



Office of the Attorney General



Office of the Attorney General  
**Client Service Guide 2005-2007**

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## Foreword

The Office of the Attorney General, incorporating the Office of the Parliamentary Counsel to the Government and the Chief State Solicitor's Office, is committed to the pursuit of excellence in customer and client service and has identified this objective as a key strategic priority in the Office's current Statement of Strategy. This commitment will be re-enforced in the Statement of Strategy 2006-2008.

In seeking to develop a comprehensive understanding of your needs as customers and clients, the Merrion Street Office (Office of the Attorney General and the Office of the Parliamentary Counsel to the Government) and the Chief State Solicitor's Office commissioned reviews of service delivery standards during 2004. These extensive reviews helped the Offices to establish important priorities and were used to inform the development of the Offices' Client and Customer Charters. These Charters were agreed by the Offices' Partnership

Committees and published in both Irish and English in March, 2005 and circulated to clients and customers; the key principles are also included in this new Client Service Guide 2005-2007 and Customer Action Plan 2005-2007. The Client Service Guide and Customer Action Plan complements the Charters which highlight the service our clients and customers can expect to receive.

These service delivery targets have been developed in conjunction with staff throughout the Offices and while challenging, we are confident that the standards will be realised. We are also privileged to enjoy the commitment of an enthusiastic and experienced team who have embraced the need for the achievement of enhanced standards of excellence.

The Office looks forward to working with you and to receiving your ongoing co-operation as we pursue our joint objectives for the future.

**Finola Flanagan**  
Director General

**Deirbhle Murphy**  
Chief Parliamentary Counsel

**David J. O'Hagan**  
Chief State Solicitor

December, 2005



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## 1. The role of the Office of the Attorney General

*“The mission of the Office of the Attorney General is to provide the highest standard of professional legal services to Government, Departments and Offices.”*

The principal roles of the Office are:

- to support and advise the Attorney General in carrying out the duties of that office;
- to provide the highest standard of professional legal services to Government, Departments and Offices;
- to draft legislation;
- to provide litigation services;
- to contribute to effective public service by encouraging and participating in the co-ordination of the legal services of the State;
- to ensure efficient delivery of legal services to, and an effective and productive working relationship with, Government, Departments and Offices taking into account the Public Service

Change Programme and in particular, the principles of Quality Customer Service.

The structure of the Office is outlined in the organisation chart at Appendix 2 and a detailed description of the organisation’s legal, administrative and support services is outlined in Appendix 3 of this Guide.

## 2. Clients of the Office

### 2.1 External clients

The principal clients of the Attorney General and the Office are the Government itself, its individual members and the Departments they head as well as certain public bodies. As part of its functions the Office also supports, contributes and provides legal services to a broad range of Committees and Commissions which have been established to meet the needs of Government and the Public. These Committees and Commissions are listed in Appendix 4 of this Guide.

### 2.2 Internal clients - staff of the Office

The dedication of staff is one of the main strengths of the Office and is essential to the achievement of the objective of providing the highest standard of legal services to Government, Departments and Offices. Internal customers or staff of the Office are consulted on, and contribute to, the development of service standards and associated performance objectives. The Office is committed to a policy of staff development which ensures that we continue to benefit from a highly motivated and skilled team. To this end staff are provided with the necessary expertise and administrative, IT, knowledge management and related resources and systems.

### 2.3 Members of the Public

It is important to note that the Attorney General and the staff of the Office do not provide legal advice to members of the public or undertake any legal research on their behalf. Members of the public who wish to seek legal or political advice should consult their own advisers. In relation to Relator Actions and the Attorney General Scheme we refer you to information included on our website at [www.attorneygeneral.ie](http://www.attorneygeneral.ie)

### 2.4 Freedom of Information Acts

The Freedom of Information Act 1997 and the Freedom of Information (Amendment) Act 2003 apply only to a record held or created by the Attorney General or by the Office of the Attorney General concerning the general administration of the Office.



## 3. Our Key Client Service Commitments

The Office is committed to continuously improving the quality of service which it provides. Against this background and in the context of the Quality Customer Service Initiative, we commissioned an independent review of customer and client service during 2004. This review involved extensive interviews and a detailed customer/client survey. Focus group workshops were also held with external clients in areas such as Extradition and Asylum, Immigration and Child Abuse. The results of this comprehensive review have been used to inform the development of our first Client and Customer Charters and this Client Service Guide. The Office's Standing Client and Customer Panel meets bi-annually.

Having considered feedback and established performance benchmarks, the Office looks forward to working with clients and customers to continuously improve service levels into the future. The Offices' key commitments are outlined below.

### 3.1 Communications

The Office will support its clients and customers by developing and promoting efficient and effective communications systems, structures and processes. Our aim is to ensure that all the avenues of communication necessary to enable us to give the best possible service are in place.

In the context of this commitment, the Advisory and Administration sides of the Office will undertake to achieve the following service standards in their dealings with clients and customers:

- Acknowledge initial correspondence within 3 working days and advise you of who has been assigned to deal with your case/query/request.
- In the case of requests for advice, where requested, respond within 7 working days of receiving your initial correspondence with a view, if possible, to agreeing an expected completion date, taking account of other Government priorities and the complexity of the issues raised.
- Be accessible to our clients.

The Office of the Parliamentary Counsel to the Government (OPC) will undertake to achieve the following service standards in its dealings with clients and customers:

- Acknowledge initial correspondence within 5 working days of its receipt and advise you of the group or officer who has been assigned to deal with your correspondence.
- Work with you in fixing a reasonable completion date for your legislation, taking into account its length, complexity and Government priorities as indicated by the Government Legislation Committee.
- Convene meetings, where appropriate, and keep you informed of the progress of your legislation and any issues which are likely to affect mutually agreed timescales.
- Be accessible during normal business hours and at other times by arrangement.

We will also provide you with appropriate contact details for personnel who have been assigned to deal with your case/query/request.

### 3.2 Responsiveness

As part of our process of continuous improvement in service delivery, the Office will endeavour to provide customers and clients with enhanced levels of responsiveness. Our objective is to ensure, so far as possible, that we meet the requirements of our clients and customers both in respect of urgent and more routine work.

To this end, the Advisory Counsel and Administrative sides will:

- Demonstrate a high level of responsiveness in respect of urgent and routine issues which will be prioritised on the basis of overall Government requirements.
- Respond to any written request for information regarding the progress of work within 10 days.
- Keep you informed of work progress and any issues which are likely to affect or require the revision of expected completion dates.

The Office of the Parliamentary Counsel to the Government will:

- Demonstrate an appropriate level of responsiveness in respect of both urgent and

routine issues which will be prioritised on the basis of overall Government requirements.

Customers and clients are requested to support the Office in delivering enhanced levels of responsiveness by:

- Ensuring full compliance with the Cabinet Handbook guidelines, (cf. Appendix 1, part 1) and particularly those relating to timelines for obtaining observations in respect of Government Memoranda.
- Ensuring full compliance with the guidelines for seeking legal advice from this Office - see minute, dated 9 October, 1996 from the Director General and attached at Appendix 1, part 2.
- Keeping us informed of any issues which may impact upon the case or issue under review.
- Keeping us informed of any issues which may affect the drafting of your legislation.

### 3.3 Accuracy & Quality of Outputs

The accuracy, quality and consistency of work outputs continues to be a key priority for the Office. Our aim is to ensure that the expertise of the Office and the management of knowledge are reflected in the work outputs to our clients and customers.

In this context the Advisory and Administration sides of the Office undertake to:

- Ensure that, so far as possible, outputs emanating from the Office are clear, considered, comprehensive and consistent.
- Give independent and impartial advice.
- Give reasons for our views and recommendations as required.

The Office of the Parliamentary Counsel to the Government will:

- Draft your legislation in a manner that is constitutionally and legally sound, clear, comprehensive and responsive to your requirements and, in particular, we will propose solutions to any legal and drafting problems that may arise in the course of drafting.

- Draft your amendments to Bills for tabling in Dáil Éireann and Seanad Éireann.

In order to help us meet your requirements, all clients should

- Be sufficiently clear about your policy objectives.
- Be familiar with and aware of relevant legislation which applies to your Department, Office or organisation.
- Give drafting instructions and respond to queries in a timely manner, bearing in mind any completion date.
- Inform us as soon as possible if you will require amendments to Bills for tabling in Dáil Éireann and Seanad Éireann.

