

Office of the Attorney General

Statement of Strategy

2016 – 2019

"Our mission is to provide the highest standard of professional legal services to the Government, Departments and Offices as economically and efficiently as possible and to support adherence to the rule of law."

INTRODUCTION BY THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

I welcome the publication of this Statement of Strategy for the Office of the Attorney General. The Office has an ambitious mission, to provide our clients with the highest standard of professional legal services as economically and efficiently as possible, and to support adherence to the rule of law. This Statement of Strategy, grounded in an analysis of our operating environment, sets out the strategies we will employ to meet the needs of our clients as they deliver upon the Programme for Government. The high level goals in this Statement of Strategy will be reflected in business plans for staff within the Advisory side of the Office, the Office of Parliamentary Counsel to the Government, the Chief State Solicitor's Office and the Administration sides in both Offices, so that the contribution each member of staff will make to the fulfilment of our common mission is clear.

Staff and management of the Office are fully committed to these goals and I look forward to working with them to realise our organisation's objectives.

Máire Whelan, S.C.
Attorney General

FOREWORD BY THE DIRECTOR GENERAL, CHIEF PARLIAMENTARY COUNSEL AND CHIEF STATE SOLICITOR

The preparation of the new Statement of Strategy for the 2016-2019 period is an opportunity for us to engage further with the needs and expectations of our client Departments. While the core functions of the Office in relation to assisting the constitutional role of the Attorney General, drafting government legislation and providing legal advice and assistance do not change, the context does change. The digital world, European Union changes and the realities of the minority government require that we adapt and review our priorities. We look forward to further collaboration with our client Departments over the life of this Statement of Strategy to achieve our constitutional purpose and the aims of the Programme for Partnership Government.

Liam O'Daly, Director General

Paul Linehan, Chief Parliamentary Counsel

Eileen Creedon, Chief State Solicitor

Introduction - Roles and Functions

Under the Constitution the Attorney General, Máire Whelan SC, is the adviser to the Government on matters of law and legal opinion, and is the chief law officer of the State.

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

- to provide legal advice to the 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.

With over 243 legal staff (including 23 seconded Advisory Counsel in Government Departments) and a total complement of 404 staff, together we provide our client Departments and Offices with a full spectrum of specialist legal services spanning advisory, legislative drafting, litigation and transactional work. We have a deep institutional knowledge of the workings of the State and of Government which, combined with the legal professional skills of our experienced and dedicated staff and our whole-of-Government perspective, enables us to provide the Attorney General and our clients with a high quality professional service which meets their distinctive legal service requirements.

Advisory Counsel

The Advisory side of the Office is divided into five Groups of Advisory Counsel covering all major legal specialisms (subject areas). In addition, the Deputy Director General has 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 Advisory 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 legislative drafting service to Government Departments and Offices.

In addition to the Advisory Counsel within the Office, the Office continues to assign 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 also assigned on secondment to 13 Government Departments.

Office of the Parliamentary Counsel to the Government

The Office of the Parliamentary Counsel to the Government (Office of Parliamentary Counsel) comprises a team of lawyers trained in the discipline of drafting legislation. The Office of the Parliamentary Counsel provides a specialist legislative drafting service to Government.

The main work of the Office of Parliamentary Counsel is to draft Government Bills to be introduced in the Houses of the Oireachtas and certain secondary legislation for Government Departments and Offices, including instruments transposing EU legislation into domestic law under the European Communities Acts.

The Office of the Parliamentary Counsel is organised into Groups, each having responsibility for the provision of legislative drafting services to specific Government Departments and Offices.

Chief State Solicitor's Office

The Chief State Solicitor's Office (CSSO) is a constituent element of the Attorney General's Office and is the principal provider of solicitor services to the Attorney General and to 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.

Services include:

- Litigation - representing the State in all civil litigation in domestic and external fora (courts, tribunals of inquiry and commissions of investigation) in constitutional actions, judicial reviews, asylum and immigration matters, extradition, mutual assistance requests and European Arrest Warrants, ministerial prosecutions, matters involving the Criminal Assets Bureau, representing Ireland at the Court of Justice of the European Union, and all other litigation where Government Departments or Offices are involved;
- Advisory - providing general and specific advice to client Departments and Offices on a range of legal matters and providing commercial and other advices for important areas of Government such as public procurement (including representing the Office of Government Procurement) and property matters;
- Transactional - providing a comprehensive conveyancing and property legal service to client Departments and Offices; negotiating, drafting and advising on tender documents and commercial contracts.

