

# Office of the Attorney General

## Statement of Strategy

2011 – 2014

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## **FOREWORD BY THE ATTORNEY GENERAL**

I welcome the publication of this Strategy Statement for the period 2011 – 2014, the first since my appointment as Attorney General. I have reviewed, discussed and agreed the Strategy Statement with the Director General of my Office.

This Strategy Statement updates and builds upon the previous Strategy Statement, which covered the period 2008 - 2010. It takes account of developments in the internal and external environments within which my Office operates and which have occurred since the last Strategy Statement. It also takes account of the Public Service Agreement 2010 – 2014 (Croke Park Agreement) and the Office's commitment to implement its Action Plan under the Agreement. It highlights anticipated changes for the legal and non-legal areas over the coming four year period. The High Level Goals, Outputs, Outcomes, Performance Indicators and Strategies 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, to provide the highest standard of professional legal services to Government, Departments and Offices as economically and efficiently as possible, is achieved.

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**Máire R Whelan, SC**  
**Attorney General**

## **INTRODUCTION BY THE DIRECTOR GENERAL**

The delivery of legal services of the highest standard to the Government, Departments and Offices as economically and efficiently as possible in the coming four year period will be a complex and demanding task for the Office as a whole. This Strategy Statement is the product of the whole Office's thinking and planning for the next four years. The Office of the Attorney General through its various parts (Advisory, Office of the Parliamentary Counsel, the Chief State Solicitor's Office and the Administration functions) has undertaken a comprehensive programme of strategic thinking and forward planning to create a 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 the Strategy Statement.

The process of developing this Strategy Statement commenced in August 2010. This process of development which involved an extensive analysis of the internal and external environment within which the Office operates has involved the Attorney General, both local and the Main Management Advisory Committees and every individual section of every part of the Office. The Partnership Committees of the Attorney General's Office, Merrion Street, and of the Chief State Solicitor's Office have also provided very valuable input to the process.

The four-year period covered by this Statement of Strategy will be very demanding for us in the Office. 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. These strategic Government priorities will impact upon the Office in terms of increased demand for advice and further legislation particularly in relation to banking and financial services; the Euro sovereign debt crisis; the implementation of the EU/IMF Agreement commitments; taxation; public sector pay and pensions; reforming the law on personal debt; incentivising business; changes to key central departments; State financial governance; amendments to the Ministers and Secretaries Act and the Public Service Management Act; rationalisation of State agencies; value for money in obtaining legal services and dealing with litigation; proposed referendums to amend the Constitution; proposed changes to the health service; child protection issues, especially vetting and reporting; employment law and environmental law. The challenge for the Office for the next

four years will be to give effect to these priorities while making the optimum use of all its resources.

The Office will face many challenges in the four year period covered by this Statement of Strategy particularly in relation to the management of resources. Reduced annual financial allocations due to the very difficult fiscal situation and reduced staffing levels will pose specific challenges. However, the Office will meet these challenges by careful management of its resources so as to maximise output and maintain the quality of legal services.

Through Partnership we will deliver the requirements of the Public Service Agreement 2010 – 2014 (Croke Park Agreement) in the context of implementing our Action Plans under the Agreement. The undertaking of follow-up client and customer surveys will allow the Office to benchmark the findings of the surveys against the findings of previous surveys with a view to identifying areas where enhanced levels of client and customer service can be delivered to clients and customers.

The continued implementation of the new Knowledge Management Strategy will provide a framework for the sharing, capture and re-use of internal knowledge and expertise to enhance the quality of legal services. During the coming four year period we will further embed and promote a culture of knowledge-sharing throughout the Office. We will provide increased opportunities for staff to share expertise with each other and to learn from each other.

We will continue to develop further our very successful project to recruit, train and second Advisory Counsel to participating Government Departments where they will serve as “in-house” Legal Advisers. This project represents an important development in the provision of legal services to the State.

During the period covered by this Strategy Statement we will continue to review and monitor the process of submitting to Government three times yearly a Memorandum and Report on sensitive and constitutional cases it is handling. These Reports are a very valuable source of information to Government.