### 3.4 Service Delivery

In addition to offering a professional and responsive service, we will work with you to promote a spirit of partnership and teamwork. Our aim is to assist our clients and customers in finding appropriate mechanisms to meet their policy requirements.

As part of this commitment, we will:

- Be courteous, professional, reasonable and helpful at all times.
- Adopt a team-based approach and be committed to helping you achieve your objectives.
- Ensure that we are sufficiently organised in advance of meetings/discussions.

### 3.5 An Ethical & Confidential Service

The Office will continue to observe high standards of public and commercial ethical standards in the discharge of its functions. All staff are bound by the Official Secrets Act, the Freedom of Information Act as amended, the Committees of the Houses of the Oireachtas (Compellability, Privileges and Immunities of Witnesses) Act 1997 and by professional duties of confidentiality and pertaining to the principles of legal privilege.



### **3.6 Service Integration**

The Merrion Street Office works closely with the Chief State Solicitor's Office to ensure consistency of advice, recommendations and strategic direction. The Merrion Street Office also works closely with the Law Reform Commission to facilitate its work. Regular meetings with both the Chief State Solicitor's Office and the Law Reform Commission are held. These meetings are attended by representatives from each of these organisations to discuss and progress matters of shared responsibility, relevance and importance.

## 4. Consultation, Correspondence, Contact and Feedback

### 4.1 Consultation & Commitment

In 2004 the Office completed an extensive consultative process which involved interviews, focus group workshops and an extensive survey of a cross section of its customer and clients. The process was designed to solicit feedback, identify performance targets and promote service delivery improvement.

The consultative and improvement processes are continuing and have been designed to provide the Office with feedback on a periodic basis. The Client and Customer Panel will meet for facilitated workshop sessions at least twice a year. It is also intended to undertake a follow-up survey of customer and client satisfaction in 2006.

In this context, we are committed to:

- Providing a structured approach to meaningful consultation in relation to the development, delivery and review of services;
- An organised, systematic and regular review of service against benchmarked and balanced key performance indicators;
- Obtaining formal and informal feedback to determine whether your professional legal service requirements are being met;
- Regularly assessing the efficiency of the Office and its systems and procedures;
- Reviewing and updating the Office's website to ensure its relevance and timeliness;
- Publishing progress and annual reports outlining achievements against commitments contained in this Guide.

The promotion and enhancement of quality client and customer service remains a core objective for the Office and is supported through training, awareness and the promotion of competencies under the Performance Management Development System. The Office also supports the ongoing training and development of all staff in legal and related areas.

### 4.2 Correspondence & Contact

All items of correspondence received by the Office

are assigned a correspondence number, recorded, tracked, added to, or associated with, an existing or new file.

To ensure that we can process matters and cases in the most efficient manner possible, requests for advice or information are assigned on the basis of resource availability and staff expertise. Clients are therefore requested to ensure that *all initial correspondence* is sent via our Registry to the Office of the Attorney General or the Office of the Parliamentary Counsel to the Government and not addressed to individual staff members as the failure to support this process can lead to unnecessary delays.

The Office also accepts requests for advice and information by email; initial correspondence should be sent to: [info@ag.irlgov.ie](mailto:info@ag.irlgov.ie) so that it may be assigned to an appropriate member of staff. Where correspondence, including subsequent correspondence relating to a request already received in the Office, is sent to the Office by email, please copy all such email correspondence (with our reference number where known) to our Registry at the above email address.

The Office switchboard is open from 9:00am to 6:00pm, Monday to Friday, voicemail message facilities are also available for use when staff members are unavailable. Contact outside of office hours is available where necessary and in consultation with the client or customer.

### Contact details for the Office are as follows:

Office of the Attorney General  
Government Buildings  
Upper Mount Street  
Dublin 2

**Phone:** + 353 1 661 6944 / 631 4000

**Fax:** + 353 1 676 1806 (Advisory Counsel & Administration)

**Fax:** + 353 1 661 1287 (Parliamentary Counsel)

**Email:** [info@ag.irlgov.ie](mailto:info@ag.irlgov.ie)

**Web:** [www.attorneygeneral.ie](http://www.attorneygeneral.ie)

### 4.3 Feedback

Customer and client feedback is always welcome and provides us with a means through which we can enhance the quality of service provided.



Your comments, suggestions or complaints may be addressed to the relevant contact within the Office, or where feedback is of a more general nature, it should be addressed to Mr. Paul Gibney, QCS Officer, at the above address.

Once received, feedback will be considered and investigated and we will respond to you within 21 working days. Where investigations are likely to take in excess of 21 days, we will contact you within this period to agree a date by which we expect to conclude the matter.

## 5. Provision of Information and Access

### 5.1 Irish Language

The Office supports the provision of services through Irish and is committed to encouraging the development of skills and proficiencies in the Irish language and to meeting our obligations under the Official Languages Act 2003. Under the terms of the Act we will be obliged to draw up a Scheme in consultation with the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs which will set out in detail the services which will be provided in Irish, in English or bilingually. We will ensure that we meet the target date (to be set by agreement with the Minister for Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs) for publication of our Irish Language Scheme. Also we will continue to endeavour, where appropriate, to provide a service through Irish by making every effort to accommodate customers or clients who telephone or visit the Office and who wish to communicate through Irish and will co-operate with the Chief State Solicitor's Office in briefing and working with Irish speaking counsel in appropriate cases.

### 5.2 E-Information

Our website [www.attorneygeneral.ie](http://www.attorneygeneral.ie) provides access to the Irish Statute Book which currently includes Acts of the Oireachtas and Statutory Instruments from 1922 to 2003. The Chronological Tables to the Statutes 1922 to 2003 are also available. Other relevant websites can also be accessed through our website

Queries about the content and functionality of the Irish Statute Book may be referred to: [info@ag.irlgov.ie](mailto:info@ag.irlgov.ie).

### 5.3 Library & Know-how Unit

The primary clients of the Library and Know-how Unit are the staff of the Office of the Attorney General. The Unit provides library, research and know-how resources and services to these clients.

The secondary clients of the Unit are the legal staff in the Chief State Solicitor's Office, the Law Reform Commission, the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions and departmental legal advisers.

### 5.4 Equality

The Office is committed to the application of fairness, equality and impartiality in undertaking its duties and discharging its responsibilities.

The principles enshrined in the Employment Equality Act 1998 and the Equal Status Act 2000 are applied at all times and special emphasis is placed on the promotion of equality in recruitment, development and the promotion of staff as well as in the selection of external advisers and consultants.

### 5.5 Physical Access

Our objective is to provide accessible offices and to facilitate people with disabilities or other special needs. A programme of work has been completed in recent years and provides enhanced levels of access for all personnel. More recently the Office undertook a redesign of our website in accordance with public sector guidelines on accessibility. The website was audited to validate the accessibility and usability measures taken. Also, the Office carried out separate safety and physical accessibility audits in the Merrion Street premises and most recommendations arising from these audits have been implemented such as the relocation of proximity card readers, lift buttons and light switches to accommodate people with disabilities. The Offices' Health and Safety Statement has been updated to take account of these recommendations. Occupational health and safety standards/requirements will continue to be monitored on an ongoing basis and appropriate modifications implemented as required.

### 5.6 Further Information

The Office's website at [www.attorneygeneral.ie](http://www.attorneygeneral.ie) provides information in a customer focused manner on the activities of the Office. The site includes information on the roles and functions of the Office, access to the Irish Statute Book and publications such as Annual Reports, Statements of Strategy, Client and Customer Charters, Action Plans and Progress Reports under *Sustaining Progress* and Guide to the functions and records of the Office, Freedom of Information Act Section 15 and 16 Reference Book.

