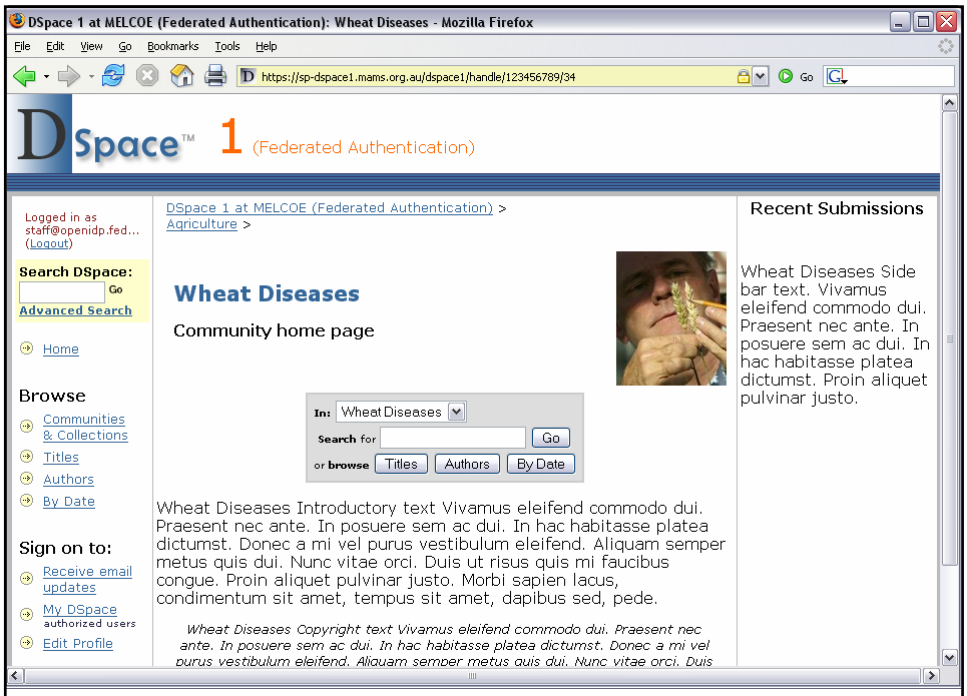
Australian Access Federation

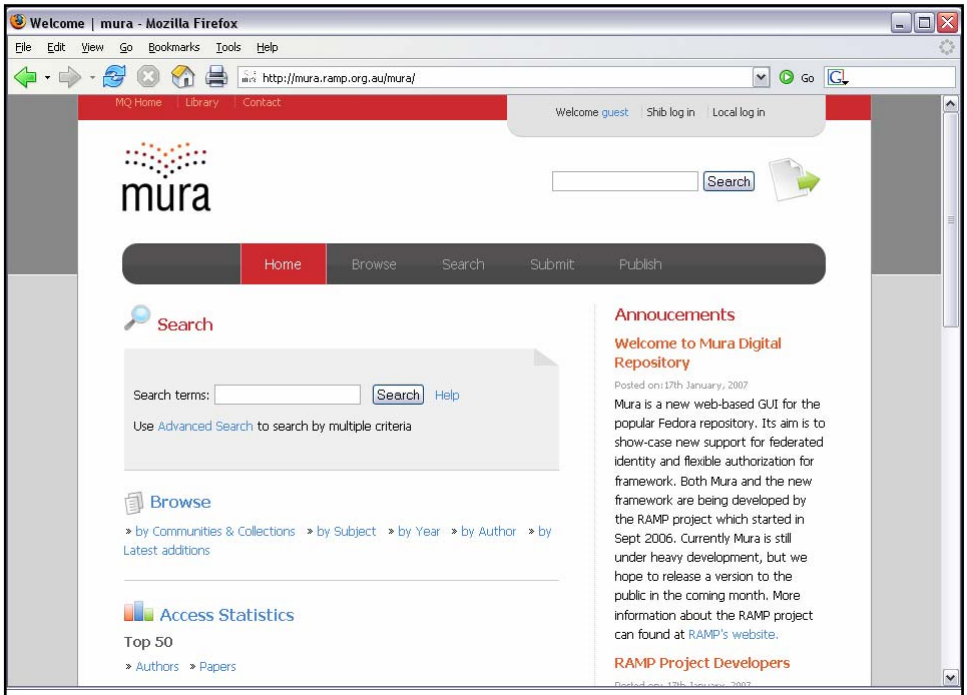
- The Australian Access Federation project is taking forward the work of the MAMS (Shibboleth) and e-Security (PKI) projects to develop a unified trust federation for higher education and research
  - Policy and governance
  - PKI and Shibboleth production rollout
  - Adoption support, workshops, supporting systems, etc