We have carefully selected six High Level Goals in this Statement of Strategy, the Outputs, Outcomes and Strategies to implement them and the Performance Indicators to measure their

achievement. These High Level Goals, Outputs, Outcomes, Performance Indicators and Strategies were selected by the Office with a clear focus on the Government's and clients' needs in our area of responsibility and to provide a framework within which to deliver these legal services. The Office will report on progress achieved in the implementation of these High Level Goals, Outputs, Outcomes 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.

I am very grateful indeed for the dedicated involvement of staff in all areas of work of the Office as a whole. I look forward to working with all staff in implementing this Strategy Statement through the business planning process over the coming four year period.

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**Liam O'Daly**  
**Director General**

## **Chapter 1: Roles and Functions**

The mission of the Office of the Attorney General is to provide the highest standard of professional legal services to the Government, Departments and Offices. The Attorney General is the legal adviser to the Government and is a constitutional officer. The clients of the Attorney General are the Government as a whole, Government Ministers and the Departments they head. The main functions of the Office of the Attorney General are:

- to provide legal advice to Government, Departments and Offices
- to draft legislation
- to provide litigation services
- to provide solicitor services, including conveyancing and other transactional services.
- to assist and advise the Attorney General in carrying out her functions as described in Section 6 of the Ministers and Secretaries Act 1924, and Article 30 of the Constitution.

### **Advisory Counsel**

The Advisory side of the Office is divided into five specialist Groups of Advisory Counsel covering all major legal specialisms (subject areas). In addition, the Deputy Director General and the Head of EU and ECHR law also have responsibility for specific subject areas. Advisory Counsel specialise, to a significant degree, in a variety of areas of law. Each Advisory Group has dedicated clerical support staff familiar with the business of the Group.

The range of subjects covered by the Groups is extensive, but the activities themselves fall into three functional areas, namely:

- (a) the provision of advice;
- (b) the direction of litigation;
- (c) legal advice in the provision of a drafting service to Government Departments.

In addition to the Advisory Counsel within the Office, the Office continues its assignment of an Advisory Counsel by way of secondment as Legal Counsellor to the Permanent

Representation of Ireland to the European Union in Brussels. Further, Advisory Counsel are assigned on secondment to 11 Government Departments.

## **Parliamentary Counsel to the Government**

The Office of the Parliamentary Counsel to the Government (OPC) comprises a team of specialist lawyers trained in the discipline of drafting legislation. The goal of the OPC is to provide a high quality professional, specialist and efficient legislative drafting service to Government.

The main work of the OPC is to draft Government Bills to be introduced into the Houses of the Oireachtas and certain secondary legislation, where appropriate, for Government Departments or Offices, including instruments transposing EU legislation into domestic law under the European Communities Acts. The OPC is actively involved in the development of the Better Regulation policy in co-operation with the Department of the Taoiseach and its work includes statute law revision and consolidation in the context of the Regulatory Reform Agenda.

The OPC is organised into three Groups, each having responsibility for the provision of drafting services to specific Government Departments and Offices. Each Group has dedicated clerical support staff familiar with the business of the Group.

## **Chief State Solicitor's Office**

The Chief State Solicitor's Office is a constituent element of the Attorney General's Office and is the principal provider of solicitor services to the Attorney General and to all Government Departments and Offices. It also provides solicitor services to certain other State Agencies and to Tribunals of Inquiry, but does not act for members of the public.

The Chief State Solicitor's Office is organised into five legal Divisions. The Divisions are Public Law, Asylum and Legal Services, State Property, Justice and Common Law and Advisory. Each Division is organised into Sections on the basis of similarity of work or client. The organisation takes account of the principal demands of clients including an increased involvement with the ECJ and on the domestic front, more ECHR related actions,



an increase in the number of European Arrest Warrants received from other countries in the EU and a greater demand for advice in relation to Public Procurement and Commercial Contracts.