## Appendix 1 - Guidelines for Departments

### Part 1

#### “Appendix II - Guidelines for Departments in respect of the preparation of General Scheme of Bill

##### Note

*The purpose of the following guidelines is to remind Departments sponsoring legislation of matters they should have regard to when drawing up Schemes of Bills for the approval of the Government. Failure by a Department to observe these requirements is likely to result in the preparation of the legislation in the Office of the Attorney General taking longer than would otherwise be the case. A Department which has failed to observe the guidelines cannot expect the drafting of its legislation to receive priority over the drafting of legislation for Departments which have observed the guidelines.*

##### Preliminary

1. In the preparation of the Heads of a Bill, it is necessary for the civil servants in a Department promoting legislation to be knowledgeable in the subject matter concerned and with the requirements and procedures of the process for proposed legislation; for that reason they should have thoroughly familiarised themselves with the existing body of legislation and administrative practices to which the Heads will relate to enable adequate Heads to be prepared by them on:-
  - (a) the substantive matter,
  - (b) the administrative requirements or consequences resulting from the proposed legislation, and
  - (c) the consequential provisions (e.g. amendments and repeals, transitional provisions, etc.) necessary in the context of points (a) and (b).

##### General

2. The Heads and notes should contain sufficient background information to enable parliamentary counsel to understand the policy contained in the proposals.
3. The principal objects of the legislation have to be clearly and fully stated and the Heads and notes have to be sufficiently detailed to enable parliamentary counsel to draft the Bill.

4. The Heads and notes should refer to all known implications and difficulties, whether legal, social or administrative. Regarding constitutional, legal and legal policy issues, relevant advice should be obtained from the Office of the Attorney General as part of the preparation of the Heads and such issues should be resolved before the Heads are sent for drafting.
5. Although certain supplementary policy implications may only become apparent after discussions with (or a draft has been supplied by) the parliamentary counsel concerned, all policy matters that may have a bearing on the draft should be resolved by the Department **(including inter-departmental matters)** before the Heads are sent for drafting and supplementary policy implications should be resolved as quickly as possible.

##### Jargon and Technical Language

6. The Heads and notes should be expressed in language that will be understood by parliamentary counsel, accordingly:-
  - (a) the use of jargon (administrative or otherwise) ought to be avoided;
  - (b) where possible, technical language ought to be avoided and where it cannot be avoided it should be explained.

##### Use of Precedents

7. (a) Where Heads are based on a precedent, that fact should be referred to in the notes to the Head.
  - (b) Where more than one appropriate precedent for a provision is known, each should be referred to and the reason given for the choice of one precedent over the other.
  - (c) Care should be taken to check whether the precedent has been amended for any reason and drawn to the attention of parliamentary counsel.
  - (d) Where a precedent is taken from another jurisdiction copies of it must be supplied to parliamentary counsel together with other relevant provisions (e.g., where appropriate, the definition or interpretation section).

**Conventions and EU Directives, etc.**

8. Where the proposed legislation is for the purpose of implementing international conventions or acts of the European Union, a copy of each relevant Convention or act to be implemented must be supplied to parliamentary counsel together with:-
- either in the notes to the Heads or in a comparative table, sufficient information to identify where it is proposed in the Heads to implement each provision of the Convention or EU act;
  - where a provision is not proposed to be implemented, that fact should be drawn to the attention of parliamentary counsel and the reason for the exclusion should be given;
  - where a convention or EU act is amending an earlier one which has already been implemented into Irish Law, copies of all the earlier Conventions and EU acts must be supplied to parliamentary counsel together with sufficient information to identify all the earlier implementing provisions.

**Other and Special Cases**

9. The above guidelines are guidelines for general application. In certain cases they may not all be of direct relevance or applicability because of the nature of the proposed legislation (e.g. the annual Finance and Social Welfare Bills); in such cases direct consultation is necessary on this matter with parliamentary counsel.
10. While these guidelines primarily deal with Bills, they are also generally of relevance to the drafting of statutory instruments, in particular, the drafting of Regulations to give effect to acts of the European Union.

**Office of the Attorney General**

October 2005"

**Part 2****"Appendix II - Guidelines for Government Departments or Offices seeking legal advice from the Office of the Attorney General**

These guidelines are intended to assist officers of Government Departments or Offices who have

occasion to seek legal advice from the Office of the Attorney General.

In the context of proposals for Government (proposals for legislation or otherwise) in accordance with the requirements of Chapters 3 and 4 of the Cabinet Handbook legal advice should be sought in advance and reflected in the draft memorandum for Government when circulated for observations.

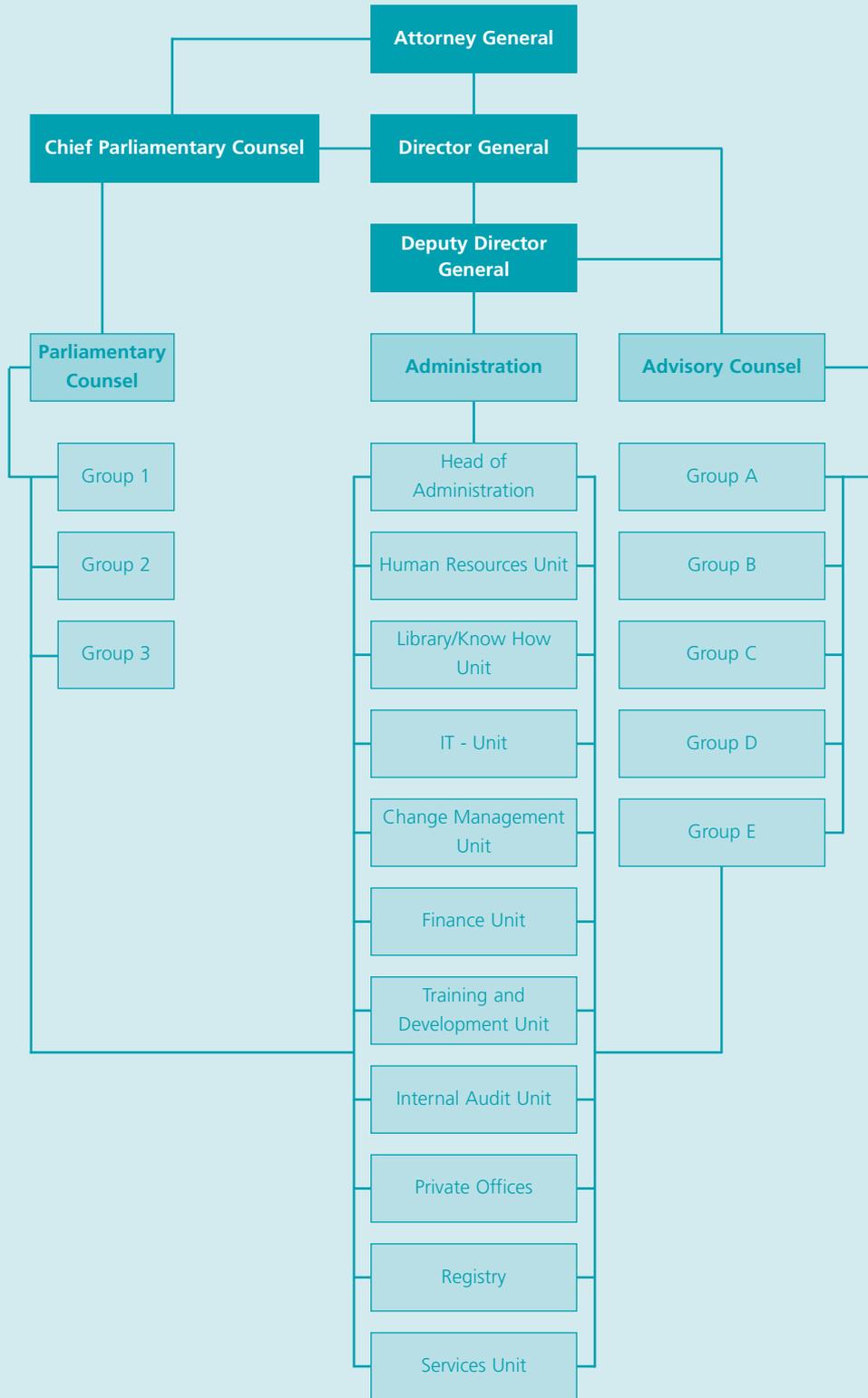
The aim is to ensure that requests for advice are accompanied by all necessary information so as to eliminate unnecessary requests for further information from the Office of the Attorney General which may delay the provision of the advice sought.