Examples of trusted services

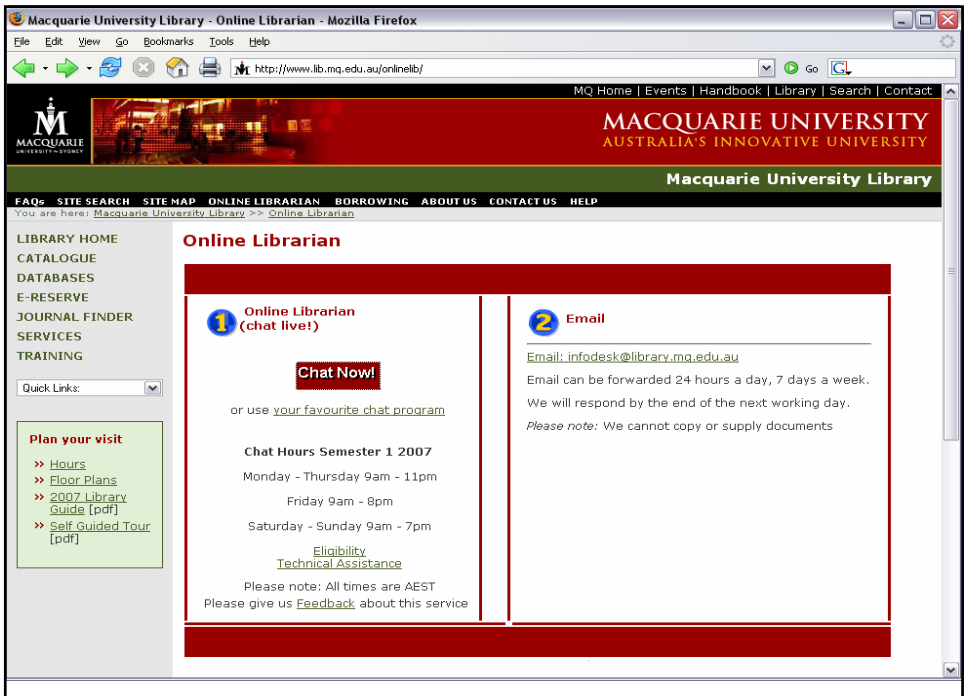
- Trusted (secure) repositories (documents, data, media)
  - DSpace (integration of “traditional” application)
  - Fedora (native support for SAML, XACML for authorisation)
  - Others to come
- Secure Real-Time Text Chat
  - Example: Online Librarian
- Trusted Gridsphere portal and Virtual Organisation management (“IAMSuite”)
  - Including access to Grid services via Shibboleth/PKI bridge
- Workflow for collaborative research (“RAMS”)