## **Administration**

Both the Merrion Street Office and the Chief State Solicitor's Office have administrative Units to support the work of legal staff by providing professional corporate support services such as Human Resources/Training and Development, Finance/Accounts, Corporate Services, Clerical Support, Change Management, Information Technology, Internal Audit, Registry and Records Centre and Library and Know-how.

## **Website**

The Office's website at [www.attorneygeneral.ie](http://www.attorneygeneral.ie) provides more detailed information

## **Chapter 2 : Analysis of the Working Environment**

### **Introduction**

The environment affects the nature of the legal work and also the manner in which it is carried out [including the Office's capacity to deliver on its mission statement]. Changes in the environment often result from domestic and EU legislative and policy developments, legal challenges and decisions of the courts and developments in Civil Service governance. Major drivers of change at present include the Programme for Government, the fiscal and banking crisis of the State, the level of resources allocated to the Office and the Public Service ("Croke Park") Agreement.

The Office must maintain the capacity to respond effectively in a timely manner to changes as they arise. Reacting to requests for advice, urgent or otherwise, is the main feature of the working environment. It must plan carefully and manage work and, particularly, how work is divided between the Offices, and between staff, in order to maximise capacity.

The Programme for Government sets the priorities to be considered in the context of the development of new Strategy Statements. As a provider of legal services the strategic priorities of the Office are to a large extent determined by those of our clients - Government and Departments and Offices which formulate and implement Government policy. These strategic Government priorities will impact upon the Office in terms of increased demand for advice and further legislation particularly in relation to banking and financial services; the Euro sovereign debt crisis; the implementation of the EU/IMF Agreement commitments; taxation; public sector pay and pensions; reforming the law on personal debt; incentivising business; changes to key central departments; State financial governance; amendments to the Ministers and Secretaries Act and the Public Service Management Act; rationalisation of State agencies; value for money in obtaining legal services and dealing with litigation; proposed referendums to amend the Constitution; proposed changes to the health service; child protection issues, especially vetting and reporting; employment law and environmental law. The challenge for the Office for the next four years will be to give effect to these priorities while making the optimum use of all its resources.

When developing this new Statement of Strategy, the Office undertook a review of the environment in which the Office provides legal services in order to anticipate how that environment may change over the next four year period. We have developed 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.

## **Specific Challenges**

### **Management of Resources**

The very difficult fiscal situation will pose specific challenges for the Office over the next four-year period, including reduced annual financial allocations and reduced staffing levels. The Office will meet these challenges by careful management of its resources so as to maximise output and maintain the quality of legal services.

### **Challenges that the Offices are likely to face over the next four years include:**

- The 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 “knock-on” effects of judgments against the State and the large costs in the event of findings of State liability in such cases;
- Ensuring that proper instructions are furnished in relation to litigation involving the State as well as requests for legislative drafting and advisory work in order to optimise the use of resources and avoid duplication and profligate use of Office time;
- New law in areas such as public finances and taxation required under the EU/IMF Programme; EU law pertaining to domestic economic governance; Euro stabilisation; banking; insurance; company law and corporate governance; regulatory matters; management of budgets, competition; amalgamations of State agencies, reform of legal services, State Aids; State property issues; changes to Public Service conditions of employment and the proposed amendments to the Ministers and Secretaries Act

and the Public Service Management Act. The proposed amendments to the Constitution and the increase in Oireachtas oversight of EU legislation will be complex. Environmental law and legal issues pertaining to energy resources will continue to raise many significant issues. New developments at EU level in the area of Freedom, Security and Justice, the Charter of Fundamental Rights, new measures relating to criminal law and procedure and intellectual property issues will be major work areas. Child protection issues particularly reporting and vetting will continue to be an important area. The planned changes to the way the health service is delivered including a proposed universal health insurance, as well as the inevitable emergence of new legal issues brought about by changes in health and social services policy, will require detailed and intense engagement between the Office and stakeholders . All these matters will impact upon the Office in terms of requests for advice, the drafting of legislation and other legal services;

- Advancements in science, medicine and technology are also having an increasing impact on legal matters involving the State;
- The increasing volume, complexity and range of initiatives at EU level;
- Managing the increased demand for high speed, multi-user communications methods for discussion and the issue of formal advices ;
- Identifying services that could be discharged by other bodies at lower cost.