- When advice is being sought on a particular matter, previous relevant advices should be consulted by the Department in advance and should be referred to in the request for advice.
- A request for advice about a law or statutory instrument which the Department is responsible for administering should, where appropriate, include relevant information about the Department's experience in such administration and the Department's views on the point raised and its reasons for those views.
- A request for advice should include details of all relevant legislation, primary or secondary, domestic or E.U. and Treaties or Conventions of which the Department is aware. The Department should refer where appropriate to relevant provisions of the European Convention on Human Rights. A copy of the relevant legislation or Treaty, etc., with the exception of Acts of the Oireachtas and E.U. Treaties, should be attached. The Department should also refer to any relevant court judgments or decisions of which they are aware particularly if these are unreported or unlikely to be contained in any legal databases.
- Requests should be as specific and precise as possible. The more specific a request is, the faster it can be dealt with.

**Office of the Attorney General**

October 2005"

## Appendix 2 - Organisation Chart



## Appendix 3 - Organisation and Legal, Administrative and Support Services

### 1. Organisation

The Office of the Attorney General has an authorised complement of 123 staff comprised of 30 Advisory Counsel, 25 Parliamentary Counsel, 63 permanent administrative staff and the remainder employed on a contract basis on drafting or research work. Clients are referred to the organisation chart at Appendix 2.

### 2. Advisory Counsel

The Advisory side of the Office is divided into five specialist groups covering all legal specialisms. It is comprised of barristers (Advisory Counsel) each of whom specialises in a variety of specific areas of law. The principal duty of Advisory Counsel is to assist in the performance of the Attorney General's functions and duties. Each Group has dedicated clerical support staff familiar with the business of the Group. The range of subjects covered is extensive but the activities themselves fall into three functional areas, namely:

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

#### 2.1 Work of Advisory Counsel

The Office has put in place structures and systems to accommodate and address all routine queries as well as requests for urgent advice on significant legal and constitutional issues. There is a high degree of specialist legal knowledge within the Office. Advisory Counsel work closely with lawyers in the Office of the Parliamentary Counsel in relation to advising on legal issues arising in the drafting of legislation and with the Chief State Solicitor's Office in relation to advising on the conduct of litigation and other legal matters.

The range of advisory work normally undertaken by the Office is very broad and includes constitutional law, administrative law, European law, commercial law, public international law and criminal law - in fact, all areas of legal work in respect of which Government or a Department or Office may require legal advice. Advice is frequently provided under extreme pressure of time. Requests for advice may be received from the Government as a whole, from Ministers, or

from civil servants in Government Departments or Offices. Requests from Government or Ministers are usually made directly to the Attorney General. An Advisory Counsel is usually assigned to assist the Attorney in dealing with such a request. Most requests for advice, however, come from civil servants in Departments or Offices. Such requests either come directly to the Office or via the Chief State Solicitor's Office.

#### 2.1.1 Structure

Each of the five specialist groups has a group co-ordinator who is an Advisory Counsel Grade 1 (equivalent to an Assistant Secretary). Each group takes responsibility for specified areas of work grouped together in broad categories. The group co-ordinators have a combination of both professional and managerial responsibilities. Administrative support for Advisory Counsel is provided by a number of clerical officers. Each group has a complement of two dedicated clerical support staff who are familiar with the business of the Group.

Details of the Groups and their areas of responsibility are set out in Part 1 of this Appendix.

### 2.2 Permanent Representation to the European Union

The Office has assigned an Advisory Counsel to be seconded as legal attaché to the Permanent Representation of Ireland to the European Union in Brussels. Since its establishment in 1996, the role of the legal attaché has become an essential and intrinsic element of the effective functioning of the Permanent Representation. The role is very varied and involves a wide range of functions and duties.

The legal attaché furnishes legal advice to the representatives of all Government Departments who are members of the Permanent Representation on the wide range of legal issues which arise on a day-to-day and often very urgent basis. Due to the participation of the legal attaché in important EU negotiations, including Treaty reform and other significant legislative developments, the Attorney General is now involved from an early stage in advising on significant EU legal issues. The role involves furnishing oral and written advices, opinions and briefings on matters of EU law, domestic legal and constitutional issues which arise in the context of



Ireland's membership of the Union. This service facilitates the seeking and provision of legal advice in respect of community initiatives and seeks to ensure that Departments are aware of, and as up-to-date as possible with, their obligations under European law. The diplomatic aspect of the role includes extensive consultation, briefing and negotiations within the Council for the protection and promotion of the State's legal interests.

### 2.3 Parliamentary Counsel to the Government

The Office of the Parliamentary Counsel to the Government ("OPC") comprises a team of specialist lawyers trained to a high level in the discipline of drafting legislation. The mission of the OPC is to provide the highest standard of professional legislative drafting service to its clients and to maintain information on the progress of the drafting of legislation.

#### 2.3.1 Work

The main work of the OPC is to draft Government Bills to be introduced into the Houses of the Oireachtas and to draft secondary legislation, where appropriate, for Government Departments or Offices, including instruments transposing EU legislation into domestic law under the European Communities Act 1972. 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, restatement and consolidation in the context of the Regulatory Reform Agenda.

#### 2.3.2 Structure

The Chief Parliamentary Counsel is the head of the OPC and, within the Office of the Attorney General, has overall responsibility for the legislative drafting services provided by it.

The OPC is organised into three groups, each having responsibility for the provision of drafting services to specific Government Departments and Offices. Each group is headed by a group manager who is not lower in rank than that equivalent to an Assistant Secretary. The Group Manager has responsibility for managing the delivery of the drafting services of the OPC to the Departments and Offices allocated to that group.

Administrative support for the OPC is provided by an executive officer and seven clerical officers.

Each group has dedicated clerical support staff familiar with the business of the Group. In addition, a staff officer acts as Private Secretary to the Chief Parliamentary Counsel.

Details of the Groups and their areas of responsibility are set out in Part 2 of this Appendix.

### 2.4 Administration and Support Services

This division of the Office is headed by the Head of Administration (Principal Officer).

Details and contact information are set out in Part 3 of this Appendix in respect of the following:

- Library and Know-how Unit
- IT Unit
- Registry
- Finance Unit
- Human Resources Unit
- Training and Development Unit
- Internal Audit Unit
- Change Management Unit
- Services Unit
- Attorney General's Private Office
- Director General's Private Office
- Chief Parliamentary Counsel's Private Office.

## Part 1 Advisory Counsel

**Group A** has responsibility in the areas of garda, justice, prisons, Attorney General's Functions, Anglo-Irish, criminal assets, extradition, mutual assistance, interception of telecom and postal packages, international judicial co-operation, EU criminal justice measures, defamation, licensing and Irish language issues.

The group is comprised of the Group Co-ordinator and five other Advisory Counsel.

**Group B** has responsibility in the areas of private international law, casual and occasional trading, statistics, Statutory Instruments Act, civil justice issues, Haughey/Lowry Tribunal - public interest, personal injury, health, blood issues, childhood abuse (civil), organs and vaccines, abortion, adoption, assisted human reproduction, education, family law, ombudsman, nuclear, health and safety and environmental law.

The group is comprised of the Group Co-ordinator and four other Advisory Counsel.

**Group C** has responsibility in the areas of asylum and immigration, state aids and grants, competition law, broadcasting, electricity, fisheries, foreshore, law of the sea, shipping law, harbours, marinas, Irish coastguard service, commissioners of Irish Lights, coinage, international trade, gas, postal law, road haulage and buses, road traffic acts, revenue law, double taxation agreements, National Infrastructure/National Development Plan/Public-Private Partnerships, Gaeltacht, Anglo-Irish issues, Defence, Consumer Protection, Export Credit insurance, Export refunds, Air Transport and Rail Transport.

The group is comprised of the Group Co-ordinator and four other Advisory Counsel.

**Group D** has responsibility in the areas of relator actions, bankruptcy/insolvency/liquidation issues, charities, Comptroller and Auditor General, Appropriation Account Bill, estimates and financial procedures relating to the Exchequer and Audit Department Act 1866, Appropriation and Public Expenditure, Probate and Succession Law, Arbitration, banking, Bills of Exchange, Building Societies, Company Law, Ethics, Insurance, Land

Registration, Landlord and Tenant, Mergers and Monopolies, Metrology, Mining and Quarrying, Petroleum, State monopolies, State Property Act, Stock Exchange and Investment Law, Telecommunications, Information Society Services, UNCITRAL, other State Authorities, Electoral Law, Northern Ireland Trade and Business Body, Office of Public Works, Transfer of Undertakings Regulations, semi-State Bodies, Tobacco, Tourism and Planning Acts.