The CSSO is organised into five legal Divisions: the Administrative Law Division; the Advisory, Commercial and Employment Law Division; the Constitutional and State Litigation Division; the Justice Division; and the State Property Division. Each Division is organised into sections on the basis of similarity of work or client.

Corporate Services

Each constituent part of the Office includes administrative support staff who facilitate and assist the work of legal staff by providing the following professional corporate services: Human Resources, Training and Development, Finance, Corporate/Office Services, Clerical Support, Change Management, Information and Communication Technology, Registry and Records and Library and Know-how/Knowledge and Information Service.

Websites

More detailed information can be obtained at www.attorneygeneral.ie and also www.csso.ie

Analysis of the Changing Environment

The new Programme for Partnership Government sets the priorities to be considered in the context of the development of new Statements of Strategy. As a provider of legal services the strategic priorities of the Office are to a large extent determined by those of our clients - Government Departments and Offices which formulate and implement Government policy. Priorities about housing and homelessness, climate change, improving the lives of people with disabilities, and political and constitutional reform are among the priorities set out in the Programme that will impact upon the Office in terms of increased demand for advice and further legislation.

The challenge for the Office over the period of this Statement of Strategy will be to give effect to these priorities in the context of the new political reality, where there is increased consultation by the Executive with political groupings within the Oireachtas and more legislative initiatives having their origin in Private Members' Bills.

This new Statement of Strategy was developed following an engagement with our client Departments and Offices, internal consultation and an examination of the legal environment. This review highlighted a number of important challenges and opportunities in our operating environment which will impact on the way we deliver legal services over the lifetime of this Statement of Strategy. These include:

- **Collaborative Engagement** – the imperative to encourage early referral and active review of files to enhance case management options and ensure that prudent approaches to cases are adopted;
- **Management of Litigation** – the challenge to manage litigation effectively and the opportunity to encourage early investment by client Departments and Offices in the assessment of litigation files, particularly in those areas in which, from time to time, there are significant increases in litigation, so as to minimise the cost of the litigation to the taxpayer;

- **Efficiency Enhancement** – the opportunity to identify where processes, procedures and operations can be streamlined and rendered as efficient as possible so as to ensure the best use of resources;
- **Organisational learning and Knowledge Management** – maintaining a high quality, pro-active legal library and Office intranet as key information sources; promoting a culture of sharing internal information and expertise and ensuring a high degree of sharing of knowledge, in particular by the capture and dissemination of legal Know-how;
- **Client Departments' Policy Formulation** – recognising client Departments' critically important policy formulation responsibilities and adherence to the requirements set out in the Cabinet Handbook, and the need to enhance their expertise in that regard and the opportunity to provide appropriate assistance where feasible in order to allow the delivery of clear, precise instructions to the Office;
- **Service Delivery** – the need to ensure consistency and quality of work undertaken by the Office and by external legal counsel or service providers;
- **Investment in staff** – the challenge of retaining legal staff in a competitive marketplace and the need to ensure that all staff are developed to their maximum potential so as to obtain the best from them;
- **Procurement of external legal services** – the challenge to ensure that external legal counsel are selected on a basis that will ensure a high quality, value for money service which protects the mutual interests of client Departments and Offices, the State and the Office;
- **Legislation Programme** – the challenge to produce draft legislation of varying complexity and urgency, often on the basis of incompletely developed policy instructions;
- **Legal Specialisms** – the opportunity to consult regularly with client Departments and Offices in relation to requests made for legal services and to identify new and emerging areas of law to further develop our expertise to meet ongoing requirements;

- **Legal Units** – the further development of dedicated legal units within Departments and Offices building on the success of the secondment of Advisory Counsel and CSO legal staff from the Office to Government Departments and Offices;
- **Specialised Services** – the challenge to respond to the increased use of external law firms by Government Departments and Offices in specialist areas in such a way as to maintain consistency, value for money and the public interest;
- **EU measures** – the opportunity to respond to the increased awareness in Government Departments and Offices of the need for early intervention in the negotiation of EU instruments to protect the State's interest and to facilitate the early transposition of EU measures;
- **UK exit from the EU** – the outcome of the recent Referendum for the United Kingdom to exit the EU is likely to impact the Office in terms of the delivery of legal services;
- **Changes within the Houses of the Oireachtas** – the change in the working relationship between the Houses of the Oireachtas and the Executive is likely to result in a significant increase in Private Members Bills with potential attendant difficulties in terms of policy development by client Departments and Offices and potential issues arising in respect of ensuring consistency of the statute book.