### **Challenges posed in relation to drafting legislation include:**

- Increasing demand:-
  - (a) to produce draft legislation of varying complexity and urgency with particular reference to complying with EU/IMF Agreement deadlines;
  - (b) to implement and transpose of EU measures in very tight timeframes, specifically by the changes brought about by the Lisbon Treaty and accelerated enforcement procedures;

- (c) to produce draft legislation to allow Ireland to ratify international conventions;
- (d) for Committee and Report Stage amendments to Government Bills, and
- Facilitating better planning and co-ordination:-
  - (a) between the Office and Departments of drafting work to achieve optimum use of resources through prioritisation;
  - (b) at Departmental level in relation to the formulation and finalisation of policy issues and improving co-ordination between Departments of State in relation to policy formulation on cross-cutting legislation.
- The referendums proposed in the Programme for Government will pose considerable advisory and drafting challenges.

## **Challenges in relation to organisational learning and Knowledge**

### **Management include:**

- As a knowledge-based law Office, maintaining a high quality, pro-active law library and office intranet as key information sources; promoting a culture of sharing internal information and expertise, ensuring a high degree of sharing of Knowledge, in particular by the capture and dissemination of legal Know-how;
- Meeting the training needs of newer staff - and continue professional development for all staff including keeping abreast of legal and organisational developments in other law offices at home and abroad and the continued participation by legal and other staff in the activities of law societies, organisations and professional bodies.
- Minimising the loss of knowledge and skills as a result of reduced staff numbers and retirements.
- Implementation of the Office's Knowledge Management Strategy 2010 – 2013;
- Finalising and implementing a new Legal Know-How application to contribute to the continued development of legal know-how in the Office;

## **Challenges in relation to business processes and systems include:**

- Enhancing the Financial Management System and integration of the system with the Office's Case and Records Management System to provide comprehensive financial and costs-related accrual management reports;
- Finalising and implementing an authoring tool to further enhance the process of producing legislative text;
- 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 2011 – 2014, Chief State Solicitor's Office Customer Action Plan 2011 – 2014, Client and Customer Charters 2011 – 2014 and the Public Service Agreement 2011 - 2014. These reports will feed into the Office's Annual Reports;
- Measuring, monitoring and reporting on progress in relation to achievement of our objectives,
- Delivery of the Public Service Reform Plan in all its facets.

## **Internal Context**

### **Client, Customer and Service Delivery**

The Office seeks to manage, in responsive ways, relationships with external stakeholders and agencies in order to deal with complex and cross-cutting issues involving advising several Departments or agencies on a single matter.

- (a) Legal staff are grouped and assigned to a particular list of subject areas on the advisory side, to a number of Departments on the legislative drafting side and a combination of specialist areas or form of litigation, as is deemed most appropriate, in the Chief State Solicitor's Office. There is a need for organisational flexibility balancing the ability to give the high level legal advice required by the State in the context of the development of policy in certain areas with a more detailed approach

required in other areas. Given the limited number of staff in the Office, it is also important that there is a spread of expertise to cover staff exigencies and when urgent issues arise.

