

Office of the Attorney General

Statement of Strategy

2008 – 2010

Contents

Foreword by the Attorney General

Introduction by the Director General

Chapter 1: Introduction

- 1.1 Mission Statement**
- 1.2 Mandate**
- 1.3 Structures of the Office**
- 1.4 Values and Hallmarks**
- 1.5 Overview of the Office**

Chapter 2: Analysis of the Working Environment

- 2.1 Introduction**
- 2.2 Specific Challenges**
- 2.3 Internal Context**
- 2.4 External Context**

Chapter 3: Goals, Objectives, Strategies, Performance Indicators

- 3.1 Advisory Counsel**
- 3.2 Office of the Parliamentary Counsel**
- 3.3 Chief State Solicitor's Office**
- 3.4 Business Support Services**

Chapter 4: Monitoring and Reporting on Implementation

Appendix 1: Attorney General's Responsibilities

Appendix 2: Organisation Chart

Appendix 3: Stakeholders

Appendix 4: Committees and Commissions

Appendix 5: Roles and Responsibilities

**Part 1: Attorney General's Office,
Merrion Street**

Part 2: Chief State Solicitor's Office

FOREWORD BY THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

I welcome the publication of this revised Strategy Statement for the period 2008 – 2010 prepared following the change of Government in May, 2008.

Paul Gallagher SC
Attorney General

INTRODUCTION BY THE DIRECTOR GENERAL

Following a Government Decision in May, 2008 the Office commenced a process to review the Statement of Strategy 2008 – 2010, finalised in December, 2007.

Since December, 2007 a number of important developments have occurred that impact upon the internal and external environments within which the Office operates. In April, 2008 the Report of the OECD Review of the Irish Public Service – *Towards an Integrated Public Service* was published and included many recommendations for the future direction of the public service. In May, 2008 the Taoiseach appointed a Task Force on the Public Service to develop an Action Plan for the Public Service drawing on the analysis and recommendations of the OECD Report. The Report of the Task Force *Transforming Public Services: Citizen Centred – Performance Focused*, published in November, 2008 sets out an integrated set of measures to deliver real change in public services. The emerging difficult fiscal situation will pose specific challenges for the Office for the remaining period of this revised Strategy Statement in terms of resource management including funding staff and accommodation. Other developments such as the publication of a Value for Money and Policy Review of the maintenance of the electronic Irish Statute Book (eISB) and newly developed approaches to staff development entailed a review of our high level Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Performance Indicators so as to create a new framework which will allow us to continue to provide a comprehensive legal service to clients on behalf of the Attorney General over the period of this revised Statement of Strategy. The Office will report on progress achieved in their implementation.

I look forward to working with all staff in implementing this revised Statement of Strategy through the business planning process over the remainder of the three-year period.

Finola Flanagan
Director General

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Mission Statement

The mission of the Office of the Attorney General is:

To provide the highest standard of professional legal services to Government, Departments and Offices as economically and efficiently as possible.

1.2 Mandate

The Attorney General is the legal adviser to the Government and a constitutional officer and is independent in the exercise of his or her functions. The clients of the Attorney General and the Attorney General's Office are the executive branch of Government, that is to say the Government as a whole, its individual members and the Departments they head. By virtue of Article 30.1 of the Constitution and section 6 of the Ministers and Secretaries Act 1924 and the ninth part of the schedule to that Act, the Office of the Parliamentary Counsel to the Government (OPC) and the Office of the Chief State Solicitor (CSSO) are assigned to the Attorney General. These Offices are constituent parts of the Office of the Attorney General.

The main functions of the Office of the Attorney General are to:

- Provide legal advice to Government, Departments and Offices;
- Draft legislation;
- Provide litigation services;
- Provide solicitor services, including conveyancing and other transactional services.

The role of the Office of the Attorney General, including all its officers, in both the Merrion Street Office and in the Chief State Solicitor's Office, is to assist and to advise the Attorney General in advising Government and performing other functions specifically conferred by the Constitution and legislation. Under the Public Service Management Act 1997 authority for management of the Office, monitoring policies that affect the Office and the delivery of specified outputs devolves on the Head of the Office, who is the Director General.

1.3 Structures of the Office

Attorney General's Office, Merrion Street

The Merrion Street Office includes:

- **Advisory Counsel** divided into Groups, each of which provide legal advice in specific and related areas of law;
- **Parliamentary Counsel** divided into Groups, each of which provides legislative drafting services to designated Departments.

Chief State Solicitor's Office

The Chief State Solicitor's Office provides solicitor functions and is divided into Divisions with each Division organised into Sections which are based on the nature of the legal service involved.

Law Reform Commission

Under the Law Reform Commission Act 1975 the Attorney General has functions in respect of the Law Reform Commission. The Commission is an independent statutory body established under the Act. Its main functions are to keep the national law under review, and in accordance with the Act, to undertake examinations and conduct research with a view to reforming the law and to form proposals for law reform. The Commission is predominately funded by way of a Grant-in-Aid from the Vote of the Office of the Attorney General. The Office's Internal Auditor, examines, evaluates and reports on the adequacy of the Commission's financial control systems. The function of preparing draft restatements of legislation which are required to be certified by the Attorney General under the Statute Law (Restatement) Act 2002 was transferred in 2007 to the Commission. The function of preparing the Legislation Directory (formerly the Chronological Tables to the Statutes) was also transferred from early 2008 to the Commission.

Attorney General as Guardian of the Public Interest

The Attorney General may exercise a role as representative of the public for the assertion or defence of public rights other than in the context of criminal prosecutions. Included in this role of guardian of the public interest are the Attorney General's functions in relation to the protection of the Constitution and the vindication of constitutional rights. In certain exceptional circumstances the Attorney General can seek an injunction from the Courts to prevent a breach of the criminal law.

Website

A full description of the functions, roles and responsibilities of the Attorney General and the Office is available on the website at www.attorneygeneral.ie.

Advisory Counsel

Advisory Counsel perform a number of legal advisory functions, the principal ones being advising the Attorney General and Government Departments and Offices generally, advising on draft legislation and assisting in the conduct of litigation involving the State.

Legal advice is sought in all areas touching upon the work of all Government Departments and including domestic, EU, international and constitutional legal issues.

Advisory Counsel advise Departments on General Schemes for legislation and on legal issues as they arise during the drafting of both primary and secondary legislation and constitutional amendments. In this regard Advisory Counsel work closely with Parliamentary Counsel and the Attorney General in giving legal and constitutional advice on specific issues. Advisory Counsel also advise Departments on legal issues that arise during the negotiation of draft European legislation in Brussels.

Advisory Counsel assist in directing the conduct of litigation involving the State. They deal not only with individual cases but also with important overall issues, such as how to deal with categories of mass claim and trends in litigation. Advisory Counsel work closely with solicitors and legal executives in the Office of the Chief State Solicitor.

Advisory Counsel advise on the conduct of European and international litigation such as EU litigation before the European Court of Justice (ECJ) and the European Court of First Instance, the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) in Strasbourg and in international arbitrations such as those under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea.

Advisory Counsel maintain a broad knowledge of constitutional, administrative, European Union and Human Rights law and an understanding of the way our clients in Government and the Civil Service operate.

Office of the Parliamentary Counsel to the Government

As reflected in the procedures under the Cabinet Handbook, the function of the Office of the Parliamentary Counsel to the Government (OPC) is to draft Government Bills and Government Orders. Aside from the requirements in the Cabinet Handbook, the OPC also drafts some but not all Statutory Instruments on behalf of Ministers of the Government, Ministers for State and certain State authorities. Parliamentary Counsel work closely with Advisory Counsel and the Attorney General in the preparation of

draft legislation and the giving of constitutional and other legal advice to Departments in relation to Government legislative proposals.

The OPC works closely with the Government Legislation Committee (GLC) in ensuring that the Government Legislation Programme is implemented. The GLC is chaired by the Government Chief Whip. The function of the GLC is to assist the Government in fixing legislative priorities for the forthcoming parliamentary session and to oversee and co-ordinate the implementation of, and monitor progress in relation to, the Government Legislation Programme. The GLC provides a mechanism for reconciling the competing claims of Departments for the services of the OPC and for dealing with problems that may impede the timely implementation of the Government Legislation Programme. The OPC forwards weekly progress reports to the GLC in relation to all Bills and Statutory Instruments that are being drafted in the OPC.

Chief State Solicitor's Office

The Chief State Solicitor's Office's function is to provide solicitor services, including conveyancing and other transactional services, to Departments and Offices.

The Office is organised into five legal Divisions and an Administrative Division. Each legal Division is organised into Sections (or, in some cases, teams) on the basis of similarity of work or client.

The Chief State Solicitor is Ireland's Agent in cases before the European Court of Justice and before other international tribunals.

Management Advisory Committees

The Management Advisory Committees of the Offices are as follows:

- **Main Management Advisory Committee (Main MAC)** for the whole of the Office comprises lawyers at equivalent to Assistant Secretary grade and above and both Offices' Heads of Administration. Main MAC normally meets every two months;
- Merrion Street Office and CSSO each has its own Management Advisory Committee, which meets every month and comprises lawyers at equivalent to Assistant Secretary grade and above and the Head of Administration;
- **Legal Management Advisory Committee (Legal MAC)** for the whole of the Office comprises lawyers at equivalent to Assistant Secretary grade and above. The Attorney General attends meetings of the Committee which normally meets every four months.

Administration Units

The delivery of legal services to clients is supported by administration Units in the Merrion Street Office and in the Chief State Solicitor's Office comprising:

- Human Resources
- Training and Development
- Finance
- Change Management
- Information Technology
- Internal Audit
- Library and Know-how
- Private Offices (supporting the Attorney General, Director General, Chief Parliamentary Counsel and Chief State Solicitor)
- Registry
- Documentation Centre
- Corporate Services.

There is a high level of co-operation between the relevant Units in both Offices and shared services in some areas (e.g., Change Management, Internal Audit, Professional Accountant and Records Management).