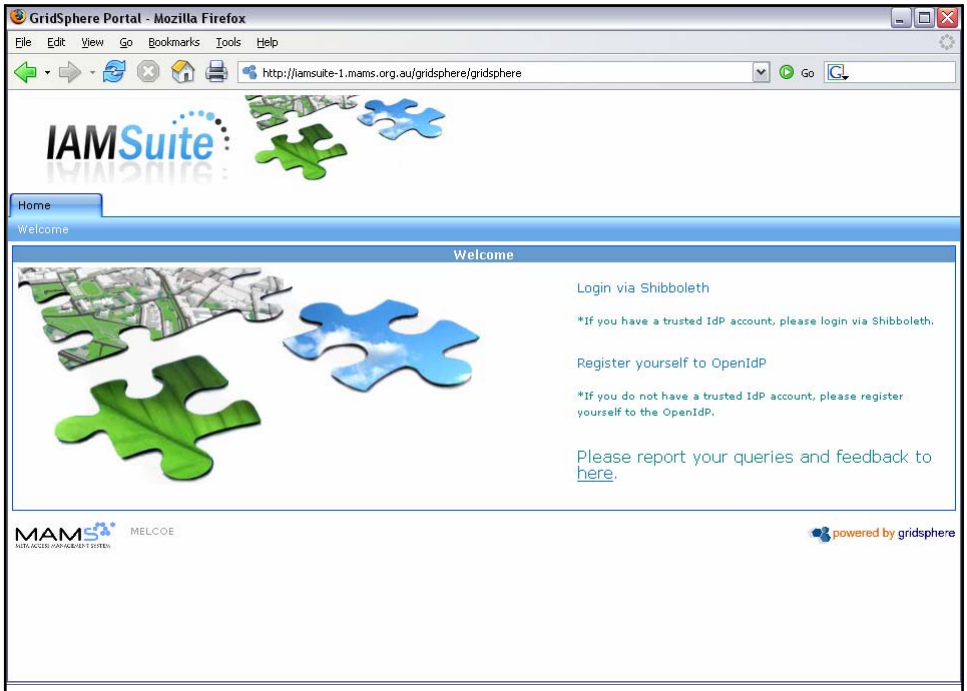
Shibboleth-enabled DSpace repository



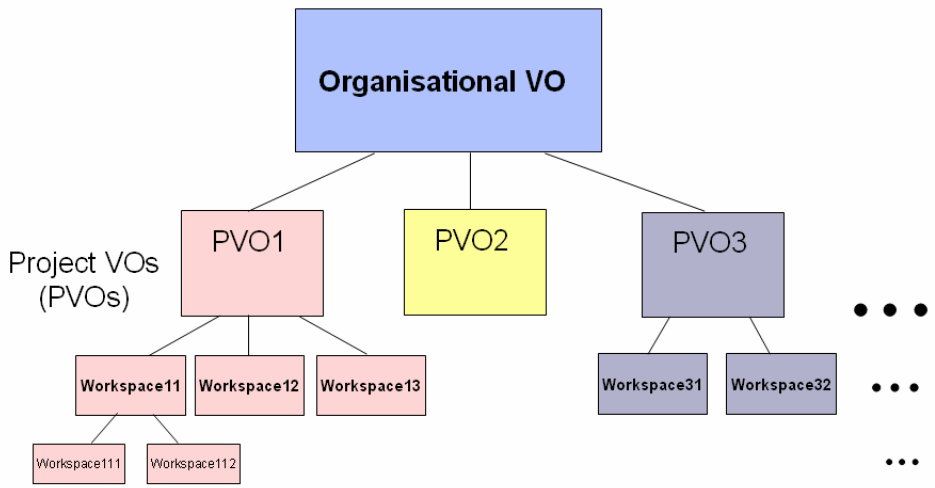
Shibboleth and XACML-based Fedora Repository