Goals and Strategic Priorities

This chapter sets out the high level goals of the Office, which are all directed towards fulfilling the fundamental goal of the Office of the Attorney General - to support the Attorney General in the carrying out of her constitutional role as legal adviser to the Government.

High Level Goal 1

Delivering a specialist legal advisory service to the Government and client Departments and Offices.

Strategic Priorities

1. To assist the Attorney General in the performance of her constitutional role as legal adviser to the Government for the purposes of ensuring that Government policies and priorities are implemented in accordance with the Constitution, European Union law and obligations arising under international treaties through:
 - timely provision of legal advice and assistance by Advisory Counsel to the Attorney General concerning Government meetings, advising Government and Government Ministers and the discharge of her functions generally;
 - effective provision of legal advice by the CSSO in connection with the delivery of services to support the Attorney General;
 - provision of effective briefing and, as appropriate, advice by Parliamentary Counsel to the Attorney General in respect of legislative drafting.

2. To engage in regular structured communication with client Departments and Offices, in order to:
 - improve our understanding of their policy objectives and requirements for specialised legal services;

- anticipate and plan legal needs and the provision of services across the range of the Office's functions;
 - develop further our flexible models for service delivery that can meet the changing needs of client Departments and Offices;
 - review processes relevant to the delivery of the Office's services, for the purposes of identifying possible weaknesses in current systems and practices, and consulting with clients and proposing solutions to identify ways in which we can deliver services in a manner that best serves their needs.
3. To deliver a service that fully meets best professional practice by keeping abreast of developments in legal firms and legal divisions in the private and public sector or other jurisdictions.
4. To continually review and improve the specialist advisory service provided by Advisory Counsel in such a way as to meet clients' needs by:
- organising groups of Advisory Counsel so as to develop expertise and ensure the effective use of resources, including collaboration across specialist groups in large scale and multifaceted projects;
 - updating our specialist knowledge of relevant areas of the law, particularly public law, thereby contributing to a specialised Know-how;
 - working closely with Library and Know-how staff and legal researchers to maximise our ability to provide high quality advice taking account of the latest developments and authorities;
 - as regards litigation, contributing in-depth legal analysis, high-level review and advising on the conduct of litigation;
 - adopting a strategic approach to legal issues in particular areas of litigation, including, where appropriate, identifying legal issues arising in litigation which may benefit from a legislative solution;
 - preparing observations on General Schemes of a Bill in which constitutional, EU, ECHR and legal policy issues arise in accordance with the Cabinet Handbook;

- advising on issues raised by Parliamentary Counsel in the course of drafting legislation and carrying out reviews of draft legislation in accordance with the Quality Assurance Scheme;
 - assisting client Departments in understanding the legal implications of Private Members' Bills so that they may decide on their policy response to such Bills;
 - identifying significant new areas of law, in collaboration with client Departments and Offices, so as to develop further our expertise in those areas.
5. To enhance the specialised advisory function within the CSSO by:
- streamlining existing legal functions within our Office to support the focused delivery by senior lawyers of specialist advices;
 - identifying and concentrating existing expertise within our Office to accommodate the development of a more defined specialist advisory role;
 - honing existing expertise and building new expertise in developing areas of law of most significance to our client Departments and Offices;
 - working closely with the in-house Knowledge Management Officer to enhance knowledge sharing between the CSSO advisory function and other CSSO sections, particularly in the field of public law, and augment specialised Know-how in the CSSO;
 - strengthening links with seconded Advisory Counsel and legal units in client Departments and Offices;
 - deepening engagement with Advisory Counsel on mutual files.
6. To continue to support and further develop the secondment programme so as to enhance the delivery of legal services to client Departments and Offices, by:
- developing connections throughout the Office with seconded Advisory Counsel and legal units in client Departments in order to strengthen existing links and channel requests for advice from those client Departments appropriately and effectively;
 - strengthening organisational, operational, knowledge management and training and development links with seconded Advisory Counsel.