1.4 Values and Hallmarks

Our mission is underpinned by the core values and hallmarks by which we operate.

Our core values are:

Professionalism

- We are committed to providing independent, objective legal advice and services and to maintaining an organisational environment which develops and enhances the expertise, knowledge, competences, capacity and capability of individual staff at all levels to carry out their roles in a professional and ethical manner.

Service to clients

- We are committed to providing high quality specialist legal services, which meet the needs of our clients and supports them in the delivery of their priorities.

Valuing our staff

- As a specialist, professional, knowledge-based organisation, we are committed to the creation of a positive and rewarding work environment, which values its staff.

Responsiveness and adaptability

- In the increasingly complex environment within which we operate, we are committed to ensuring our systems are flexible, adaptable and capable of responding to demands for our services.

Value for money

- We are committed to ensuring that our processes and systems support the delivery of efficient and effective services giving value for money.

Teamwork

- We recognise both individual and specialist team contributions and teamwork as a basis for success.

Our hallmarks are to:

- Uphold highest standards;
- Be accessible and responsive;
- Make best use of resources;
- Participate in the Civil Service Modernisation Programme and other such initiatives.

1.5 Overview of the Office

The business of the Office is dictated by the demands of our clients and customers – Government, Departments and Offices. In certain significant matters, the Office and its work differ from private sector law practices.

The Office is unique amongst law practices due to the scope and variety of the work it undertakes. The scope of the work includes work that is often done by private solicitors, practising barristers and academic lawyers. In addition, the work of the Office involves much that is particular to a public law office. Examples of this include advising the Government and Ministers, advising on and drafting legislation, advising on matters of public law, advising on proposed EU instruments and legal policy, advising on the Constitution and defending constitutional challenges to

legislation, defending judicial reviews and other legal challenges brought against the State and State authorities and dealing with State property.

The legal work of the Offices involves giving legal advice in matters presented by Government, Departments and Offices in relation to all areas of public administration. This work involves assessing the legal implications of complex schemes and facts of importance to the Government and the State. It involves understanding how Government as a whole, including Ministers, Departments and Offices and the European Union function as well as the particular context that gives rise to the matter. These requests often touch on significant, novel and controversial public law issues. Legal staff in the Office possess experience and know-how in several specialised areas of the law of importance to Government unlikely to be found, or to be sufficiently well developed, in private legal firms.

Requests for advice, drafts of legislation, litigation, conveyancing and other transactional work are often both urgent and significant. The Office must be capable of responding to these demands and be sufficiently flexible in its practices and in its skills to be able to respond to these requests for advice and legal services as necessary.

The Office endeavours to maintain a unified, co-ordinated approach to litigation and legal services. As a part of the Civil Service the Office is subject to legislation governing the Civil Service including the Public Service Management Act 1997. It is also bound by Civil Service rules of governance and procedures including financial and general management, public scrutiny, recruitment and staffing, and freedom of information. The Office does not charge for legal services.

Chapter 2 Analysis of the Working Environment

2.1 Introduction

Continuous changes in the environment in which the Office operates result from legislative and policy developments of the Executive and the Oireachtas, the European Union, developments brought about by decisions of the judiciary, legal challenges brought by the public and developments in Civil Service governance.

The Office must maintain the capacity to respond to these changes as they arise. The Office must plan carefully what work they do and how they do it and, particularly, how work is divided between the Offices, and between personnel, in order to maximise capacity.

A new Government Programme, *An Agreed Programme for Government 2007 – 2012*, was published in June, 2007. As a provider of legal services to our clients the strategic priorities of the Office are to a large extent determined by those of Government and by Departments and Offices who implement Government policy. The challenge for the Office for the next three years will be to give effect to these priorities while making the optimum use of all its resources.

Well developed structures are in place to promote the delivery of high standards of client and customer service. The Office will continue to cultivate a client service ethos amongst its staff through the Performance Management Development System and the Quality Customer Service initiative within the Civil Service. The Office has adopted an integrated strategy which is designed to deliver quantifiable improvements in client service including monitoring and measuring compliance with our Client and Customer Charters, Client Service Guide and Customer Action Plan.

When devising this Statement of Strategy, a review of the environment in which the Office provides legal services was carried out in order to anticipate how the environment in which we provide legal services may change over the next three years and to devise strategies appropriate to those changes. The Office will provide legal services in the context of political, financial, economic, social, technical and other changes over that period.

2.2 Specific Challenges

Management of Resources

The emerging difficult fiscal situation will pose specific challenges for the Office over the next three-year period. The Office will meet these challenges by careful management of its resources, including funding staff and accommodation so as to maximise output and quality of legal services.

Challenges that the Offices are likely to face over the next three years include:

- The ever-increasing extent to which public law issues, including the interpretation of legislation and administrative decision-making are the subject matter of legal challenge;
- The potential widespread effect and large cost to the State in the event of findings of State liability in such cases;
- The emergence of new legal issues brought about by changes in society e.g. asylum and immigration and developments in education, health and social services policy and environmental law;
- Meeting the requirements posed by changes in Court practices including the listing of cases in provincial areas and proposed changes in the jurisdiction of the District and Circuit Courts;
- The increasing volume, complexity and range of European law and litigation;
- Identifying the requirements of human rights law and ensuring that they are addressed when advising.

Challenges posed in relation to drafting legislation include:

- Increasing demand to produce draft legislation of varying complexity and urgency;
- Facilitating better planning and co-ordination between the Office and Departments of drafting work to achieve optimum use of resources through prioritisation;
- Meeting the ever increasing demand for drafting House amendments to Government Bills, and
- Meeting demands in relation to implementation and transposition of European legislation.
- Co-ordination between Departments of State in relation to policy formulation on cross-cutting legislation.

Challenges in relation to organisational learning include:

- As a knowledge-based law office, ensuring a high degree of sharing of Knowledge Management and sharing of Know-how;

- In the context of increasing demands on the Office to provide legal services, making time to train new entrants comprehensively and continue professional development for all staff, and
- Managing the turnover of staff and minimising the loss of knowledge and skills as a result of staff changes.

Challenges in relation to business processes and systems include:

- Embedding and enhancing ACME (the Offices' Case and Records Management System);
- Enhancing the Financial Management System and integration of the system with ACME to satisfy the Management Information Framework requirements of the Office with particular regard to financial and costs-related indicators;
- Introducing systems to monitor management information of non-financial indicators;
- Ensuring reporting obligations are met including Progress Reports on implementation of the key objectives in the Statement of Strategy and the Merrion Street Office's Client Service Guide 2008 – 2010, Chief State Solicitor's Office Customer Action Plan 2008 – 2010 and Client and Customer Charters 2008 - 2010. These reports will feed into the Office's Annual Report;
- Increased emphasis on the co-ordination of information resources to ensure that users have access to an appropriate range of information services and to ensure value for money;
- Continuing the process of embedding risk management within the Offices, and
- Measuring, monitoring and reporting on progress in relation to achievement of our objectives.

2.3 Internal Context

Client, Customer and Service Delivery

The emphasis remains on ensuring that the Office provides an objective and independent confidential, professional service.

The Office recognises the need to manage, in ever more responsive ways, relationships with external stakeholders and agencies. Increasingly this includes the requirement to deal with complex issues involving advising several Departments or agencies on a single matter which demands greater levels of adaptability and co-operation. The Office's stakeholders are outlined at Appendix III.

The Office provides legal services through specialist Groups, Sections and Divisions. This enables the Office to meet the increasing complexity of both the internal

environment and the legal environment in which it operates. It provides an opportunity formally to adjust specialist groups, sections and teams where demand arises in order to improve alignment to client needs. A highly developed case and records management system is essential for this purpose. The Office also uses external legal expertise in specialised areas as necessary and in particular for advocacy services.

Organisational Learning

The Office is committed to a comprehensive staff development policy to ensure that it continues to have a highly-motivated and skilled workforce. The Office recognises the need to maximise the effective use of available resources and to meet staff expectations in relation to an open and rewarding working environment.

The Offices are in the course of developing comprehensive strategies to address their training and development needs over the next three years. The strategies will be formulated so as to ensure that new entrants receive training to acquire the appropriate skills, knowledge and experience as quickly as possible to enable them to carry out the work of the Offices. Training and development plans ensure that existing staff continue to develop professionally.

The Office implements its Knowledge Management Strategy so that staff have access to the knowledge and information required to deliver high quality services and to ensure that the collective knowledge of the organisation and its people is harnessed and developed. The Office promotes knowledge management in many ways including the development of communities of practice and networks both within the Office and with our legal colleagues in Government Departments in order to share specialist knowledge and know-how. Furthermore the Office promotes and encourages educational development and learning opportunities for staff. As a knowledge-based organisation the Office has reviewed the recommendations of our current Knowledge Management Strategy with a view to developing and improving knowledge management. A key development in this regard will be the development of a new know-how application facilitating a “best practice” approach so as to make more accessible important internal advices and other legal materials. This will build on current know-how processes and procedures within the Office.

Partnership

The Office recognises the importance of continuing the Partnership approach in developing the change culture within the Office. This Partnership approach has been fundamental to the achievement of recent change and will be continued over the period of this Statement of Strategy. The Partnership Committee in each Office, representative of management, unions and other staff, will play an integral role in the implementation of this Statement of Strategy.

Business Processes and Systems

ACME provides the Offices with a case management system and associated records management functionality appropriate to the needs of a large legal office along with the capacity to monitor outputs in all areas of work, including draft legislation,

advices, litigation and other transactions. It facilitates our capacity to analyse and report on our work and will inform management of trends in demands for services and work levels.

The Office has an integrated Financial Management System introduced in the context of the Management Information Framework initiative. This provides financial management reports that facilitate planning, monitoring and reporting on performance and expenditure. The completion of the interface between the Financial Management System and ACME will provide comprehensive financial and non-financial management and costing reports.