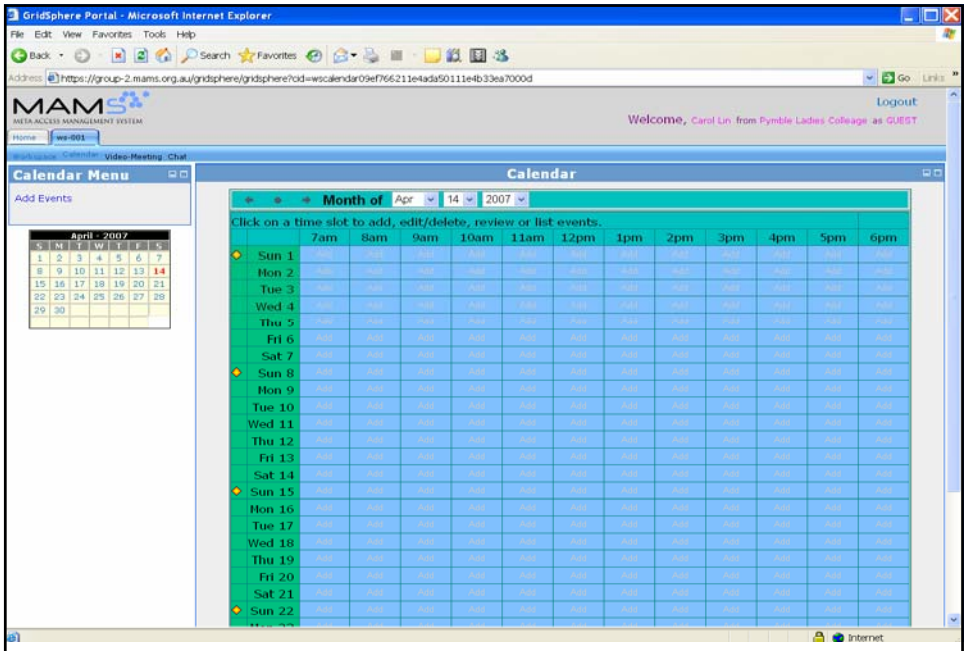
Shibboleth-based Secure chat service – Online Librarian



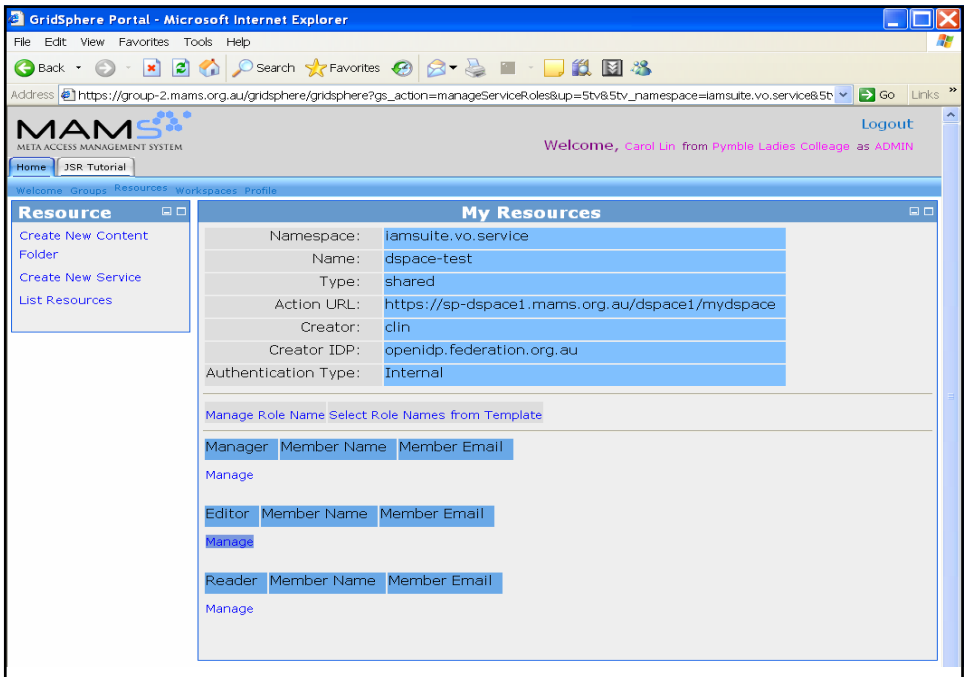
Shibboleth-based Virtual Organisation system - IAMSuite