The group is comprised of the Group Co-ordinator and four other Advisory Counsel.

**Group E** has responsibility in the areas of Intellectual Property, Public International Law, Data Protection Act, Freedom of Information, Oireachtas and Oireachtas Reform, Ministers and Secretaries, Public Service, Labour Law, Legal Aid, Cultural, Human Rights, Coroners, Government contracts including public procurement, Diplomatic and Consular Service, Law Reform Commission, Explosives and Firearms, Gaming, Lotteries and Betting Acts, Official Secrets Act, Forestries, Agriculture and Social Welfare Law.

The group is comprised of the Group Co-ordinator and four other Advisory Counsel.

A senior Advisory Counsel at a rank higher than Assistant Secretary has responsibility in the areas of Defamation, Costs, Tribunals, Committees of Investigation and Oireachtas Committees, Goodman litigation, Morris Tribunal, Institutional EU issues, EC Judicial system, EU Horizontal and horizontal issues for the OPC and Brussels-specific issues.

The legal attaché to the Permanent Representation to the European Union in Brussels also works within this group.



## Part 2

### Parliamentary Counsel

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

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

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, three 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 Secretary General level, six other Parliamentary Counsel and three contract drafters.

## Part 3 Administration and Support Services to the Office of the Attorney General

### Head of Administration Pat O'Sullivan

#### Contact details

**Phone:** 01 631 4066  
**Fax:** 01 661 2385  
**Email:** pat\_osullivan@ag.irlgov.ie

### Section Human Resources Unit

#### Section Head Padraig McMahon

#### Contact details

**Phone:** 01 631 4016  
**Fax:** 01 631 4190  
**Email:**  
padraig\_mcmahon@ag.irlgov.ie

#### Service provided

- To facilitate the recruitment of staff to the Office
- To ensure that payroll details are kept up to date and all changes are implemented in good time
- To create, maintain and monitor records relating to staffing levels and staff attendance
- To organise internal competitions and to assist in the holding of external competitions
- To provide an information resource for all staff concerning their conditions of service and to ensure enforcement of all relevant Civil Service Regulations
- To liaise with staff and with other Departments as required in the provision of and sharing of information

#### Client

Dept of Finance, Public Appointments Commission, Public Appointments Service, Dept of the Taoiseach, Dept of Social, Community and Family Affairs, Office of the Revenue Commissioners, staff of the Office.

### Section Library and Know-How Unit

#### Section Head Ruth O'Flaherty

#### Contact details

Ruth O'Flaherty

#### Contact details

**Phone:** 01 631 4112  
**Fax:** 01 631 4197  
**Email:**  
ruth\_oflaherty@ag.irlgov.ie

#### Service provided

The provision of law library facilities and legal information and know-how services

#### Client

Office of the Attorney General and Office of the Parliamentary Counsel to the Government

## Section IT Unit

### Section Head Brian Scannell

#### Contact details

**Phone:** 01 631 4069

**Fax:** 01 676 1806

**Email:**

brian\_scannell@ag.irlgov.ie

#### Service provided

- IT Strategy development and implementation
- IT systems development/procurement, implementation and on-going management and development
- IT infrastructure procurement, implementation and on-going management and development
- End-user support

#### Client

Staff of the Office, suppliers, CMOD, Office of the Houses of the Oireachtas

## Section Registry Unit

### Section Head Emma O'Reilly

#### Contact details

**Phone:** 01 631 4002

**Fax:** 01 676 1806

**Email:**

emma\_oreilly@ag.irlgov.ie

#### Service provided

- Registering of all post including electronic emails where appropriate and maintaining an efficient filing system
- Annual check of files to identify files for transmission to National Archives. When files are identified same are checked and entered on to appropriate database and subsequently forwarded to the National Archives.
- Assisting in the implementation of the new Case and Records Management System

#### Client

All Office Staff, Staff in the CSSO and other Government Departments, and the National Archives

## Section Internal Audit Unit

### Section Head Ann Moroney

#### Contact details

**Phone:** 01 631 4017

**Fax:** 01 676 1806

**Email:**

ann\_moroney@ag.irlgov.ie

#### Service provided

Provide advice, assistance and guidance on control and good practice

Carry out audits on all areas of the AGO including the Law Reform Commission and CSSO and produce reports of findings to the Audit Committee, MAC and the relevant line managers

To provide assurance to the Accounting Officers as to the adequacy and effectiveness of the Office's internal control system

#### Client

Staff of the AGO and CSSO, Law Reform Commission, Internal Audit Committee, C&AG

## Section Change Management Unit

**Section Head**  
Paul Gibney

### Contact details

**Phone:** 01 631 4103  
**Fax:** 01 676 1806  
**Email:** paul\_gibney@ag.irlgov.ie

### Service provided

To implement 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), Management Information Framework (MIF), Expenditure Review Initiative (ERI), Irish Language including obligations under the Official Languages Act 2003 (OLA), *Sustaining Progress* and subsequent Social Partnership Agreements etc. within the Offices (AGO and CSSO).

### Client

Staff of Office of the Attorney General and Office of the Chief State Solicitor, Department of the Taoiseach, Department of Finance

## Section Finance Unit

**Section Head**  
Stephen Brady

### Contact details

**Phone:** 01 631 4075  
**Fax:** 01 631 4050  
**Email:** stephen\_brady@ag.irlgov.ie

### Service provided

- Preparation of the Appropriation Account for signature by the Accounting Officer
- Liaison with and facilitation of needs of auditors including Internal Audit and the C&AG.
- Processing Counsel Fees and recording fees movement between the CSSO and the AGO.
- Development, implementation and roll-out of the requirements of the Management Information Framework as it pertains to finance.
- Preparation of Annual Estimates and Multi-Annual Budgets
- Negotiate Administrative Budget
- Monitor Expenditure on a monthly basis
- Processing the payment of all invoices promptly
- Travel Service - To ensure travel arrangements are made for staff and processing of travel claims
- Preparation of Brief for the Director General, as Accounting Officer, for appearance before the Public Accounts Committee

### Client

Payment of fees to barristers and solicitors, Department of Finance, Law Reform Commission, suppliers

## Section Services Unit

**Section Head**  
David Donnelly

### Contact details

**Phone:** 01 631 4063  
**Fax:** 01 676 1806  
**Email:** david\_donnelly@ag.irlgov.ie

### Service provided

- Dealing with the maintenance and upkeep of the building and co-ordinating accommodation works.
- Ordering all non IT supplies.
- Maintaining the Office PABX system and dealing with all mobile phone issues.
- Arranging various office functions, both internally and externally. Assisting with the implementation of the new Financial Management System.
- Keeping track of all office equipment and maintaining an up to date office inventory.
- Liaising with Gardai, Military Police and other users of the Government Buildings complex on all security issues.
- Ordering of all taxis and couriers on behalf of the Office.
- Providing cover for telephonists when required

### Client

Office Staff, Office of Public Works, Outside suppliers



**Section**  
**Training and Development**  
**Unit**

**Section Head**  
**Vacant**

**Contact details**

**Phone:** 01 631 4019

**Fax:** 01 631 4031

**Email:**

padraig\_mcmahon@ag.irlgov.ie

**Service provided**

To ascertain, prioritise and address the training needs of all staff in the Office.