7. To deliver an enhanced service of EU law to client Departments and Offices by:
 - providing internal structures and processes for ensuring that significant EU law issues are tracked and co-ordinated across the Office;
 - assisting client Departments to make interventions and responses in respect of relevant litigation before the European Court of Justice;
 - providing early and effective advice to clients who seek advice on EU projects and policy proposals.

8. The Office will review the administration and implementation of functions under section 7 of the Prosecution of Offences Act 1974 in connection with the retention of external counsel with a view to ensuring the provision of a high quality, timely and cost efficient service for client Departments.

High Level Goal 2

Office of the Parliamentary Counsel to the Government: Provision of a specialist legislative drafting service to Government.

Strategic Priorities

1. The Office of Parliamentary Counsel will prepare draft legislation that gives effect to the legislative policy set by Government, that conforms with the Constitution and the State's EU obligations and in particular it will draft:
 - Government Bills in accordance with the Government Legislation Programme;
 - other urgent or priority Bills as directed by Government;
 - Committee and Report stage amendments to such Bills;
 - Government orders, commencement orders and statutory instruments (including regulations intended to give effect to acts of the European Union that amend primary legislation);

- other statutory instruments where the exigencies of existing legislative priorities permit.
2. In view of the challenge to produce draft legislation of varying complexity and urgency, often on the basis of incompletely developed policy instructions, the Office of Parliamentary Counsel will continue to emphasise to Government Departments the importance of:
- adherence by Government Departments to the procedures regarding primary and secondary legislation set out in the Cabinet Handbook;
 - Government Departments fully formulating and developing legislative policy proposals before engaging the services of the Office of Parliamentary Counsel;
 - the central role of the Government Legislation Committee in setting and overseeing Government legislation priorities and in reconciling competing legislative priorities in order to ensure that Government derives maximum benefit from the services provided by the Office of Parliamentary Counsel.
3. The Office of Parliamentary Counsel will continue to engage with Government Departments in order to ensure greater efficiency in the interaction by the Departments with the Office of Parliamentary Counsel, and in particular will:
- emphasise the importance of client Departments engaging with seconded Advisory Counsel and Advisory Counsel at an early stage in the development of legislative proposals;
 - emphasise the importance of client Departments engaging with other Government Departments at an early stage in the development of legislative proposals where the policy proposals fall under the remit of more than one Department or have implications for policy areas that fall under the remit of more than one Department;
 - where appropriate and subject to resource constraints within the Office of Parliamentary Counsel, engage with client Departments to support training initiatives taken by them in respect of the legislative process.

4. The Office of Parliamentary Counsel will continue to actively participate in and engage with the Government Legislation Committee in order to enable proper monitoring and supervision of the implementation of the Government Legislation Programme.
5. The Office of Parliamentary Counsel will continue to collaborate with Advisory Counsel when drafting legislation. The Office of Parliamentary Counsel will also engage with Advisory Counsel in carrying out reviews of significant legislative projects in order to improve and refine processes relating to legislation drafting files.
6. The Office of Parliamentary Counsel will continue to operate the Quality Assurance Scheme for draft legislation and also the Legislation Workbench in conjunction with the Bills Office of the Houses of the Oireachtas.

High Level Goal 3

To provide a litigation service that delivers optimum results for our client Departments and Offices.

Strategic Priorities

1. To improve proactive case management, the Office will:
 - actively encourage and support the early assessment of cases, and likely outcomes, to facilitate informed decision making by our client Departments and Offices at an early stage in proceedings;
 - enable timely decision making by our client Departments and Offices on the conduct of cases, through ongoing consultation and regular review of the management of cases to facilitate best outcomes;
 - support the early identification, referral and active management of cases with the potential to lead to mass litigation, so as to ensure that the State's interests are best protected;

- apply our combined experience, particularly in the field of legal costs, to strengthen the State's position in negotiating and agreeing case settlements on behalf of our clients;
 - ensure that in contentious matters, where appropriate, our clients will receive the best advice on all options for dispute resolution early in the process so that the optimal outcome can be achieved.
2. To leverage our experience and learning, the Office will:
- harness the knowledge and experience gained during the conduct of cases to inform our clients' approach and our approach in future similar cases and benefit from lessons learned;
 - support, encourage and contribute to the compilation and retention of information by our clients to identify those areas of their operations which are susceptible to legal challenge, and enable measures to reduce the volume of cases in these areas to be explored;
 - identify recurring legal challenges to legislation with our client Departments and encourage them to adopt a proactive approach to progressing legislative amendment, where appropriate;
 - identify means of strengthening procedures and processes to reduce unnecessary procedural legal challenges to the business of Government through focused case outcome reviews, feedback and advice to clients.