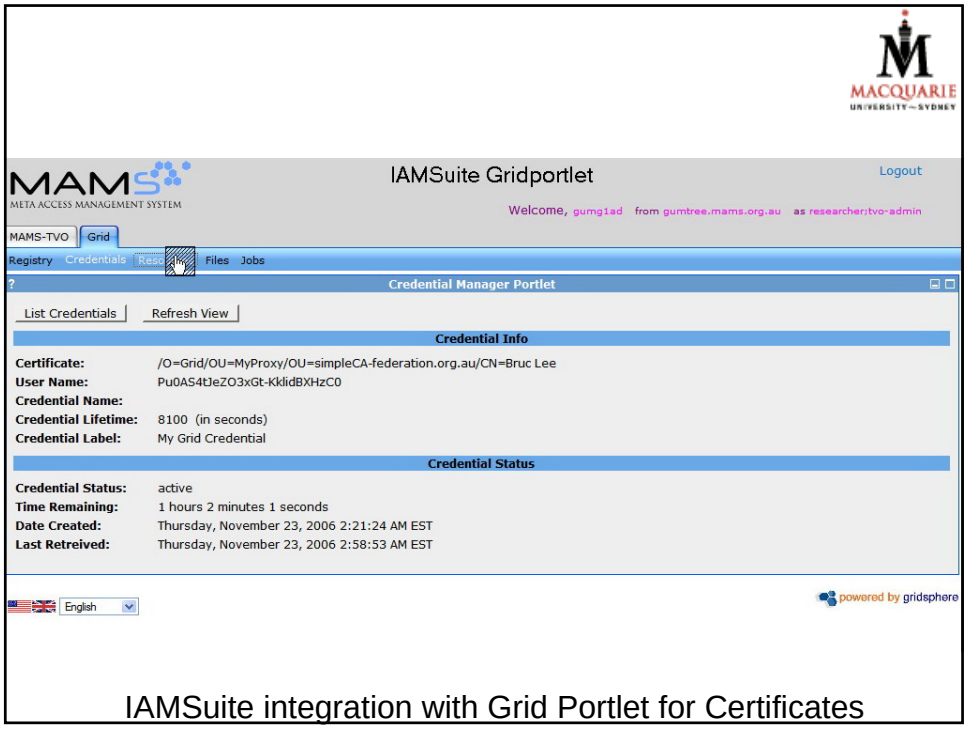
IAMSuite Toolkit for management of Virtual Organisations (secure workspaces)



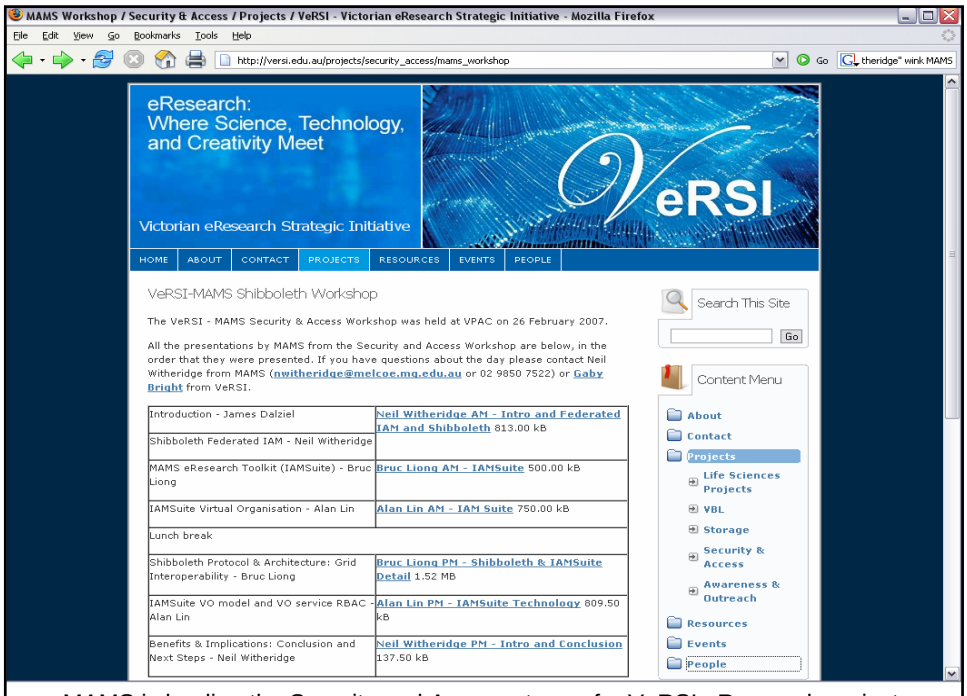
IAMSuite: Example of VO tools – shared calendar service