**Client**

All staff of the Office, course organisers

**Section**  
**Attorney General's Private**  
**Office**

**Section Head**  
**Nora Coyne**

**Contact details**

**Phone:** 01 631 4088

**Fax:** 01 662 3969

**Email:** nora\_coyne@ag.irlgov.ie

**Service provided**

To provide support services to the Attorney General so as to ensure an effective interface between the Attorney and the Office

**Client**

All Departments and Offices, judiciary, members of Bar Council and Law Library

**Section**  
**Director General's Private**  
**Office**

**Section Head**  
**Anne Marie Flynn**

**Contact details**

**Phone:** 01 631 4070

**Fax:** 01 662 1079

**Email:**

annemarie\_flynn@ag.irlgov.ie

**Service provided**

To provide administrative secretarial support to the Director General, Deputy Director General and Head of Administration

**Section**  
**Chief Parliamentary Counsel's**  
**Private Office**

**Section Head**  
**Louise McKeown**

**Contact details**

**Phone:** 01 631 4061

**Fax:** 01 661 1287

**Email:**

louise\_mckeown@ag.irlgov.ie

**Service provided**

To provide administrative secretarial support to the Chief Parliamentary Counsel to the Government

**Freedom of Information**  
**Liaison Officer**  
**Padraig McMahon**

**Contact details**

**Phone:** 01 631 4016

**Fax:** 01 676 1806

**Email:**

padraig\_mcmahon@ag.irlgov.ie

*Requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act 1997 must be made in writing addressed to:\**

*Padraig McMahon  
Freedom of Information Liaison Officer,  
Office of the Attorney General,  
Government Buildings,  
Upper Merrion Street,  
Dublin 2.*

*\*Replies will be made by post only and not email.*

## Appendix 4

### Committees and Commissions

- Advisory Board National Children's Office
- Assistant Secretaries Network
- Change Management Network
- Civil Service Training Officers Network
- Commission on the Assisted Human Reproduction
- Company Law Review Group
- Consultative Committee on Law Reform
- Consumer Advisory Council.
- Council of Europe Committee on Administrative Law
- Council of Europe Committee of Experts in Family Law
- Court Rules Committees
- Cross-Departmental Team on Infrastructure
- Cross-Departmental Group on EU Enlargement and Freedom of Movement
- 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 Working Group on Vetting
- Garda Implementation Group on Vetting
- Government Legislation Committee
- Greco Evaluation Team
- Hague Conference on Private International Law
- Information and Communications Technology Managers Forum
- Information Society Legal Working Group
- Implementation Group on Compensation Issues
- 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)
- Library Managers Network
- Management Group for Judicial Reviews in Asylum Cases
- Member of the Commission on Assisted Human Reproduction
- MIF Consultative Committee
- MIF Project Management Sub-Group
- Ministers and Secretaries Group on European Matters
- “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
- QCS Working Group
- QCS Officers Network
- 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
- Technical Experts Working Group on the Constitutional Treaty
- 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
- United Nations Convention on Climate Change
- Working Group on Company Law Compliance and Enforcement
- Working Group to Review Coroners Services
- Working Group on Legal Costs

## Appendix 5

### Stakeholders

- Government
- Departments and Offices (which request and receive legal services)
- Courts
- Departments and Offices of State (fulfilling statutory obligations)
- Government Legislation Committee
- Dáil Public Accounts Committee/Comptroller and Auditor General
- Courts Service
- Panels of Counsel
- Asylum Agencies
- Department of the Taoiseach
- Oireachtas Committees
- Bills Office of the Houses of the Oireachtas
- Department of Finance
- Director of Public Prosecutions
- Department of Foreign Affairs - European Union Permanent Representative
- Office of Public Works
- Legal Profession
- State Claims Agency
- Law Reform Commission
- Tribunals of Inquiry
- EU Commission
- EU Council
- EU Institutions
- European Court of Justice
- European Court of Human Rights
- Recruitment Agencies
- External Professional Support
- Independent Agencies



Chief State Solicitor's Office  
**Customer Action Plan 2005-2007**



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## Mission Statement



The mission of the Chief State Solicitors Office is to provide the highest standard of professional legal services to Government, Departments and Offices



## Introduction

The Chief State Solicitors Office (“the CSSO”) is a component part of the Office of the Attorney General and is the principal provider of Solicitor services to the Attorney General and to all Government Departments and Offices. The CSSO also provides Solicitor services to certain other State Agencies and to Tribunals of Inquiry, but does not act for members of the public.

The CSSO carried out a Client Survey in 2004 and following an analysis of the results which were very positive, prepared a Customer Charter which was published in March, 2005.

We are committed to the provision of a high quality service to our clients and are always anxious to enhance the level of same. To this end, customer service training will be provided to all members of staff and we welcome client feedback.

This Customer Action Plan sets out how the commitments given in our Customer Charter will be delivered and evaluated in accordance with the Twelve Principles of Quality Customer Service.



## Functions

The functions of the CSSO are to provide a Solicitor service to the Attorney General and to Government Departments and Offices.

Functions include;

- carrying out conveyancing of State property, including dealing with landlord and tenant and other property matters.
- furnishing of legal advice on the various issues that are submitted by Government, Departments and Offices and drafting of the necessary accompanying legal documents, including commercial contracts.
- providing a Solicitor service in all civil courts in which the State, any State Authority or the Attorney General is involved.
- preparing and presenting prosecutions initiated by Ministers or Government Departments.
- providing a Solicitor service to the Garda Síochána in matters related to the functions of the Criminal Assets Bureau.
- acting as Agent of the Government before the European Court of Justice.
- acting for the State in Inquiries under the Tribunals of Inquiry (Evidence) Acts 1921 - 2004 and supplying legal staff to act for the Tribunals, the public interest and other relevant State Authorities.
- advising and representing State parties in asylum, refugee and immigration matters.
- acting for the State in Extradition and European Arrest Warrant proceedings, Mutual Assistance Applications, Inquests, Police Property Applications and cases involving the Transfer of Sentenced Persons.
- 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 taxations of costs before the Taxing Masters and on appeal.

## Clients

### External Clients

The main clients of the CSSO are Government Departments and Offices and we also provide legal services to Tribunals of Inquiry.

The CSSO does not act for members of the public and its principal contact with the public is through their Solicitors. On occasion however, the CSSO does deal directly with the public in cases involving lay litigants and the administration of escheated estates.

It is imperative that the CSSO receives full and timely instructions from clients in order to provide an efficient service to them. Whilst urgent matters do arise; clients are asked to submit requests for legal services as early as they can in the process. Instructions in all cases should be as detailed and comprehensive as possible with all relevant documentation attached, as delays occur when the member of staff in the CSSO dealing with the matter has to seek additional information or clarification before he/she can proceed further.

The CSSO will not accept instructions by email from clients in new matters in the interests of ensuring adequate control over new work.

When requests for advice are submitted, clients should make reference in their covering minute to any previous relevant advices furnished to them by the CSSO.

Clients are asked to **give the CSSO reference number** in all ongoing correspondence with us.

### Internal Clients

Staff in the CSSO are customers of each other and the CSSO recognises that they must be fully consulted and be provided with an excellent level of ongoing training and IT support to deliver a quality service. The internal customer is considered in more detail at page 42.

### Disclosure of Information

The CSSO will observe a high standard of public and commercial ethics in the discharge of its functions. All staff are bound by the Official Secrets Act 1963 as amended and in addition legal staff are bound by a professional duty of confidentiality.

It is the policy of the CSSO not to discuss any issue with members of the press or other media. Where questions from the press/media relate to the business of clients such questions will be brought to the attention of the client immediately. In the event that queries relate to the business of the Office they are referred without delay to the Government Information Service for its attention. Any departure from this policy can only be authorised by the Chief State Solicitor.

We are a component part of the Office of the Attorney General and the Freedom of Information Acts 1997 and 2003 apply only to a record held or created by the Attorney General or by the Office of the Attorney General concerning the general administration of the Office. Freedom of Information decisions by the CSSO are however, subject to review by the Information Commissioner.



## Organisation

The CSSO has an authorised staff complement at the 1st November 2005 of two hundred and thirty two staff consisting of one hundred and thirty nine legal staff (Solicitors and Legal Executives) and ninety three administrative staff. It comprises five Legal Divisions and an Administration Division and these Divisions are further organised into Sections and Units to take account of the work requirements of clients.

The Management Advisory Committee (MAC) comprises the Chief State Solicitor and the six Divisional Heads and is responsible for the overall management of the CSSO and the development and implementation of strategy through a consultative approach in partnership with all staff.

The Divisional and sub-Divisional organisation of the CSSO is set out in Appendix 1 and the grading structures are listed in Appendix 2.

### Divisions

#### Public Law Division

This Division consists of two Sections, the Commercial and Constitutional Section and the Judicial Review Section.

#### Commercial and Constitutional Section

The Commercial and Constitutional Section is responsible for the defence of a wide range of civil actions against the State and State Authorities. Issues of law involved in such cases include commercial, constitutional, contract, employment, insurance, environmental, electoral, planning, housing, public health, social welfare, administrative and European Union law. Cases invariably go to full plenary hearing in the High Court and are frequently appealed to the Supreme Court. On occasion, cases are referred to the European Court of Justice. The Section also deals with proceedings in the Circuit Court and less frequently, in the District Court.