- (b) The knowledge in the Office of the way State and Government works and of the legislative process; its overview, present and historic, of the legal issues relevant to the State; its good relationships with Government Departments and relevant State agencies and the practical experience of the advisory side of many of the legal issues being legislated for, are among the strengths which the Office and individual members of the legal staff bring to their specialist groups.
- (c) Because areas of law covered by the groups are wide, the Office requires access to expert counsel for the detailed examination of some specialist issues. In addition, the seconded Advisory Counsel in Departments will develop particular expertise and be able to access specialist knowledge from Departments.
- (d) In addition to the work arrangements described above, the Office allocates resources on a flexible basis to tackle urgent major projects. Client needs on matters of major importance to the State require immediate Office responsiveness, expertise and the ability to work in a complex and multi-disciplinary context in co-operation with outside lawyers, other stakeholders and experts.
- (e) The Office uses legal researchers who provide staff with a valuable research service which is resource efficient, enhances the quality of legal advice and is stored for future use. The Office intranet is a key information source. Promotion of a culture of learning and sharing internal information and expertise is achieved by *inter alia* the Know-How database, legal issues meetings, in-house seminars, the circulation of current awareness bulletins and continuing legal and other relevant training.
- (f) The emphasis remains on ensuring that the Office provides an objective and independent confidential, professional service.

- (g) Significant reductions in counsels' fees have been achieved over the last 3 years. -- It is the policy of the Office to seek recovery of costs in all cases where costs are awarded to the State. In November 2010 the Office issued a practice directive on the recovery of costs and now requires the legal Division Heads in CSSO to report on a bi-monthly basis to MAC on progress in recovery of costs. Recovery of costs has also been identified as a PMDS core competency for CSSO legal staff in 2011. However, other strategies set out in Chapter 3 should also reduce the State's legal costs bill.

## **Partnership**

The Office recognises the importance of continuing to foster the Partnership approach in developing the change culture within the Office.

## **Business Processes and Systems**

- (a) The Office's case and records management system (ACME) enables access by legal staff to all legal files and records contained therein. This system maintains a complete electronic file of all legal including litigation files in the Office. This positions the Office well should the eCourt initiative be rejuvenated. The Office continues to make enhancements to the system to improve the management of legal files in all areas of work and to complete the interface with the Financial Management System, Agresso.
- (b) 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. The Office is part of an eLegislation Group chaired by the Department of the Taoiseach.
- (c) As a result of the current fiscal constraints, a review of the Statute Law Revision Project had to be undertaken in 2010. The Office has re-commenced the project on a reduced costs basis. The Statute Law Revision Programme as a whole will simplify the Statute Book and is intended to reduce legal and business transaction costs and facilitate future legislative measures and benefit the Law Reform Commission in its task of preparing the Legislation Directory.



- (d) The Office's new Know-how application and other parts of the Office's Knowledge Management Strategy 2010-2013 will be implemented in 2012. The Office will also initiate a project in 2012 to assist client Departments to create a database of previous advices provided by the Office.
- (e) Risk Management and Training and Development are dealt with in Chapter 3.
- (f) The Office will undertake a review under the Government's Organisational Review Programme 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 [and will undertake separate projects to benchmark performance at organisational level with organisations in other jurisdictions.]

## **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.

- (a) 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.
- (b) The Office has a Legal Counsellor on secondment to the Permanent Representation of Ireland to the European Union.
- (c) The Office submits reports to Government on sensitive and constitutional cases three times a year. 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.

- (d) The Public Service Agreement 2010-2014 (“Croke Park Agreement”) will allow for a more flexible, integrated and responsive Public Service. The Office has developed an Action Plan setting out specific measures to maintain service and reduce costs. The Agreement will also result in demands for legal services on the Office. Also, developments at central level in relation to Public Service Reform Governance including the development of an integrated approach to Public Service Reform aligning key elements such as the Programme for Government, co-ordinated delivery of key cross-Government reforms, delivery of reform to frontline services within individual sectors, the Comprehensive Review of Expenditure, where relevant, and the Public Service (Croke Park) Agreement will impact significantly on the Office in terms of reporting requirements and demands for legal services.
- (e) In a Civil Service wide context the Office will in 2012 evaluate the need for delivering further courses in conjunction with the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform to educate civil servants in relevant and important legal matters such as EU law, including drafting of Statutory Instruments and the preparation of legislation.
- (f) The Cabinet Handbook published by the Department of the Taoiseach includes Guidelines for Departments in respect of the preparation of the General Scheme of a Bill and for Departments or Offices seeking legal advice from the Office. Often time can be lost due to Departments and Offices submitting ill-prepared or incompletely thought out requests for legal advice or drafting. The Office will develop a programme of education and protocols with Departments and Offices to agree the most efficient ways of interacting with the Office.
- (g) The Office will implement the reforms under the Public Service Reform Plan.