In the context of the Better Regulation agenda and to improve the general accessibility of the Statute Book, the Office continues to maintain the electronic Irish Statute Book (eISB) which incorporates Acts of the Oireachtas, Statutory Instruments and the Legislation Directory on an online web version. A Value for Money Review of the maintenance of the eISB, has identified recommendations that will have an important bearing upon the future production of the eISB. The Office is part of an eLegislation Group chaired by the Department of the Taoiseach. This allows the Office to liaise with other stakeholders (Department of the Taoiseach, Government Supplies Agency, Houses of the Oireachtas, Department of Finance and the Law Reform Commission) about the development of the eISB .

The Offices have developed a comprehensive risk management strategy including a risk management policy and corporate and individual group and business unit risk registers. The focus will be further to embed a culture of risk management through regular formal reviews of the registers.

The ongoing implementation of the Civil Service Modernisation Programme and related reforms will remain a priority.

The Offices' response to these reforms demonstrates our understanding of the need for accountable, transparent, and responsive systems while delivering a quality service giving value for money.

Organisational review and benchmarking

In 2007 the Government approved the commencement of an Organisational Review Programme. The reviews are intended to provide an examination of an organisation's capacity to achieve its strategic goals. During the lifetime of this Strategy Statement the Office will undertake a review to examine the capability of the Office in a number of key areas such as strategy, managing delivery and evaluation, focusing on our ability to deal effectively with future challenges and changes in direction.

An important modernisation initiative under the Social Partnership Agreement, *Towards 2016*, is the periodic assessment by the Civil Service Performance Verification Group (CSPVG) of Progress Reports on the implementation of specific modernisation commitments set out in the Offices' Action Plans. In early 2007 following the assessment of both Offices' Second Progress Reports the CSPVG highlighted the importance of including international benchmarks to demonstrate how the organisation compares in an international context. The Office has initiated two

separate projects, one to benchmark the Advisory side, Merrion Street and CSSO legal side and the other to benchmark the Office of the Parliamentary Counsel against other comparable organisations in other jurisdictions. The outcome of these projects will provide valuable information regarding the performance of the Office in an international context.

Accommodation for the Offices

Sufficient accommodation to cater for increased staffing resources is a priority for the Offices over the period of this Strategy Statement. The Offices will continue to liaise with the Office of Public Works with a view to obtaining additional and suitable accommodation.

Staffing and Budget

The following table sets out the authorised staff numbers for 2008 and the allocated budgets for the Merrion Street Office and the Chief State Solicitor’s Office for 2008.

Location	Staff numbers	2008 Budget	2009 Budget
Merrion Street Office	138	€19.551 m	€18.835 m
CSSO	249	€41,283 m	€39.372 m
Total	387	€60,834 m	€58.207 m

2.4 External Context

The nature and complexity of the external environment makes the assessment of key external drivers a challenge. However the review of current professional demands indicates that, over the duration of this Statement of Strategy, the following areas will be of significance.

Secondments of Advisory Counsel and Departments

The secondment of Advisory Counsel to a number of Government Departments where they serve as “in-house” Legal Advisers represents an important development in the provision of legal services to the State.

In early 2006, six lawyers were recruited who became the first trainees on the Secondment Pilot Project. After receiving specialised training and induction these lawyers were seconded to the following Departments: Education and Science, Social and Family Affairs, Transport, Environment, Heritage and Local Government and Health and Children.

In 2007 four more Advisory Counsel were seconded. One each went to the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform and Communications, Energy and Natural Resources and additional lawyers went to the Departments of Education and Science and Health and Children.

In 2008 two further Advisory Counsel were seconded, one each to Justice, Equality and Law Reform and Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.

The Office has a Legal Counsellor on secondment to the Permanent Representation in Brussels since 1996.

The programme has benefited the Office and Department in the following ways:

- routine issues are dealt with on an in-house basis, releasing legal staff within the Office to concentrate on more specialised activities;
- seconded Advisory Counsel have developed first hand knowledge and understanding of departmental requirements for legal services;
- the Office will benefit from expertise developed by persons on secondment returning to the Office;
- the Secondment Project affords direct links with client Departments enabling the Office to understand better their needs, and the policy imperatives which drive them. This benefit has been in evidence in relation to requests for legal advice, litigation and legislation.

Reports to Government on Sensitive and Constitutional Cases

The Office submits to Government three times a year a Memorandum and Report on sensitive and constitutional cases it is handling setting out the issues involved, implications and status. Prior to submission to Government the Report is circulated to relevant Departments thus assisting them to develop appropriate containment strategies in respect of such cases. These Reports are a valuable source of information to Government and the process will be kept under constant review and monitored over the period of this Strategy Statement.

Chapter 3 Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Performance Indicators

The goals, objectives, strategies and performance indicators for the Office identify the new specific actions to be undertaken and the important ongoing actions which must be continued to ensure that the mandate of the Office is achieved. As the specialist provider of legal services to the Government, Departments and Offices the objectives and strategies are underpinned by our core values including professionalism, high quality service and value for money.

The high level goals for the core legal and business support sides have been derived from the Mission Statement which is to provide the highest standard of professional legal services to Government, Departments and Offices as economically and efficiently as possible. They describe in broad terms what the core legal and business support sides want to achieve over the period of this Statement of Strategy. They are

Goal 1 – Advisory Counsel

To provide high quality specialist legal advice and support to the Attorney General in carrying out the duties of his office and to client Departments and Offices in a responsive, efficient and effective manner in areas of law of importance to Government.

Goal 2 – Parliamentary Counsel

To provide a high quality professional, specialist and efficient legislative drafting service to Government.

Goal 3 – Chief State Solicitor’s Office

To deliver a high quality specialist solicitor service to the Attorney General, Departments and Offices in litigation and to provide high quality specialist legal advice in property and transactional matters.

Goal 4 – Business Support Services Merrion Street Office and CSSO

To provide modern and professional corporate and business support services that deliver the highest quality service to internal and external clients and customers.

Objectives

The Office has identified objectives under each high level goal. These are specific statements of intent which indicate how the goals are to be progressed in each area in the three-year period to 2010.

Strategies and Performance Indicators

The Office has identified strategies which we will pursue to achieve each objective, and the performance indicators we will use to monitor progress.

Advisory Counsel, Parliamentary Counsel and CSSO have identified specific strategies related to key organisational support areas such as human resources, quality customer service, financial management, risk management and knowledge management. These strategies are important in terms of achieving the implementation of the objectives and high level goals for the provision of legal services.

Outputs and Outcomes

The Office will report on progress achieved in the implementation of our high level goals, objectives and strategies in future Annual Reports. We will identify specific quantitative and measurable outputs for each strategy. We will also identify qualitative or broader outcomes which will allow a more subjective analysis of the implementation of strategies.

3.1 Advisory Counsel

Goal 1

To provide high quality specialist legal advice and support and to the Attorney General in carrying out the duties of his office and to client Departments and Offices in a responsive, efficient and effective manner in areas of law of importance to Government.

Objective 1

To deliver a high quality specialist legal advisory service to our clients supported by knowledge management and information technology.

Strategies	Performance Indicators
<p>1. Deliver the Office’s key commitments in its Client Service Guide 2008 – 2010 and Client and Customer Charter for Advisory Counsel and Administration.</p>	<p>Comply with the Client Service Guide and Charter commitments evaluated through regular formal reviews, annual meetings of Client Panel and client surveys in 2008 and 2010. Benchmark progress and improvement against previous survey and review results which consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effectiveness in communicating proactively with clients; • Responsiveness and timeliness in service delivery performance; • Accuracy, quality and consistency of work outputs/advice provided; • General service delivery and professionalism of Advisory Counsel; • Client contributions to service delivery; • Improvements achieved over intervening periods.
<p>2. Maintain close co-operation with the OPC, the CSSO and Departmental legal advisers in the handling of legal work.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procedures and practices set out in the Report of the Group on the Quality Control of Legislation monitored and reviewed; • Demonstrate co-ordination with legal advisers in Government Departments and other State Offices with regular review meetings with those legal units; • Fully operate the Case and Records Management System in handling all legal work.
<p>3. Continued development of knowledge management to ensure ‘best practice’.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute to Know-how database to ensure legal advices and other legal materials are accessible to staff; • Share knowledge through widespread participation by Advisory Counsel in legal information meetings and

Strategies	Performance Indicators
	<p>other fora.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute to production of Knowledge Management Strategy to succeed and develop existing one;
<p>4. Implement the risk management policies of the Office.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designate appropriate officials in respect of specific risks on which they report to MAC • Provide information to Director General, and Attorney General and Management Advisory Committee on areas of significant risk, including weekly reports to Director General of work of Groups by Group Manager; • Regular formal review of Group and Corporate Risk Registers; • Review system for monitoring of sensitive legal files; • Report three times yearly to Government on sensitive litigation; • Agree and monitor adherence to Office policies, protocols and workflows.
<p>5. Participate in the development of Financial Management in the Office to ensure the delivery of outputs in accordance with the Office's Annual Output Statement and ensuring value for money.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce Annual Output Statement for the Advisory Counsel Programme; • Plan and allocate resources having regard to trends in workloads and their complexity and volume;
<p>6. Plan for the future in advisory legal services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annually review legal services provided and other activities to ascertain what changes, if any, should be made in method of delivery or organisational management; • Monitor and respond to emerging legal issues. • With CSSO, review panels of counsel annually.

Objective 2

To implement the Office's Human Resources Strategy relevant to Advisory Counsel

Strategies	Performance Indicators
1. Develop and implement strategic training programme in legal and management issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement programme for further/ongoing strategic training and development for Advisory Counsel; • Provide support and training to trainee and seconded Advisory Counsel managed by a designated Advisory Counsel Training Manager. • Review induction and training programs. • Report to Management Advisory Committee every 6 months on training and development.
2. Ensure correct application of PMDS for legal staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the integrated PMDS and HR training and development; • Annual review for members of each specialist Group of progress toward meeting targets in PMDS, education, training and development.