High Level Goal 4

To provide a solution-driven legal service led by the CSSO that supports the delivery of our client Departments' transactional and business objectives.

Strategic Priorities

1. To communicate and collaborate effectively for best results, the CSSO will:

- encourage early engagement with our client Departments and Offices to facilitate transaction and project planning and the delivery of timely and comprehensive instructions;
 - ensure that, through a process of ongoing consultation and regular bilateral review of priorities, our service remains attuned and responsive to our clients' evolving business needs;
 - encourage a collaborative approach to problem solving, by drawing on the experience and knowledge of all members of the State's team and promoting a shared understanding of respective roles.
2. To ensure a high quality service, the CSSO will:
- promote standards of excellence in all our work by ensuring ongoing adherence to best practice and the application of the most up to date legal knowledge in the delivery of our services;
 - utilise our experience and legal knowledge to design and develop practical solutions that meet the particular and distinctive needs of our client Departments and Offices;
 - ensure the application of the appropriate legal expertise to all cross-cutting transactional services through collaboration across specialisms within our Office;
 - ensure the appropriate management of contentious transactions by the seamless application of the necessary dispute resolution advice at an early stage;
 - promote consistency, and streamlining where possible, in order to drive efficiency in the delivery of our services.

High Level Goal 5

To support the development of high levels of expertise, competence, up to date knowledge of the law and effective communications skills, within a knowledge based environment.

Strategic Priorities

1. The Office will ensure that knowledge management remains at the heart of what we do by implementing the AGO knowledge management strategy with a view to:

- implementing existing action points of the AGO knowledge management strategy in full;
 - reviewing the current AGO knowledge management strategy with a view to including new action points as appropriate following internal and external consultations;
 - continuing to enhance the capture, sharing and accessibility of legal and organisational know-how;
 - monitoring trends and developments in knowledge management.
2. The Office will ensure that knowledge management remains at the heart of what we do by implementing the CSSO knowledge management strategy with a view to:
- further developing and implementing systems, processes and procedures that will facilitate more effective knowledge management within the CSSO;
 - fostering a culture of knowledge sharing within the CSSO;
 - identifying knowledge management priorities;
 - incentivising participation in knowledge management initiatives;
 - identifying the knowledge supports required to facilitate the achievement of sectional goals or objectives and set knowledge in context;
 - developing channels (electronic/digital and other) to capture, develop, share and exploit knowledge;
 - maximising the office's shared knowledge and experience to support the delivery of legal services.
3. We will continue to focus on the training, learning and development of all our staff in order to maximise performance and potential and meet ongoing and anticipated needs by:
- continually reviewing training, learning and development needs that are required across the constituent parts of the Office to achieve goals and objectives;

- completing the action points in current training, learning and development strategies across the Office and producing new strategies;
- ensuring the effective use of monies allocated to Office budgets for training, learning and development;
- continuing to engage and contribute to the Learning and Development Project as part of Action 9 of the Civil Service Renewal Plan.

High Level Goal 6

Provision of modern and professional legal practice, corporate and business management services that support the Office in its delivery of the highest quality of service.

Strategic Priorities

1. The Office will take steps to learn from other providers of legal services so as to ensure better service and thus better outcomes for Government by:
 - benchmarking and reviewing the services provided by other legal service providers' and implementing any recommendations arising;
 - ensuring the Office has sufficient resources to be competitive when it comes to recruiting the best staff and reviewing the career structures for staff in the Office, with the assistance of Government.
2. The Office will maintain support structures and functions to allow the Office meet the goals set out above by ensuring:
 - no interruptions in the services provided by the Office to its client Departments arising from shortcomings in the support structures;