#### Judicial Review Section

This Section represents the State and State Authorities in Judicial Review applications. Judicial Review provides the means by which judicial control of administrative action is exercised and is the process by which the High Court exercises jurisdiction over the proceedings and decisions of inferior courts, tribunals and other bodies who

carry out quasi-judicial functions or who are charged with the performance of public acts and duties. The Section also deals with habeas corpus, cases stated, adoption cases, transfer of sentenced persons, 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.

#### Justice and Asylum Division

There are three Sections in this Division, the Justice and Crime Section, the Asylum Section and the Legal Services Section.

#### Justice and Crime Section

This Section deals with Extradition Proceedings, applications for European Arrest Warrants under the European Arrest Warrant Act 2003 as amended and advising in relation to the transfer of persons under the Transfer of Sentenced Persons Acts 1995 and 1997. Staff in the Section also conduct Ministerial Prosecutions, represent the Garda Síochána at the hearing of Intoxicating Liquor Licensing Applications and Police Property Applications and provide representation for the State at Inquests.

#### Asylum Section

The Asylum Section handles all asylum, immigration and repatriation 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. Most of the work is of a litigious nature primarily dealing with Judicial Review applications (both for leave to proceed and substantive hearings) as well as Habeas Corpus applications in the asylum area and necessitates daily attendance before the High Court. The Section also deals with District Court applications pursuant to the Refugee Act 1996, as amended.

#### Legal Services Section

This Section has responsibility for legal costs accounting (including assessing bills of costs and attending at the taxation of same) and for the recovery of legal costs due to the State. It is further responsible for the payment of Counsel's fees and acts for the State Authorities in Garda

Compensation claims and 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**

The State Property Division deals with property transactions, landlord and tenant, planning and title issues for the State. It is organised into three Sections.

### **Office of Public Works/Health and Children Section**

This Section deals mainly with commercial conveyancing for the Office of Public Works (OPW), with the focus changing from time to time to match the ongoing needs of the OPW as the property management agents for the State. The work includes commercial leasing of accommodation for Government Departments and Offices and the acquisition and disposal of properties under programmes such as the Transferring State Assets programme, the School Site Acquisition Programme and the Decentralisation Programme. A small proportion of work is also undertaken for the Department of Health and Children.

### **Defence, Marine and Sports Capital Programme Section**

Property work for several Government Departments namely Defence, Communications, Marine and Natural Resources, Arts, Sport and Tourism and Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, Agriculture and Food, Enterprise Trade and Employment and Transport is dealt with in this Section. The work includes the disposal of property surplus to military requirements, leases and licences of Foreshore, sales and leases of sites of Fishery Harbour Centres and handling the legal requirements in relation to the issue of National Lottery Grants and Gaeltacht Grants.

### **Finance, Education, Justice and Heritage Section**

In this Section the work includes the property aspects of the Residential Institutions Redress Indemnity Scheme, waivers of property of

dissolved companies under the State Property Act 1954 and dealing with escheated estates where the State is the ultimate intestate successor. The heritage work covers the acquisition of national monuments, historic properties and bogland for conservation purposes.

### **Common Law Litigation Division**

This Division handles childhood abuse claims against the State, delegated to the State Claims Agency under the National Treasury Management Agency (Delegation of Claims Management Functions) Order 2005 as well as certain tortious and personal injury claims. It comprises three Sections.

### **Personal Injuries Section**

This Section deals with general personal injury claims not delegated to the State Claims Agency such as claims in relation to liability for intentional infliction of mental suffering, defective products, malicious prosecution, malicious abuse of the civil process and assaults by Gardai and Prison Officers.

### **Tortious Claims Section**

The Tortious Claims Section is responsible for all childhood abuse work including litigation arising out of claims of abuse in Residential Institutions and Day Schools, in addition to work before the Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse. It also handles claims for damages for deceit, injurious falsehood, defamation, injury suffered by a member of the Garda Síochána or the Defence Forces outside the State while in the service of the State, as well as appeals to the High Court by persons infected with Hepatitis C or HIV or both, through the administration of blood or blood products.

### **Army Hearing Loss**

This Section which dealt with hearing loss litigation brought by members and ex-members of Defence Forces against the State is being wound down at the end of 2005 with the transfer of the remaining work to the State Claims Agency (see Changing Environment).

### **Advisory Division**

The Advisory Division consists of four Sections, the Specialist Advisory Section, the General Advisory Section, the State and European Litigation Section and the Commercial Contracts Section.



### **Specialist Advisory Section**

This Section handles certain special legal advisory matters and has primary responsibility for dealing with Tribunals of Inquiry work. Solicitors from the Advisory Division including those on the general advisory side, provide representation to Tribunals as well as representing Government Departments and the Attorney General (as representative of the public interest) before such Tribunals. The Tribunals which are running at the date of publication of this Customer Action Plan are the Tribunal of Inquiry into complaints concerning some Gardai of the Donegal Division ("The Morris Tribunal"), the Tribunal of Inquiry into payments to Messrs Charles Haughey and Michael Lowry ("The Moriarty Tribunal") and The Tribunal of Inquiry into Certain Planning Matters and Payments ("The Mahon Tribunal").

### **General Advisory Section**

A wide variety of advisory and court work is dealt with in this Section including Tribunal work (see above), instituting Plaintiff litigation on behalf of the State, company law proceedings, arbitration under Irish law, adoption matters, applications for discovery of documentation, environmental proceedings, wildlife and habitat prosecutions and advising in relation to mining and petroleum exploration and development.

### **State and European Litigation Section**

This Section handles employment work and represents the State before Rights Commissioners, the Labour Court, the Employment Appeals Tribunal and the Office of the Director of Equality Investigations. It also has responsibility for representing Ireland before the European Court of Justice in Luxembourg (the Chief State Solicitor is Ireland's Agent at the Court) and in addition acts for the State in extra territorial proceedings such as international arbitrations.

### **Commercial Contracts Section**

This Section was established in 2005 (see Changing Environment).

### **Criminal Assets Section**

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

### **Administration Division**

This Division provides internal customer services in the CSSO and comprises the Human Resources Section, the Accounts Unit, the Information Technology Unit, the Library and Know-How Unit, the Training and Development Unit, the Office Services Unit and the Records and Registry Unit. The Head of Administration has overall responsibility for these areas of service.

### **Human Resources Section**

This Section is headed by a Human Resources Manager and is responsible for all personnel functions within the CSSO. The work includes the creation and maintenance of staff records, recruitment of external staff and organisation of competitions for promotion, induction training for new staff, provision of information on employment in the Civil Service, keeping staff appraised of developments on terms of service, health and safety issues and the rollout of PMDS. The HR Manager is the Freedom of Information contact point for the CSSO.

### **Accounts Unit**

This Unit is responsible for all payments paid out by the CSSO, excluding payroll and a small number of payments processed through the Costs Accounting Unit. It is also responsible for the maintenance of financial records and for ensuring that effective control practices are in place. The CSSO 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 chairperson.

### **Information Technology Unit**

An IT Manager heads this Unit whose 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 databases and communications systems which support the legal service functions of the CSSO including financial, library and human resources systems. The Unit plays a lead role in the implementation of the Office's IT strategy. Members of the Unit have been assigned to work on the Office's new Case and Records Management System (ACME) and their duties on this project include system development and

testing, data migration, rollout and post go live and user support.

#### **Library and Know-How Unit**

The role of the Library and Know-How Unit 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 other staff are an Assistant Law 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 CSSO's education initiatives. The Unit is strongly committed to the development of knowledge management capabilities within the CSSO and is leading the implementation of knowledge sharing initiatives and strategies.

#### **Training and Development Unit**

This Unit is responsible for the organisation of training courses for the CSSO particularly the training and development identified by staff in their Personal Training and Development Forms under PMDS.

The training comes under a number of headings, IT training, legal training and general training which includes management training, personal development training and customer service training.

The CSSO encourages staff to undertake further academic training including post graduate courses and the Unit operates a Refund of Fees Scheme for this purpose.