Objective 3

To assist in the co-ordination of legal services of the State

Strategies	Performance Indicators
1. Contribute to effective public service by assisting in the co-ordination of the legal services of the State.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate co-ordination with legal advisers in client Departments and Offices through regular review meetings with them; • Operate the programme of secondment of Advisory Counsel to Departments and Offices with annual reviews of its operation; • Review and enhance the system to facilitate and co-ordinate the approach to domestic and ECJ litigation; • Participate in the work of the AGO/Law Reform Commission Consultative Committee.
2. Provide legal services to Government in the implementation of litigation and compensation scheme policies and in the handling of cross-Departmental issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in interdepartmental working groups and in the Committees and Commissions listed in Appendix 4; • Ensure appropriate communication with Government Departments in relation to European Court, of Justice litigation;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with State Claim Agency, Office of Director of Public Prosecutions, Revenue Solicitors Office and agent to European Court of Human Rights (Department of Foreign Affairs) in relation to litigation as appropriate.
--	--

3.2 Office of the Parliamentary Counsel

Goal 2

To provide a high quality professional, specialist and efficient legislative drafting service to Government.

Objective 1

To draft

- Government Bills in accordance with the priorities set out in the Government Legislation Programme,
- Committee and Report Stage amendments to Bills in a timely manner,
- Statutory instruments (including regulations giving effect to acts of the European Communities) in a timely manner.

Strategies	Performance Indicators
<p>1. Co-operate with the Government Legislation Committee in monitoring and supervising the implementation of the Government Legislation Programme.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare weekly reports for the GLC on the Bills that are being drafted in the Office; • Attendance by the Chief Parliamentary Counsel and Group Managers at meetings of the GLC; • Ensure that, where Ministers attend meetings of the GLC, officers from the Office who are drafting Bills for the Department for which he or she is responsible attend also.
<p>2. Deliver the Office's key commitments in its Client Service Guide 2008 – 2010 and Client and Customer Charter for Parliamentary Counsel.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comply with the Client Service Guide and Charter commitments evaluated through regular formal reviews, annual meetings of Client Panel and client surveys in 2008 and 2010. Benchmark progress and improvement against previous survey and review results which consider: • Effectiveness in communicating with Government Departments; • Responsiveness and timeliness in delivery of draft legislation;

Strategies	Performance Indicators
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accuracy, quality and consistency of draft legislation; • General service delivery and professionalism of Parliamentary Counsel; • Departmental contributions to service delivery; • Improvements achieved over intervening periods.
<p>3. Co-operation with Advisory Counsel in the handling of legislation files.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procedures and practices set out in the Report of the Group on the Quality Control of Legislation monitored and reviewed; • Fully operate the Case and Records Management System in handling all work.
<p>4. Continued development of knowledge management.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disseminate information and knowledge among drafters; • Collaborate with Advisory Counsel in the sharing of knowledge and expertise. • Contribute to Know-how database to ensure legal advices and other legal materials are accessible to staff. • Share knowledge through widespread participation by Parliamentary Counsel in legal information meetings and other fora. • Contribute to production of new Knowledge Management Strategy to succeed and develop the existing one.
<p>5. Implement the risk management policy relevant to Parliamentary Counsel.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designate appropriate officials in respect of specific risks on which they report to Management Advisory Committee. • Provide feedback to the Chief Parliamentary Counsel, Management Advisory Committees and Attorney General on areas of significant risk; • Regular Formal reviews of Group and Corporate Risk Registers; • Agree and monitor adherence to Office policies, protocols and workflows.
<p>6. Participate in the development of Financial Management in the Office to ensure the delivery of outputs in accordance with the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce Annual Output Statement for the Parliamentary Counsel Programme; • Plan and allocate resources having regard to trends in workloads and their complexity and volume.

Strategies	Performance Indicators
Office's Annual Output Statement and to ensure value for money.	
7. In conjunction with the Government Legislation Committee plan for the delivery of the Government Legislation Programme.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review annually drafting services to ascertain what changes, if any, should be made in method of delivery or organisational management; • Monitor and respond to emerging issues relevant to legislative drafting.

Objective 2

To implement the Office's Human Resources Strategy relevant to Parliamentary Counsel.

Strategies	Performance Indicators
1. Recruit, train and develop new Parliamentary Counsel.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek appropriate Department of Finance sanction for and recruit Parliamentary Counsel as necessary; • Review Office's induction of new Parliamentary Counsel entrants; • Further develop and progress the training of recently recruited drafters so as to ensure that they acquire requisite drafting skills within a timeframe that accords with international best practice; • Regular meetings held with recently recruited drafters, supervise them closely and give them regular feedback on drafting; • Training log for recently recruited drafters to be prepared and kept up-to-date by them and kept under review by Group Manager on a regular basis.
2. Implement training programme relevant to Parliamentary Counsel.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement OPC programme for further/ongoing training and development; • Report to Management Advisory Committee every 6 months on training and development.
3. Ensure correct application of PMDS for OPC staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the integrated PMDS and HR training and development priorities; • Annual review for members of each specialist group of progress toward meeting targets in PMDS, education, training and development.

Objective 3

To assist in the co-ordination of legal services of the State

Strategies	Performance Indicators
1. Contribute to the ongoing process of making Acts of the Oireachtas more accessible and easier to produce.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue to liaise with Houses of the Oireachtas staff on formatting of Bills;• Participate in trial of Houses of the Oireachtas Parliamentary Workbench system;• Ensure ongoing consultation with the Houses of the Oireachtas in relation to collaboration on the production of the Acts of the Oireachtas;• Participate in collaborative initiatives (including the Interdepartmental Group on eLegislation chaired by the Department of the Taoiseach) that promote accessibility and coherence of the electronic Irish Statute Book.
2. Contribute to effective public service by assisting in the co-ordination of the legal services of the State.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure continued co-operation with the Law Reform Commission in its preparation of future Restatements and the Legislation Directory;• Co-operation with legal advisers in Departments in relation to the finalisation of Heads of Bills;• Continued participation in the delivery of appropriate training courses for the Civil Service on the legislative process.

3.3 Chief State Solicitor's Office

Goal 3

To deliver a high quality specialist solicitor service to the Attorney General, the Departments and Offices in the areas of litigation and to provide high quality specialist legal advice and in property and transactional matters.

Objective 1

To use best practice in the delivery of legal services supported by the use of information technology and high quality knowledge and understanding of legal practice.

Strategies	Performance Indicators
<p>1. Deliver the Office's key commitments in its Customer Action Plan 2008 – 2010 and Customer Charter.</p>	<p>Comply with the Customer Action Plan and Charter commitments evaluated through regular formal reviews, annual meetings of Client Panel and client survey in 2009. Benchmark progress and improvement against previous survey and review results which consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationship and Understanding; • Service Quality; • Responsiveness; • Documentation; • Feedback; • Complaints; • Service through Irish; • Physical Access.
<p>2. Maintain close co-operation with the Attorney General's Office and Departmental legal advisers in the handling of legal work.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate co-ordination with legal advisers in Government Departments, Tribunals and Inquiries and other State Offices with regular review meetings; • Fully operate the Case and Records Management System in handling all legal work.
<p>3. Continued development of knowledge management.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share knowledge and expertise at Division and Section meetings and through widespread participation by Solicitors and Legal Executives in legal information meetings and other fora; • Contribute to Know-how database to ensure legal advices and other legal materials are accessible to staff; • Contribute to production of new Knowledge Management Strategy to succeed and develop the existing one.
<p>4. Implement the risk management policies of the Office.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designate appropriate officials in respect of specific risks on which they report to Management Advisory Committee; • Provision of information to Chief State Solicitor and CSSO Management Advisory Committee and to the Attorney General's Office on areas of significant risk; • Regular formal review of legal Risk Registers and Corporate Risk Register; • Review system for monitoring of sensitive legal files; • Report three times yearly to Government on sensitive litigation;

Strategies	Performance Indicators
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree and monitor adherence to Office policies, protocols and workflows.
<p>5. Participate in the development of Financial Management in the Office to ensure the delivery of outputs in accordance with the Office's Annual Output Statement and to ensure value for money.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce Annual Output Statement for the CSSO Programme; • Plan and allocate resources having regard to trends in workloads and their complexity and volume; • With AGO, review panels of counsel annually; • Implement policy of collection of legal costs where awarded and viable; • Review of Office practices on taxation of costs in light of the Report of the Legal Costs Working Group (Haran Report).
<p>6. Planning for the future in CSSO legal services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review annually legal services provided and other activities to ascertain what changes, if any, should be made in method of delivery or organisational management; • Monitor and respond to emerging legal issues.

Objective 2

To implement the Office's Human Resources Strategy relevant to CSSO legal staff.

Strategies	Performance Indicators
<p>1. Train and develop CSSO legal staff.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide and review induction for new legal entrants; • Review on an ongoing basis specific training and development requirements for new legal staff.
<p>2. Develop and Implement strategic training programme in legal issues.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and Implement CSSO programme for further/ongoing strategic training and development; • Report to Management Advisory Committee every 6 months on training and development.
<p>3. Ensure correct application of the PMDS for legal staff.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the integrated PMDS and HR training

Strategies	Performance Indicators
	and development priorities; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual review for members of each Division and Section of progress towards meeting targets in PMDS, education, training and development.

Objective 3

To assist in the co-ordination of legal services of the State

Strategies	Performance Indicators
1. Contribute to effective public service by assisting in the co-ordination of the legal services of the State.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate co-ordination with legal advisers in client Departments and Offices, Tribunals and Inquiries through regular review meetings; • Review and enhance the system to facilitate and co-ordinate the approach to domestic and ECJ litigation.
2. Provide legal services to Government in the implementation of litigation policies and in the handling of cross-Departmental issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in interdepartmental working groups and in the Committees and Commissions listed in Appendix 4; • Ensure necessary communication with Government Departments in relation to European Court of Justice litigation; • Represent Attorney General on the Courts Rules Committees and the Courts Service User Group; • Liaise with State Claims Agency, Office of Director of Public Prosecutions and Revenue Solicitor's Office and other law offices in relation to litigation as appropriate.