## **Chapter 3: Goals, Outputs, Outcomes, Performance Indicators and Strategies**

The mission of the Office of the Attorney General is:

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

### **High Level Goal 1**

To support the Attorney General in the performance of her constitutional role as legal adviser to the Government.

### **Output**

Provision of advice and briefing of material for the Attorney General for Government meetings.

### **Outcome**

Provision of advice to Cabinet on the legal issues arising from, and the legally compliant means of, implementing Government policies and priorities in accordance with the Constitution, with European Union law and with obligations arising under international treaties.

### **Performance Indicators**

- Provision of requests for advice from the Attorney General.
- Observations and advice supplied in response to Government Memoranda and documents to be submitted to Cabinet.
- Briefing notes and material prepared for the Attorney General for use at Cabinet meetings.

### **Strategy**

Efficient use of and continued training on eCabinet system.

Timely response to requests on eCabinet.

Responding to Government memoranda as required by the Cabinet Handbook.

Maintaining close relationships and communications with relevant officials in Government Departments.

Private Office procedures to ensure briefing material is available.

## **High Level Goal 2**

Delivery of a high quality specialist legal advisory service to our clients.

### **Output**

Opinions and advice provided in a timely fashion to Government Departments to assist them in meeting their requirements, in particular in relation to fulfilling the commitments required under the EU/IMF Programme of Financial Support for Ireland and the Programme for Government as it is implemented by the Government.

### **Outcome**

The attainment of the targets set by the EU/IMF Programme during its course and the attainment of the priorities and objectives set by Government in compliance with the legal requirements of the Constitution, European Union Law and international treaty obligations.

### **Performance Indicators**

- Quality and quantity of advices to clients.
- Delivery of advice in accordance with agreed timelines.
- Client feedback.

### **Strategy**

- Compliance with the Client Service Guide and Client and Customer Charter.
- Implementation and roll-out of legal Know-how application.
- Maintaining high quality Library and KH Unit, promoting a culture of Knowledge Management and implementation of Knowledge Management Strategy.
- Maintenance and review of risk management policies in the Office.
- Commitment to training and development for all staff.
- Continued optimal application of human resources including PMDS.

- Maintenance and development of the integrated case records and file management system.
- Improved systems for the management of information and communications in a complex and multi-disciplinary environment.

### **High Level Goal 3**

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

### **Output**

Government Bills in accordance with the Government Legislation Programme, subject to priority for

- legislation required under the EU/IMF Programme and
- Priority and urgent matters as directed by Cabinet.

Committee and Report Stage Amendments to Bills provided in a timely manner.

Statutory Instruments, including regulations giving effect to acts of European Communities.

Government Orders approved by Cabinet.

### **Outcome**

- Delivery of draft legislation as laid down in the EU/IMF Programme and as required by Government in line with instructions given by Government Departments.
- Draft Legislation which conforms to Irish and EU legal requirements.
- Draft legislation which conforms to the policy objectives set by Government in terms of encouraging employment and the business environment and furthering the Government's Better Regulation Agenda.

### **Performance Indicator**

- The number and size of Bills.
- The number of Committee Stage Amendments.

- The number of Statutory Instruments.
- Client feedback.

### **Strategy**

- Participation in the Government Legislation Committee to monitor and supervise the implementation of the Government Legislation Programme.
- Maintaining close working relationships with Government Departments and instructing officials.
- Operating the Quality Assurance System for draft legislation.
- Continued development and training in drafting skills.
- Development of Know-How.
- The implementation and use of the Legislation Workbench in conjunction with the Bills Office of the Houses of the Oireachtas.

### **High Level Goal 4**

To support and assist in the coordination of the legal services of the State.