IAMSuite VO: Configuring User Authorisation for Trusted Services



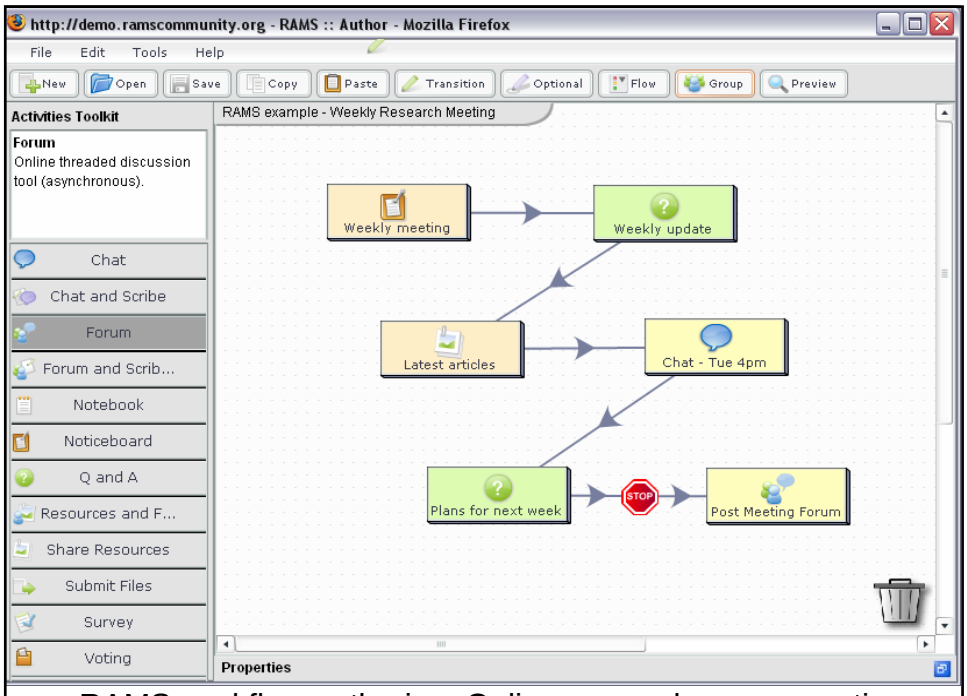
IAMSuite integration with Grid Portlet for Certificates