3.4 Business Support Services in Merrion Street Office and the CSSO

Goal

To provide modern and professional corporate and business support services in the Offices that deliver the highest quality service to internal and external clients and customers.

Objective 1

To develop human resource management to support the overall objectives of the Office and to develop the training and development function within the Offices.

Strategies	Performance Indicators
<p>1. Implement the HR Strategies 2008 – 2010.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put HR Strategies in place; • Put Action Plans in place in respect of HR Strategies.
<p>2. Review and develop specific recruitment and selection methodology so as to enhance the ability of the Offices to attract, select and retain suitable and high potential candidates.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review core skills and competencies identified for all staff, in conjunction with Groups/Divisions/Sections/Business Units as appropriate; • Introduce use of formal competency and ability testing; • Provide new staff with induction training within 2 months of taking up duty; • Undertake an analysis of atypical working arrangements for staff and devise/review appropriate policies.
<p>3. Develop comprehensive Training & Development Strategies to address anticipated needs over the next three years, including management development programmes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake an analysis of the staff skills, knowledge and experience required by each section in the Offices, in conjunction with senior managers, to carry out their work both current and anticipated work; • Set out in strategy form how these skills can be most effectively imparted to new entrants and further developed in more experienced staff; • Ensure that the Offices' Action Plans meet the objectives of this Statement of Strategy; • Implement formal Management Development Programmes; • Carry out an interim review by the end Q1 2009 to evaluate progress made against the aims of this Statement of Strategy; • Report to Management Advisory Committee every 6 months on training and development.
<p>4. Further develop and enhance Human Resource IT system.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review effectiveness of the Human Resource Management System;

Strategies	Performance Indicators
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop appropriate management reports.
5. Provide suitable accommodation for all staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify suitable accommodation for Merrion Street Office and CSSO through ongoing consultation with appropriate authority; • Continued upkeep and maintenance of existing office space; • Review annually Health and Safety Statement and Business Continuity Plans; • Keep accessibility to and security of, all buildings kept under review.
6. Continue to review and develop the Partnership process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review Partnership process annually.
7. Review operation of CSSO Documentation Centre.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete Review.

Objective 2

To develop financial management processes that control and monitor the financial resources of the Office so as to ensure the delivery of outputs and value for money.

Strategies	Performance Indicators
1. Implement final elements of Management Information Framework Project Plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fully embed MIF and achieve utilisation of full functionality of FMS; • Provide statistical reports for use in Management Reporting for review by relevant Office Committees; • Improve Management Reports; • Use costing Framework in conjunction with the RAB project with initial Costing Reports utilising financial and non-financial information completed; • Update RAB Models annually; • Submit Annual Output Statements on each Programme to Department of the Taoiseach.

Strategies	Performance Indicators
<p>2. Maintain Office capability to operate FMS (Agresso).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop core skills to maintain Office capability to operate FMS effectively; • Comply with statutory requirement to submit Annual Appropriation Account; • Pay interest and compensation under Prompt Payment legislation, where applicable, minimised and reported as appropriate.
<p>3. Recommendations of Mullarkey Report on accountability of Secretaries General and Accounting Officers reviewed annually in Merrion Street Office and CSSO within set timeframes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have annual year-end review of internal financial procedures verified by Audit Committee to ensure monitoring and control of all income and expenditure through efficient and effective systems; • Review risk Policy, Risk Registers for Groups/Divisions/Sections/Business Units and Corporate Risk Register twice yearly by Risk Committee and reported to local MAC's, Main MAC and Audit Committee; • Have Annual Internal Audit Programme agreed by Audit Committee with Audits undertaken and recommendations implemented within agreed timeframes; • Make Annual Report made to Audit Committee on implementation of all Audit Reports; • Put programme of Value for Money and Policy Reviews in place with regular reviews undertaken and externally reviewed and published.

Objective 3

To implement cost effective ICT systems that support all professional transactional, management and service delivery activities in the Office.

Strategies	Performance Indicators
<p>1. Further develop the Case and Records Management System to ensure that it effectively supports the Office in its strategic and operational requirements.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieve maximum use for all business; • Evaluation feedback from staff; • Implement approved improvements.
<p>2. Further develop the Financial Management System to ensure</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieve maximum use of system for all business;

Strategies	Performance Indicators
that it effectively supports the Office in the management of its finance function and its management information needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate feedback from staff; Implement approved improvements.
3. Implement appropriate IT Systems to support the Merrion Street Office and CSSO Knowledge Management Strategy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define business requirements for the system; Implement appropriate Know-how systems to match requirements identified.
4. Develop a new IT Strategy for the Office.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement new IT Strategy, integrated with the Office's business objectives.
5. Keep under review the Office's technical architecture and ensure that it continues to provide a robust foundation for the delivery of IT Services to the Merrion Street Office and CSSO.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess and improve IT systems as necessary.

Objective 4

To implement a Modernisation Programme that supports the achievement of the Offices' Goals and is allied with the Civil Service Modernisation Programme.

Strategies	Performance Indicators
1. Implement agreed commitments set out in Modernisation Action Plans within agreed timeframes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have progress reported in line with central deadlines and verified externally by CSPVG; Have recommendations of CSPVG in place and implemented in advance of submission of subsequent Progress Reports.
2. Delivery of the Offices' key service delivery commitments as set out in the Client and Customer Charters and Client Service Guide 2008 – 2010 and Customer Action Plan 2008 - 2010.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gauge client and customer satisfaction levels through annual meetings of Client and Customer Panels; Measure client and customer satisfaction levels through client and customer surveys in 2008 and 2010.
3. Undertake comprehensive organisational review in the context of the Organisational Review Programme.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake organisational review and implement recommendations within agreed times.
4. Undertake review of the Report of the Report of the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake review of Report and implement appropriate initiatives within agreed timelines.

Strategies	Performance Indicators
Task Force on the Irish Public Service.	
5. Ensure that clients are directed to the appropriate access and referral points for information on the Office.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish Annual Reports for 2008, 2009 and 2010 in accessible formats; • Review and update Internet site regularly by Working Group; • Meet obligations under the Freedom of Information Acts and Data Protection Act.

Objective 5

To provide staff with access to the information and knowledge required to deliver high quality services through the strategic development of information and knowledge management.

Strategies	Performance Indicators
1. Establish a co-ordinated approach to the organisation of office-wide information and knowledge management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revise and implement strategies for the continued development of knowledge management; • Review the need for the development of a taxonomy/office-wide thesaurus to support key business applications; • Contribute professional expertise to the ongoing development of file-plans.
2. Identify and implement appropriate technical solutions to deliver improved library, research and know-how services to users.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review shared AGO/CSSO/ODDP e-journals solution to ensure that it is meeting the requirements of users; • Review the Know-how procedures. Select and implement appropriate know-how databases; • Review the joint AGO/CSSO/LRC Library Management System (LMS) with a view to planning the future development of the LMS. Plan/implement any necessary developments and enhancements to the system; • Support and develop the level and range of services available to legal staff seconded to Government Departments and Offices;

Strategies	Performance Indicators
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the level of library and research services provided to external Government lawyers.
3. Review and implement enhanced research and know-how services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to monitor increased areas of specialisation in the Offices, and ensure library, research and know-how services reflect these; Review staffing levels and structures required to deliver specialised research services; Identify communities of practice in key legal areas and support these with research services where required; Identify measures to support the development of independent research skills for lawyers including a review of appropriate e-learning tools; Identify opportunities for collaboration with the Training & Development Units and IT Units to co-ordinate approach to training & learning provision; Incorporate library and know-how training/educational initiatives into organisational training strategies.
4. Provision of the appropriate physical environment to maximise access to our print collections and reading room facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review layout of print collections; Review collection development policy to ensure it continues to meet the Offices needs.

Objective 6

To maintain and develop the Registry and Records function to support the legal, drafting and administration sections.

Strategies	Performance Indicators
1. Administration and maintenance of an efficient records centre and filing system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Close files electronically and store physical files appropriately for subsequent archiving; Comply with the Offices' obligations under the National Archives Act.

2. Development of statistical/data strategy for the Offices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Produce appropriate statistical data for use in management and other reports.

Chapter 4 Monitoring and Reporting on Implementation

Over the lifetime of this Strategy Statement the Office will systematically monitor and review its performance and progress towards the achievement of its high level goals and associated objectives and strategies. Qualitative and quantitative performance indicators have been formulated against which the performance of the Office will be assessed over this period.

The successful implementation of these goals, objectives and strategies will require dedication and commitment at all levels of the organisation. The Strategy Statement will be reviewed at least twice yearly by the local and Main MACs, with a view to monitoring its implementation. Business Plans will be developed at legal Group, Division and Section level and administrative Business Unit level setting out an annual programme of actions to implement objectives and strategies. These Business Plans, in turn, will be used as a basis for the individual work programmes of staff members in their PMDS Role Profiles. Our Business Plans will be reviewed annually and will enable staff to see strategy and planning as an on going exercise, thus enabling the Office to respond flexibly to our changing environment.

The Office will adopt other mechanisms for monitoring the implementation of our Strategy Statement. These will include:

- The Office's Annual Reports, which will report on progress in achieving our goals, objectives and strategies;
- The Annual Output Statements, submitted in tandem with the annual Estimates submissions, linking the Statement of Strategy, business planning and resource allocation in the Estimates to outputs and outcomes and performance measurement;
- Partnership Committees in both Offices;
- The Office's Internal Auditor and Audit Committee will review progress on the achievement of aspects of Statement of Strategy;
- The undertaking of an organisational review in the context of the Organisational Review Programme to examine the Office's capacity to achieve its strategic goals and to assist management in addressing the future needs of the Office;
- The undertaking of a benchmarking exercise in an international context against similar organisations;
- The Risk Management programme;
- The Management Information Framework;
- Client feedback, both formally in the context of annual meetings of the Customer and Client Panel and surveys every two years and informally through regular review meetings with clients, and

- Continued approval of Progress Reports submitted to the Civil Service Performance Verification Group under *Towards 2016* and any subsequent reporting arrangements.