- any expenditure incurred is within the budgetary limits set by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform;
 - the maintenance of an effective financial management system to inform decision making and enable close monitoring of our financial resources in order to ensure value for money;
 - to review the Office's IT technical architecture and infrastructure and ensure it continues to provide a robust foundation for the delivery of IT services;
 - to manage, update and improve online access to Irish legislation through the electronic Irish Statute Book (eISB);
 - to improve Information and Communication Technology (ICT) support to legal staff engaged in litigation matters, by facilitating remote access to the Office's case management system and utilising available ICT developments to improve efficiency;
 - the maintenance and development of Office premises in collaboration with OPW;
 - the continued maintenance and development of the Registry and Records' Management function to support the work of the Office.
3. The Office will continue to create a culture of professionalism and performance to embed high standards of service through:
- continued enhancement of the Office's governance and risk management culture;
 - ensuring there is a comprehensive HR strategy in place which includes workforce planning, effective recruitment and staff development;
 - strong leadership and embedded performance management at all levels;
 - maintaining effective recruitment systems;
 - continued flexibility and collaboration throughout the Office to enhance efficiency and adapt to change;
 - continued implementation of the Public Service Reform Plan and the Civil Service Renewal Plan;

- maintaining a work environment emphasising professionalism, integrity, independence and ethics;
 - continuing to ensure that our key management and operational systems support the provision of information that will help to underpin strategic decision making and effective resource and business planning and drive efficiencies;
 - maintaining a working environment in which the values of respect, diversity, dignity, safety and equality are to the forefront;
 - recognising that gender mainstreaming is a means towards realising gender equality, we will ensure that a gender perspective is reflected in our workplace;
 - implementing the Offices' Third Scheme under the Official Languages Act 2003.
4. We will plan for increased specialist legal needs in the Office and how best to resource the priority legal needs of Government by:
- reviewing the need for specialist legal staff;
 - engaging with Government on how best to resource specialist legal needs;
- and
- reviewing the models for delivery of legal services in client Departments and Offices including the use of Departmental legal units, partly or wholly staffed by seconded Advisory Counsel or CSSO staff.

Measuring Performance

Over the lifetime of this Statement of Strategy, the Office will systematically monitor and review its performance and progress towards the achievement of its high level goals and strategic priorities.

Business plans across the Office will give greater articulation to the methodologies required to implement the strategies outlined in this Statement of Strategy and their impact in relation to existing structures, style, staff and the shared values within our organisation.

Business Plans will be developed at legal Group, Division, Section and Administrative Business Unit level setting out an annual programme of actions to implement the goals and strategic priorities. These Business Plans, in turn, will be used as a basis for the individual work programmes of staff members in their PMDS Goal Setting Forms. The Business Plans will be reviewed annually and will enable staff to see strategy and planning as an ongoing exercise, thus allowing the Office to respond flexibly to our changing environment.

The Office has an established record of undertaking in-depth assessments of client satisfaction and scope for continuous improvement. Benchmarks have been established on the basis of extensive client satisfaction surveys and focus groups since they were first undertaken in 2004. Since then, performance against these benchmarks (in areas relating to communications, responsiveness, accuracy/quality, service delivery, etc.) has been monitored through regular surveys.

In addition we hold regular review meetings throughout the year. These include bimonthly meetings between legal staff in the Office and the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions regarding constitutional cases in the criminal law area, bimonthly meetings between legal staff in the Office, client Departments and An Garda Síochána to discuss extradition cases and European Arrest Warrants, regular review meetings and co-operation between legal staff in the Office and client Departmental officials in devising appropriate legal strategies to ensure the ongoing effective management of domestic and European Court of Justice (ECJ) litigation and regular meetings of the Article 40 Group to discuss issues relating to *habeas corpus*. The Office of the Parliamentary Counsel actively participates in the Government Legislation Committee and reports to the Committee in relation to Bills on the Government's Legislative Programme being progressed in the Office. Also, Legal MAC which is representative of the Attorney General's Office and the Chief State Solicitor's Office and is attended by the Attorney General meets three times a year to discuss specific legal issues and sensitive litigation with a view to signing off on the sensitive case reports to Cabinet.

The Office also engages in internal feedback mechanisms to identify how internal processes can be improved. Such assessment measures (internal and external) will continue to be used on a regular basis to monitor, evaluate and achieve the objectives outlined above during the course of this Statement of Strategy.

The Offices' Annual Reports will report on the progress of the Office in achieving our goals set out in this Statement of Strategy.