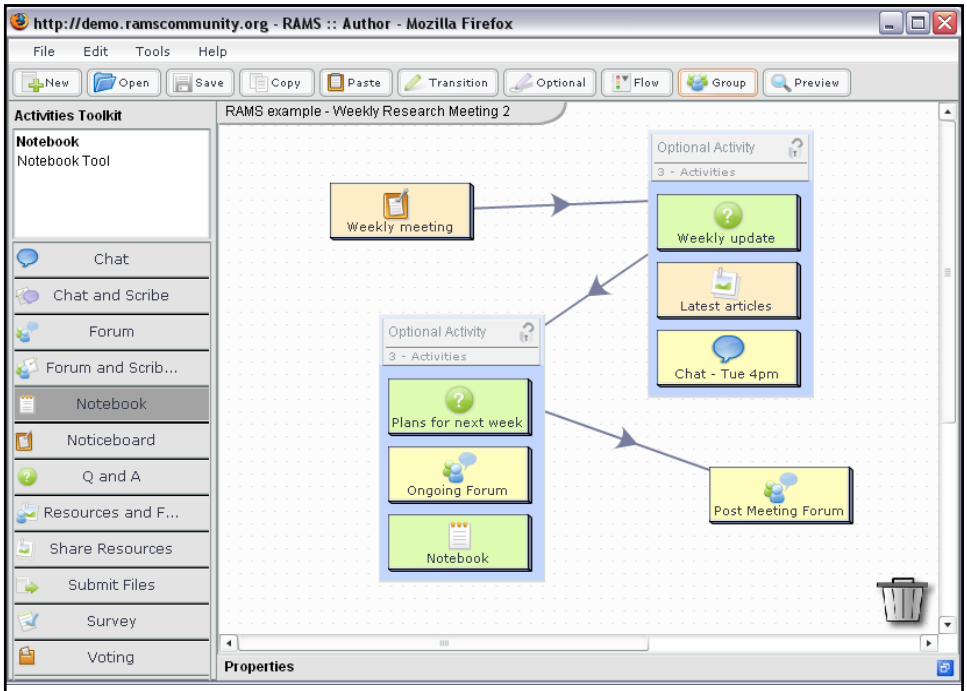
MAMS is leading the Security and Access stream for VeRSI eResearch projects

RAMS

- Research Activity Management System is a new workflow system for collaborative research activities
- Focus on research workflows that involve groups of researchers colalborating over multiple steps
  - New data processing and branching functions in V2.1
- For information, downloads and demo accounts, see
  - http://rams.ramp.org.au/



RAMS workflow authoring: Online research group meeting



RAMS workflow authoring: Alternative example of online research group meeting

Australian National Data Service

- ANDS is one of the major components of NCRIS 5.16
- Three major components:
  - Federation services – infrastructure to support federated repositories for research data and related common services
  - Stewardship services – support for metadata, curation, archival,
  - Outreach services – support services for data management, choice of software – to be available around the country
- ANDS currently being finalised, planned for launch late 2007/early 2008
- For current details, see 5.16 Investment Plan

Implications for IMOS - Authentication

- The Australian Access Federation provides the foundations for trusted identities from trusted partners
  - Trusted collaboration across organisational boundaries
- Large research organisations (Unis, CSIRO) join the Australian Access Federation as an Identity provider directly (ie, install Shibboleth IdP linked to directory)
- Smaller organisations, or large organisations with a small number of researchers, can join via the “Virtual Home Organisation”
  - Facility provided by Federation as a proxy for own IdP

Implications for IMOS – Authentication (data access)

- The combination of Australian Access Federation and flexible access control policies (eg, XACML) provides the foundation for management of secure data
  - Completely open data can be directly available on the internet
- Different policies for different datasets – controlled by:
  - Identity, user role, organisation
  - Location
  - Time (eg, closed at first, open later on)
  - Actions (eg, open to view, closed to analyse, edit, etc)
- Explore integrating OpenDAP with Shibboleth & XACML
- “Authenticated Federated Search” – potential to search across secure datasets according to access rights

Suggested Next Steps

- Add University of Tasmania (and other marine) “Identity Providers” to the Australian Access Federation
  - Some other universities may already be members
- Add small marine research groups to Virtual Home Organisations in Federation
- Add MEST as a “Service Provider” in Federation, and determine access policies for marine users
  - User attributes required for different tasks (view, download, edit)
  - Acknowledgement of Terms of Use/Intellectual Property/License (eg Creative Commons/Science Commons)
  - Authenticated federated search for search across protected repositories
- Explore flexible access policies (eg XACML) for access to protected data (eg, using Mura XACML modules), and links to OpenDAP
- Track the evolution of ANDS, consider involvement