### **Output**

- To provide information to Government on significant cases which pose risks on legal or financial grounds.
- Coordination of advice on a whole of Government basis. Maintenance of panels of counsel and briefing counsel on behalf of the State to provide advice and litigation services. Maintenance and updating of the electronic Irish Statute Book (eISB).

### **Outcome**

Facilitating Departments to carry out their functions in a lawful and consistent manner on a whole of Government basis. Coordination and sharing of advice to ensure consistency and conformity with legal requirements.

### **Performance Indicators**

- Reports to Government on sensitive cases.
- Review meetings with Departments and Legal Advisers.

- Close contacts with Legal Advisers and Seconddees in Departments.
- Participation in Inter-Departmental Working Groups.
- Feedback.
- Timely publication of Statutes and Statutory Instruments on the electronic Irish Statute Book (eISB).

### **Strategy**

- Continuance and expansion of the Secondment Programme involving the placement of lawyers in Departments.
- Assisting Departments to develop legal advice databases.
- Continued use and development of the ACME integrated case records and file management system in AGO and CSSO.
- Possible transfer of areas of litigation or legal work to other agencies such as the State Claims Agency or outsourcing.
- Shared services and legal teams shared by various State agencies in litigation where appropriate.

### **High Level Goal 5**

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

### **Output**

Involvement in legal actions on behalf of the State and in defending the interests of the State in litigation. The provision of legal advice and services generally. The provision of specialist legal advice and services in relation to property transactions and Government contracts.

### **Outcome**

Effective management of litigation on behalf of the State. Minimising the exposure of the State to damages and costs. Assessing the lessons learned from the outcome of litigation. The provision of legal services concerning property contracts and in other specialist areas.

### **Performance Indicators**

- The volume of cases and new litigation dealt with. Quality and quantity of advices to clients.
- Delivery of services in timely manner and in compliance with litigation deadlines. Client feedback. Relative movement in the cost of litigation from year to year.

### **Strategy**

- To monitor litigation and advice to extract relevant lessons and to disseminate this information across the Public Sector.
- To maintain close relationships with clients and instructing officials. To maintain close relationships between Chief State Solicitor and Attorney General's Office and a high level of communication and interchange. To maintain levels of training and development within the Office to maximise staff capability. To maintain, review and revise risk management within the Office. To continue to develop knowledge management within the office and to maintain and develop the case management system between the Chief State Solicitor and the Attorney General's Office.

### **High Level Goal 6**

To provide modern and professional corporate and business management services in the Office that delivers the highest quality of service.

### **Output**

Maintenance of support structures and functions such as Finance, Human Resources, Library and Know-how, Registry and facilities such as Office space and IT infrastructure etc. to allow the organisation meet the Goals set out above.

### **Outcome**

Satisfactory working conditions and operation of Office within parameters set by Government.



### **Performance Indicators**

- Expenditure within the budgetary limits set by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform. Achievement of the limits on staff numbers.
- Staff, services and systems facilitating achievement of Office's mission statement.

### **Strategy**

- The continued maintenance of Office facilities, the optimal use of human resources and the management of information assisted by the best Library and Know-How Service and information communication technologies available to modern law Offices.
- Maintain Office capabilities to operate FMS.
- 
- Keep under review the Office's IT technical architecture and infrastructure and ensure it continues to provide a robust foundation for the delivery of IT services.
- Implement Public Service Reform Plan.
- The continued maintenance of development of the Registry and Records function to support the legal, drafting and administration functions.

## **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 outputs, outcomes and strategies. Strategic performance indicators have been formulated against which the performance of the Office will be assessed over this period.

The successful implementation of these goals, outputs, outcomes 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 goals, outputs, outcomes 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 or maintain 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, outputs, outcomes and strategies;
- The transition to Performance Budgeting Framework will provide a direct linkage to the Statement of Strategy, allocating funding to specific Programmes of expenditure and associated outputs and outcomes;
- Partnership Committees in both Offices;
- The Office's Internal Auditor and Audit Committee will review progress on the achievement of aspects of the 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;
- 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
- Initiatives arising out of the Public Service Reform Plan.