APPENDIX I

ATTORNEY GENERAL'S RESPONSIBILITIES

- As legal adviser to the Government the Attorney General attends Government meetings. The Attorney General advises the Government on all the constitutional and legal issues which arise in connection with or at Government meetings, including whether proposed legislation complies with the provisions of the Constitution, Acts and Treaties of the European Union or other international treaties to which Ireland has acceded. This also includes advice by the Attorney General as to whether the State can ratify international treaties and conventions.
- The Attorney General is joined in all proceedings in which a challenge is raised to the constitutionality of legislation and defends the constitutionality of all legislation.
- The Attorney General defends the constitutionality of Bills referred to the Supreme Court under Article 26 of the Constitution.
- The Attorney General represents the State in legal proceedings involving the State.
- The Attorney General represents the public in legal proceedings for the enforcement of law and the assertion or protection of public rights.
- The Attorney General has a statutory function in deciding whether warrants under the Extradition Acts 1965 to 1994 should be endorsed or not, and advises in extradition cases..
- The Attorney General advises the Minister for Finance in relation to escheated estates.
- Under existing law, the Attorney General has a protective role in relation to charities and in particular in relation to a change in objects of a charity. In the period covered by this Statement of Strategy, it is possible that the Charities Bill 2007 may be enacted and an independent regulator of charities appointed to whom the Attorney General's statutory functions will be transferred.
- The Attorney General retains certain prosecution functions, for example under the Fisheries (Amendment) Act 1978, pending their transfer to the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions pursuant to the Sea Fisheries and Maritime Jurisdictions Act 2006.
- The Attorney General has a statutory function in deciding whether warrants under the Extradition Acts 1965 to 1994 should be endorsed or not, and advises in extradition cases.
- The Attorney General has functions in respect of the Law Reform Commission under the Law Reform Commission Act 1975.
- The Attorney General has functions in respect of legislative programming and is a member of the Government Legislation Committee which is chaired by the Government Chief Whip.
- The Attorney General has functions under the Attorney General's Scheme. (This is a non-statutory scheme under which the Attorney General funds certain legal proceedings not covered by legal aid.).

The Attorney General is responsible for representing the State in most civil litigation in which the State, or its officers in an official capacity, are parties (except in personal injuries litigation, the majority of which are delegated to the State Claims Agency under the National Treasury Management Agency (Amendment) Act 2000). Usually the State is the defendant in claims in which the Attorney General is involved.

The Attorney General is involved in litigation in all courts of the State, in the Court of Justice of the European Communities (Luxembourg), in the European Court of First Instance (Luxembourg) and the European Court of Human Rights (Strasbourg). The Attorney General furnishes legal advice and is involved in the preparation (sometimes with the assistance of outside counsel) of written pleadings in relation to litigation in both courts. The Chief State

Solicitor acts as agent for the State in the Luxembourg Court and the legal adviser of the Department of Foreign Affairs acts as agent for the State in the Strasbourg Court.

The Attorney General directs the conduct of litigation involving the State.

Advisory Counsel advise and assist the Attorney General in his functions including advising generally and advising on draft legislation and assisting in the conduct of litigation involving the State.

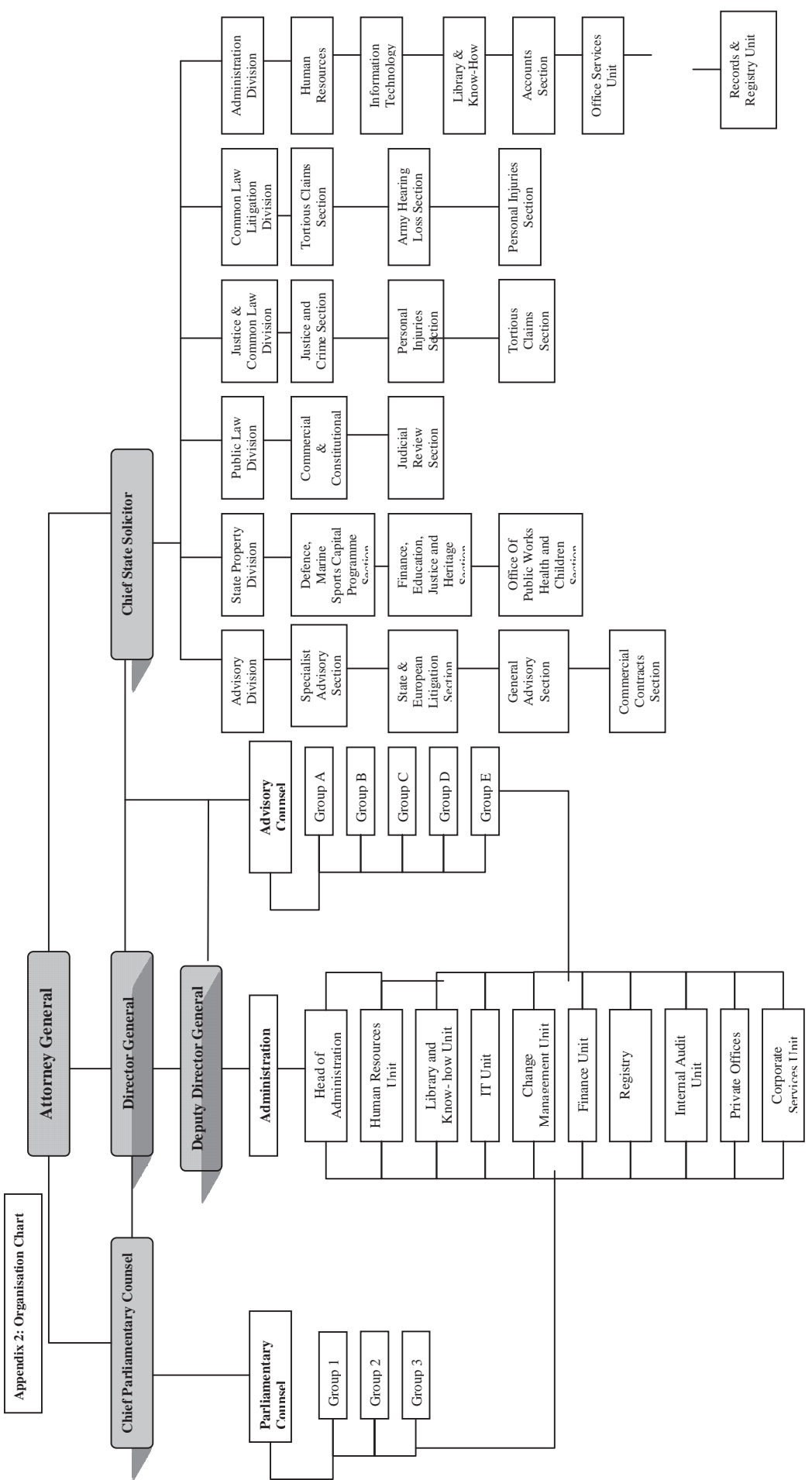
The Office of the Parliamentary Counsel to the Government is assigned to the Attorney General by section 6 and the Ninth part of the Schedule of the Ministers and Secretaries Act 1924. The role of the Office derives from the Cabinet Handbook and established practice and includes:

- drafting Government Bills (including Bills containing proposals to amend the Constitution);
- drafting, or settling drafts, of statutory instruments that are made by the Government;
- drafting or settling statutory instruments to be made by a Minister of the Government, a Minister of State or the Revenue Commissioners;
- drafting or settling any statutory instrument to be made by a person (other than a Minister of the Government) or body authorised in that behalf by statute, if requested to do so by a Minister of the Government or a Minister of State where the Minister has the statutory function of approving the draft concerned;

The Statute Law Revision Project, managed by the First Parliamentary Counsel, involves statute law revision and consolidation of the Better Regulation Agenda and includes the drafting of Bills, revising and reforming legislation;

The Chief State Solicitor's Office is assigned to the Attorney General by section 6 and the Ninth part of the Schedule of the Ministers and Secretaries Act 1924. The role of the Chief State Solicitor is to act as solicitor to Ireland, the Attorney General and Government Departments and Offices. Other functions include:

- carrying out all conveyancing of State property, including Landlord and Tenant and other land law matters;
- furnishing of legal advice on the various matters that are submitted by Government, Departments and Offices and the drafting of the necessary accompanying legal documents;
- preparing and presenting all prosecutions initiated by Ministers or Government Departments;
- acting as Agent of the Government before the European Court of Justice;
- acting for the State in enquiries under the Tribunals of Inquiry (Evidence) Acts 1921–1998 and supplying legal staff to act for the Tribunals, the public interest and other relevant State authorities;
- providing a solicitor service in all civil courts and tribunals in which the State, any State Authority or the Attorney General is involved;
- discharging functions under the Council Regulation (E.C.) No 1348/2000 of 29 May, 2000 and the 1965 Hague Convention on the Service Abroad of Judicial and Extra-judicial Documents in Civil or Commercial Matters;
- representing the State and State Authorities in taxation of costs before the Taxing Masters;
- providing staff to the members of the various Court Rules Committees.



Appendix III

Stakeholders

The stakeholders of the Office of the Attorney General including the Office of the Parliamentary Counsel to the Government and the Chief State Solicitor's Office are:

Government:

Departments and Offices including Departments with Advisory Counsel on secondment

Courts

Government Legislation Committee

Bills Office of the Houses of the Oireachtas

Chief Whip's Office

Comptroller and Auditor General

Dáil Public Accounts Committee

Oireachtas Committees

Courts Service

Panels of Counsel

Asylum Agencies

Department of the Taoiseach

Department of Finance

Law Reform Commission

Director of Public Prosecutions

Office of the Revenue Solicitor

Office of Public Works

State Claims Agency

Legal Profession

Tribunals of Inquiry

EU Institutions

European Court of Justice

European Court of Human Rights

Recruitment Agencies

External Professional Support

Independent Agencies

Garda Síochána

Companies Registration Office

Appendix 4

OFFICE REPRESENTATION ON COMMITTEES AND COMMISSIONS

Advisory Board National Children's Office
Assistant Secretaries Network
Balance in Criminal Law Review Group
Better Regulation Group
Change Management Network
Civil Service Training Officers Network
Commission for Democracy through Law
Commission on the Assisted Human Reproduction
Company Law Review Group
Consultative Committee on Law Reform
Consumer Advisory Council
Corporate and Public Lawyers Association
Council of Europe Committee on Administrative Law
Council of Europe Committee of Experts in Family Law
Court Rules Committees
Court Service Forum
Courts Service User Group
Court of Appeal Committee
Criminal Law Codification Committee
Cross-Departmental Team on Infrastructure
Cross-Departmental Group on EU Enlargement and Freedom of Movement
EU Council Evaluation Expert Group – peer evaluation
 of Estonia with regard to the practical implementation of the EAW [finished?]
EU Working Group on Legal Data Processing
EU Working Group on Contract Law
EU Intergovernmental Convention Oversight Group
Expenditure Reviewers Network
FOI Interdepartmental Working Group
FOI Liaison Officers Network
FOI Users Network Group
Garda Síochána Working Group on Vetting
Garda Síochána Implementation Group on Vetting

Government Legislation Committee
Government Library Managers Network
Greco Evaluation Team
Hague Conference on Private International Law
Hogan Committee on Balance in Criminal Law [finished?]
Information and Communications Technology Managers' Forum
Information Society Legal Working Group
Implementation Group on Compensation Issues [finished?]
Implementation Group of Secretaries General
Interdepartmental Committee on Hearing Loss Litigation
Interdepartmental Committee on the Reform of Marriage
Interdepartmental Co-ordinating Committee on European Affairs
Interdepartmental Group on Special Education Needs Litigation
Interdepartmental Working Group on Nursing Homes Charges
Interdepartmental Committee on Nuclear Issues
Interdepartmental Group on Childhood Abuse Litigation
Interdepartmental Working Groups on Disability
Interdepartmental Committee on Infrastructure
Interdepartmental Committee on State Aids
Interdepartmental Group on the Commission proposal for a European Fishing Control Agency
Interdepartmental Group on the EU Convention
Interdepartmental Group on Legislative Issues for the Information Society
Interdepartmental Group on Oireachtas Scrutiny of EU legislation
Interdepartmental Task Force on the Report of the Commission on the Status of People with Disabilities
Interdepartmental Working Group on Compensation Issues
Internal Audit Network
International Maritime Organisation Legal Committee
International Expert Group on Nuclear Liability (INLEX)
International Bar Association Public Law Committee
Management Group for Judicial Reviews in Asylum Cases
Ministers and Secretaries Group on European Matters
Money Laundering Steering Committee (Official side)
"No-Fault" Advisory Group
Northern Ireland (various groups dealing with Northern Ireland matters)
Nuclear Law Committee (Nuclear Energy Agency, a branch of the OECD)

Personnel Officers Network
PMDS Network
Public Law Committee – International Bar Association
Secretaries General and Heads of Offices Group
Single Regulatory Authority Implementation Advisory Group
State Claims Agency Liaison Committee
Steering Committee for the Pilot Project to establish an on-line small-claims procedure
Steering Group on Systems Review of Department of Agriculture and Food
Strategic Management Initiative Communications Sub-Group
Strategic Management Initiative Implementation Groups
Tax Strategy Group
UNCITRAL (The United Nations Commission on International Trade Law)
UNCITRAL Working Group on Arbitration
UNCITRAL Working Group on Security Issues
UNCITRAL Working Group on Electronic Commerce
UNCITRAL Working Group on Insolvency Law
UNIDROIT
Working Group on Company Law Compliance and Enforcement
Working Group on Electronic Statutory Instruments
Working Group to Review Coroners Services
Working Group on Legal Costs [finished?]

Appendix 5

Part 1

Attorney General's Office, Merrion Street
The Office comprises the Advisory Counsel Section, the Office of the Parliamentary Counsel and an Administration Division

Advisory Counsel

Group A has responsibility in the areas of criminal law, garda, prisons, Attorney general's criminal law functions, criminal assets, interception of telecom and postal packages, International co-operation in criminal matters, EU criminal justice measures – Title VI, Road Traffic Acts, liquor licensing, legal aid, electoral law, Oireachtas, Ministers and Secretaries, pay, allowances and pension of Ministers and ethics.

The group is comprised of the Group Manager and 6¹ other Advisory Counsel.

Group B has responsibility in the areas of private international law, casual and occasional trading, statistics, Statutory Instruments, personal injury, tobacco, health, blood, childhood abuse, adoption, abortion, assisted human reproduction, education, family law, civil legal aid, censorship, solicitors/barristers, Prosecution of Offences Act 1974, health and safety, environmental law, agriculture and aquaculture, foreshore, nuclear and planning Acts.

The group is comprised of the Group Manager and 6 other Advisory Counsel.

Group C has responsibility in the areas of asylum and immigration, fisheries, Law of the Sea, shipping law, harbours, Irish Coastguard Service, Commissioners of Irish Lights, Horizontal North/South/Anglo-Irish issues, arbitration, LRC, licensing, tourism, marinas and consumer protection.

The group is comprised of the Group Manager and 2 other Advisory Counsel.

Group D has responsibility in the areas of international trade law, telecommunications, National infrastructure/NDP/PPPs, revenue law, appropriation and public expenditure,

financial services, insurance, company law, bankruptcy/insolvency/liquidation, mergers and monopolies, gaeltacht, metrology, mining and quarrying, petroleum, e-commerce, semi-State bodies, other State authorities, State Property Act, property, relator actions, probate, succession, charities and escheated estates, land registration, landlord and tenant, civil justice, coroners, Irish language, cultural, State aids and grants and competition law.

The group is comprised of the Group Manager and 6 other Advisory Counsel.

Group E has responsibility in the areas of Intellectual Property, Public International Law, Official Secrets Act, Data Protection Act, Freedom of Information, air transport, Government contracts and procurement, social welfare law, public service, labour law, electricity, gas, postal law, road haulage and buses and rail transport.

The group is comprised of the Group Manager and 6 other Advisory Counsel.

The Deputy Director General has responsibility in the areas of Defamation/privacy law, Tribunals of Inquiry (Evidence) Acts, Morris Tribunal, costs, Institutional EU issues, EC judicial system, horizontal issues and Brussels-specific work,

The Legal Counsellor to the Permanent Representation to the European Union in Brussels also works within this group.

Parliamentary Counsel

Group 1 has responsibility for drafting legislation for the following Departments and Offices-

- Agriculture, Fisheries and Food
- Finance (including the Revenue Commissioners)
- Communications, Energy and Natural Resources
- Transport
- Taoiseach

¹ All Groups, Divisions and their Sections together with all business units, their areas of work and staffing levels in Appendix 5 reflect the position as at the date of publication of this Statement of Strategy. These may be altered during the period of application of this Statement of Strategy.

The group is comprised of the Group Manager at Secretary General level, five other Parliamentary Counsel and one contract drafter.

Group 2 has responsibility for drafting legislation for the following Departments-

- Defence
- Education and Science
- Enterprise, Trade and Employment
- Environment, Heritage and Local Government
- Social and Family Affairs

The group is comprised of the Group Manager at Assistant Secretary level, four other Parliamentary Counsel and two contract drafters.

Group 3 has responsibility for drafting legislation for the following Departments-

- Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs
- Foreign Affairs
- Health and Children
- Justice, Equality and Law Reform
- Arts, Sport and Tourism

The group is comprised of the Group Manager at Assistant Secretary General level, five other Parliamentary Counsel and one contract drafter.

Administration Units

The Division is headed by a Head of Administration at Principal Officer grade. It comprises the following Business Units:-

The Human Resources Unit, is headed by an acting Principal Officer who is also the Deputy Head of Administration and has a staff of five. As well as being responsible for personnel and training and development functions within the Office the Unit oversees the implementation of the Office's human resources strategy. Any new policies or procedures arising from the strategy are discussed at meetings of the Partnership Committee.

The Information Technology Unit, headed by an Assistant Principal, comprises a staff of nine. The main functions of the IT Unit are to develop and implement IT systems and infrastructure, where appropriate, to support the Office in achieving its business objectives and to maintain, manage and further develop those systems and infrastructure over time as requirements change.

The Library and Know-how Unit is headed by a Legal Information Manager and comprises a staff of ten. The Library and Know-how Unit assists in the delivery of legal services to the State through the provision and development of professional library, research and know-how resources, and services. The Unit's objective is to provide the highest quality service possible and to respond effectively and efficiently to the changing research needs of a modern government law Office.

The Unit caters for the information needs of approximately 138 staff and information services are also provided to Advisory Counsel on secondment to Government Departments and Offices. In addition to providing access to a substantial law collection in both hardcopy and electronic formats, the Unit manages the provision of a legal know-how database and the delivery of legal information/research services, information skills training and current awareness services to staff.

The Finance Unit, headed by an Assistant Principal, comprises of a staff of eight and is supported by the provision of the financial expertise of a professional accountant. It is responsible for the processing of all payments, excluding payroll, within the Office's Financial Management System, maintenance of financial records , and the preparation of Estimates returns and the annual Appropriation Account. The Unit liaises with the Fees Officer in the Chief State Solicitor's Office to ensure that fees to barristers and solicitors engaged to act on the instructions of the Attorney General are paid regularly. The Unit assists the Professional Accountant, who is the Management Information Framework (MIF) Project Manager, with the ongoing roll-out within the Offices of the MIF project.

The Internal Audit Unit shares an Internal Auditor with the Chief State Solicitor's Office. The work of the Internal Auditor is overseen by an Audit Committee which meets regularly.

Registry, with a staff of eleven, handles all the incoming post, including electronic correspondence, to the Office and maintains all files within the Office. The Unit also is

centrally involved in the implementation of the Offices' new Case and Records Management System and examines and identifies material for transfer to the National Archives Office.

The Corporate Services Unit comprises four staff and deals with all areas relating to the maintenance and upkeep of the Office accommodation, procuring office supplies, ensuring appropriate security arrangements, telephone communications, organising functions, co-ordinating freedom of information requests as well as maintaining the Office's Asset Register.

The Merrion Street has three Private Offices, namely the Attorney General's private office, the Director General's private office and the Chief Parliamentary Counsel's private office.

The Change Management Unit is headed by an Assistant Principal and comprises a staff of three. The Unit has responsibility for implementing the Programme of Change arising from initiatives such as the Strategic Management Initiative (SMI)/Delivering Better Government (DBG), Public Service Management Act 1997(PSMA), Quality Customer Service (QCS), Value for Money Policy Review Initiative (VFM/R), Irish Language including obligations under the Official Languages Act 2003 (OLA), *Towards 2016* Social Partnership Agreement etc. within the Offices (AGO and CSSO). Specific projects include co-ordinating the preparation of the Office's Annual Reports, Statements of Strategy, AGO Client Service Guides and Client and Customer Charters, Official languages Scheme, The Unit is located in the Merrion Street Office but it also services the Chief State Solicitor's Office.

Part 2

Chief State Solicitor's Office

The Office comprises legal Divisions with each Division organised into Sections and the Administration Division

Public Law Division comprises the following two Sections:

The Commercial and Constitutional Section is responsible for the defence of a wide range of civil actions against the State and State Authorities with many cases going to full plenary hearing. Issues of law, which are dealt with, include commercial, constitutional, contract, employment, insurance, international, environmental, planning, electoral, public health, intellectual property, housing, social welfare, administrative and European Union Law.

The Judicial Review Section represents the State and State Authorities in judicial review applications. This Section also has responsibility for habeas corpus applications, cases stated, adoption cases, letters of request from foreign tribunals and service of documents under EU Council Regulation No 1348/2000 and the 1965 Hague Convention on the service abroad of judicial and extra judicial documents in civil and commercial matters.

Asylum and Legal Services Division comprises the following two Sections:

The Asylum Section handles all asylum, immigration and repatriation related cases on behalf of the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, the Office of the Refugee Applications Commissioner, the Refugee Appeals Tribunal and the Garda National Immigration Bureau. The majority of the work is of a litigious nature dealing primarily with judicial review applications (both leave and substantive hearings) as well as habeas corpus applications (where the Section acts on behalf of the Prison Governor) in the Asylum area and necessitates daily attendance before the High Court and to a lesser degree the Supreme Court. The Section also deals with District Court applications pursuant to the Refugee Act 1996 as amended.

The Legal Services Section has responsibility for legal costs accounting (including assessing bills of costs and attending at the taxation of same) and the recovery of legal costs due to the State. It is further responsible for the payment of Counsels' fees and acts for the Commissioner of Valuation in appeals before the Valuation Tribunal. The Section also

handles requests for Mutual Assistance in criminal matters in the District Court and is involved in the preparation of Ministerial Prosecutions. The Section Head chairs a Committee which oversees a legal training scheme for clerical staff in the Office.

State Property Division comprises the following three Sections:

The Office of Public Works/Health and Children Section deals mainly with commercial conveyancing and includes commercial leasing of accommodation for Government Departments and Offices and the acquisition and disposal of properties under various Government Programmes such as the Decentralisation Programme and the Transferring State Assets Programme. A small proportion of work is also undertaken for the Department of Health and Children.

The Defence, Marine and Sports Capital Programme Section deals with transactional and advisory property matters for the following Government Departments – Departments of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs; Agriculture and Food; Enterprise, Trade and Employment; Transport; Defence; Communications, Energy and Natural Resources; Arts, Sport and Tourism. The work includes leases and licences of foreshore, sales and leases of premises which are surplus to military requirements and the implementation of the legal framework for the disposal of property for the Affordable Housing Initiative. The Section is also responsible for the legal work in relation to the issue of National Lottery Grants.

The Finance, Education, Justice and Heritage Section deals with the property aspects of the Residential Institutions Redress Indemnity Scheme, waivers of the property of dissolved companies under the State Property Act 1954, dealing with escheated estates where the State is the ultimate intestate successor, school leases, purchases of sites for schools and prisons, commercial leases for the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, claims for compensation under Section 120 of the Registration of Title Acts 1964-2006 and grants for cultural purposes (ACCESS). The heritage work covers the acquisition of national monuments, historic properties and bogland for conservation purposes.

Justice and Common Law Division comprises the following three Sections:

The Justice and Crime Section deals with Extradition proceedings, European Arrest Warrants, applications under the Transfer of Sentenced Persons Acts 1995 and 1997 and Police Property applications. Staff in the Section also conduct Ministerial prosecutions in court, represent the

Garda Síochána at the hearing of Intoxicating Liquor Licensing Applications and provide representation for the State at Inquests. The Head of the Section manages the on call panel of staff in the Office which continues to provide a round the clock service out of office hours in Extradition, European Arrest Warrant, habeas corpus and other urgent matters.

The Personal Injuries Section deals primarily with civil claims against the Garda Síochána. The Section handles claims for damages arising from assaults or wrongful arrests and false imprisonment by members of the Garda Síochána, malicious prosecution claims, bullying and harassment claims by Gardai and non party discovery involving the Garda Síochána. It also acts for the State Authorities in Garda Compensation Claims.

The Tortious Claims Section deals with all childhood abuse litigation arising out of claims of abuse in Residential Institutions and Day Schools. Following the coming into operation of the National Treasury Management Agency (Delegation of Claims Management Functions) Order 2005 (SI No 503 of 2005) on the 1st September 2005, the State Claims Agency took over the responsibility for the management of childhood abuse litigation and the Section provides legal services to the SCA in respect of such claims. There is a team of Solicitors in the Section to handle Day School Abuse litigation and a special Unit to deal with Residential Abuse cases.

This Section also deals with claims for damages for injury suffered by a member of the Defence Forces outside the State whilst in the service of the State, Civil Service bullying and harassment cases and appeals to the High Court by persons infected by Hepatitis C or HIV or both, through the administration of blood or blood products.

Advisory Division comprises the following four Sections:

The Specialist Advisory Section has responsibility for dealing with Tribunals of Inquiry work and provides representation to the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform at the Tribunal of Inquiry into complaints concerning some Gardaí of the Donegal Division (“The Morris Tribunal”). The Section also deals with natural resources cases and contractual and regulatory advisory work.

The General Advisory Section has responsibility for general advisory matters, instituting Plaintiff litigation on behalf of the State, third-party discovery, company law proceedings, arbitrations, adoption matters, mining and petroleum exploration and development, wildlife

prosecutions, habitat prosecutions as well as representing the State on public interest issues before Tribunals of Inquiry and providing representation to the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources at the Tribunal of Inquiry into Payments to Messrs Charles Haughey and Michael Lowry (“The Moriarty Tribunal”) and to the Garda Síochána at the Tribunal of Inquiry into complaints concerning some Gardaí of the Donegal Division (“The Morris Tribunal”).

The State and European Litigation Section deals with Employment work and represents Government Departments and Offices at hearings before Rights Commissioners, the Labour Court, the Employment Appeals Tribunal and the Director of Equality Investigations as well as advising on employment issues under Civil Service Regulations. It also deals with certain plaintiff litigation and with Company Restoration Applications. The Section represents Ireland before the European Court of Justice and the European Court of First Instance.

The Commercial Contracts Section advises on tenders, procurement and contractual issues, pension matters, data licences and also deals with contractual negotiations and drafting. It handles certain major contracts (including IT contracts) for Government Departments and Offices.

The Criminal Assets Section provides a Solicitor service in matters related to the functions of the Criminal Assets Bureau.

Administration Division

This Division is headed by a Head of Administration and comprises the following sections:

The Accounts Section is responsible for all payments, excluding payroll and a small number of payments processed through the Costs Accounting Section. It is also responsible for maintenance of relevant records and accounts and for ensuring that effective internal control practice are in place. On an agency basis, the Department of Finance Accounts Section provides a payroll service. The Office shares an internal auditor and an accountant with the Office of the Attorney General and maintains an internal audit programme and an Internal Audit Committee under an independent and external chair.

The Human Resource Section is headed by a human resources officer. As well as having responsibility for the traditional personnel functions it has responsibility for the development of progressive human resource strategy and practice within the Office. Human resource policy will develop in line with developments within the civil service but will also be informed by the discrete corpus of best practice developed internationally for the management of professional services.

The Information Technology (IT) Unit is headed by an IT Manager. Responsibilities include the management, development, maintenance and service of all IT resources both in terms of hardware and software and with particular reference to the data bases and communications systems which support the legal service functions of the Office. The section plays a lead role in the implementation of the Office's IT Strategy.

The Library & Know-how Unit's role is to provide staff with access to the knowledge and information required to deliver high quality legal services. The Unit is managed by a Law Librarian, who is responsible for the strategic development of professional library, research and know-how resources, and services. The Unit is staffed by an Assistant Librarian, Library Assistant, and a Know-how Officer. In addition, to managing hardcopy and electronic law collections and providing traditional law library services, the Unit handles a large volume of legal research queries, provides current awareness services, delivers information skills training programmes and supports the Office's education initiatives. The Library & Know-how Unit is strongly committed to the development of knowledge management capabilities within the Office and is leading the implementation of knowledge management initiatives and strategies in this regard. The Unit staff, through their involvement with Office committees, also play a key role in information management projects in the AGO/CSSO. The Unit does not handle queries from the public.

The Office Service Unit (OSU) consists of two sub-sections, the documentation centre and a services unit. The function of the documentation centre is to provide all large scale copying and binding services for the Office and it is intended that the Documentation Centre will operate under agreed quality performance standards. The services unit is responsible for ensuring the provision all other services to the staff of the Office in a timely and efficient manner.

The Registry & Records Centre was established as part of the introduction of a new case and records management system. The function of this section is to manage the records of the

Office in an efficient and effective manner and in line with best practice in this area. The section will also be responsible for ensuring compliance with the National Archives Act 1986. In addition the section will manage the incoming and outgoing, fax and e-mail transmissions.