#### **Office Services Unit**

This comprises a Documentation Centre and a Services Unit. The Documentation Centre provides all large scale photocopying and binding services and the Services Unit is responsible for other support services for staff including opening, distributing and collecting post, security, cleaning services, operation of lifts, reception, telephones, heating, lighting and plumbing, health and safety, ordering and supplying stationery and office

equipment, ordering couriers and taxis and the maintenance of a register of physical assets in the Office.

#### **Records and Registry Unit**

The function of this Unit which is headed by a Records Management Officer (who also performs a similar role in the Office of the Attorney General), is to manage the records of the CSSO in an efficient and effective manner and in line with best practice in this area. It is responsible for the storage, maintenance and retrieval of all closed files and for ensuring compliance with the National Archives Act 1986. The Unit also manages the distribution of all centrally received fax and email transmissions.



## Changing Environment

- The CSSO operates in a changing environment reacting to customer requirements for provision of services in new areas and withdrawing from declining areas.
- In 2005 the CSSO is closing down its Army Hearing Loss Section after 10 years in operation handling this mass litigation. The small volume of remaining claims are being taken over by the State Claims Agency under the National Treasury Management (Delegation of Claims Management Functions) Order 2005.
- We have been committed to setting up a new Section to handle commercial contracts for Government Departments and Offices. To this end, for the last two years a Solicitor has been designated specifically to deal with commercial contract work and matters which have been dealt with during this period include procurement advices, software licences, software support and maintenance contracts and State indemnities. An additional Solicitor was assigned to this area in 2005 and a further Solicitor will be deployed to deal with commercial contract work in 2006.
- The CSSO will monitor work trends to identify any areas where there is likely to be an increased demand for legal services in the future. Staff resources will be redeployed to cover emerging areas of work.
- As part of the process of improving both internal and external customer service:
  - the CSSO will transfer an entire Legal Division to refurbished premises adjacent to our Head Office in Osmond House. This will have the effect of alleviating overcrowding in Osmond House and providing better accommodation for staff at both locations as well as enhancing the implementation of record management objectives in respect of our filing systems. Furthermore, besides providing a dedicated consultation room for external customers in the new premises, the move will also result in the provision of enhanced consultation facilities for external customers in Osmond House.
- the CSSO is introducing an electronic case and records management system and financial management system which will become fully operative during the term of this Customer Action Plan. These new electronic systems will substantially increase efficiency and give an enhanced capacity to extract detailed financial data which will result in a greater value for money service.

## Principles of Quality Customer Service

The CSSO will adhere to and develop the following 12 Principles of Quality Customer Service approved by the Government;

### 1. Quality Service Standards

Publish a statement that outlines the nature and quality of service which customers can expect, and display it prominently at the point of service delivery.

### 2. Equality/Diversity

Ensure the rights to equal treatment established by equality legislation and accommodate diversity, so as to contribute to equality for the groups covered by the equality legislation (under the grounds of gender, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, religious belief, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller Community).

Identify and work to eliminate barriers to access to services for people experiencing poverty and social exclusion, and for those facing geographic barriers to services.

### 3. Physical Access

Provide clean, accessible public offices that ensure privacy, comply with occupational and safety standards and, as part of this, facilitate access for people with disabilities and others with specific needs.

### 4. Information

Take a proactive approach in providing information that is clear, timely and accurate, is available at all points of contact, and meets the requirements of people with specific needs. Ensure that the potential offered by Information Technology is fully availed of and that the information available on public service websites follows the guidelines on web publication.

Continue the drive for simplification of rules, regulations, forms, information leaflets and procedures.

### 5. Timeliness and Courtesy

Deliver quality services with courtesy, sensitivity and minimum of delay, fostering a climate of mutual respect between provider and customer. Give contact names in all communications to ensure ease of ongoing transactions.

### 6. Complaints

Maintain a well-publicised, accessible, transparent and simple-to-use system of dealing with complaints about the quality of service provided.

### 7. Appeals

Similarly, maintain a formalised, well-publicised, accessible, transparent and simple-to-use system of appeal/review for customers who are dissatisfied with decisions in relation to services.

### 8. Consultation and Evaluation

Provide a structured approach to meaningful consultation with, and participation by, the customer in relation to the development, delivery and review of services. Ensure meaningful evaluation of service delivery.

### 9. Choice

Provide choice, where feasible, in service delivery including payment methods, location of contact points, opening hours and delivery times. Use available and emerging technologies to ensure maximum access and choice, and quality of delivery.

### 10. Official Languages Equality

Provide quality services through Irish and/or bilingually and inform customers of their right to choose to be dealt with through one or other of the official languages.

### 11. Better Co-ordination

Foster a more co-ordinated and integrated approach to delivery of public services.

### 12. Internal Customer

Ensure staff are recognised as internal customers and that they are properly supported and consulted with regard to service delivery issues.



## 1. Quality Service Standards

*Publish a statement that outlines the nature and quality of service which customers can expect, and display it prominently at the point of service delivery.*

- The CSSO published its Customer Charter in March 2005 and this contained its commitments to its customers and the service standards that they can expect.
- The Customer Charter is on display in the reception area of the main office in Osmond House and will be further displayed in the reception area of the new office premises as soon as this premises is occupied.
- The Customer Charter is also on display on the CSSO website, [www.ccsso.ie](http://www.ccsso.ie).
- We are committed to:
  - Providing an ethical and confidential legal service.
  - Delivering a high quality legal service with efficiency and with a minimum of delay.
  - Establishing excellent working relationships with our customers.
  - Having regular interaction with our customers.
  - Ensuring that customers' priorities are paramount when delivering a legal service to them.
  - Identifying customer requirements for specialist legal service and developing our legal capacity in the light of such requirements.
  - Making the maximum use of information technology in the delivery of our service.
  - Ensuring that all staff receive a copy of the Customer Action Plan and are aware of its contents.
  - Including quality customer service as an integral component in the induction of staff into the CSSO and in ongoing staff training.

## 2. Equality/Diversity

*Ensure the rights to equal treatment established by equality legislation and accommodate diversity, so as to contribute to equality for the groups covered by the equality legislation (under the grounds of gender, marital status, family status,*

*sexual orientation, religious belief, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller Community).*

*Identify and work to eliminate barriers to access to services for people experiencing poverty and social exclusion, and for those facing geographic barriers to services.*

- We are committed in the provision of our service to the principles of equality as enshrined in equality legislation.
- The members of the CSSO MAC attended a workshop in 2005 on equality and diversity to further embed management awareness of equality legislation and its practical application in the workplace on a day to day basis.
- MAC will develop an Equality and Diversity Strategy for the CSSO.
- There will continue to be equality of opportunity in the recruitment and promotion of staff.
- Family friendly schemes will continue to be available, including work sharing and variable working hours.
- The CSSO will aim to reach the Government target in relation to the employment of disabled staff.
- We will raise staff awareness on equality and diversity issues.
  - The revised anti harassment, sexual harassment and bullying policy for the Civil Service entitled "A Positive Working Environment" is available on the CSSO's electronic bulletin board.
  - The booklet on "Diversity in the Civil Service - A policy on equality of opportunity" has been distributed to staff and is available in the CSSO library.
  - Training and information sessions on equality and diversity issues will be provided to staff.
  - Equality and diversity issues are highlighted during the induction of new staff into the CSSO.

### 3. Physical Access

*Provide clean, accessible public offices that ensure privacy, comply with occupational and safety standards and, as part of this, facilitate access for people with disabilities and others with specific needs.*

- We are committed to ensuring customers privacy and keeping our office clean, safe and accessible to customers with disabilities.
- The CSSO has a wheelchair accessible entrance and lifts and toilet facilities suitable for people with disabilities.
- The CSSO is currently revising and updating its Safety Statement and it will be further reviewed at regular intervals.
- There are updated evacuation procedures for people with disabilities in operation and the CSSO has installed special evac chairs and provided related training to staff in their operation.
- Our premises will be maintained to a standard that is acceptable to both external and internal customers.
- Our office website complies with public sector guidelines on accessibility.
- We will ensure that any new accommodation occupied, will comply with the relevant guidelines relating to access.
- We have consultation rooms for meetings with clients and staff where confidential discussions can take place.
- We will ensure that an adequate number of Fire Marshals and staff with relevant training in First Aid are distributed around the buildings which we occupy; who will assist in the evacuation of the accommodation in the case of fire.
- We will meet our obligations under the Disability Act 2005.

### 4. Information

*Take a proactive approach in providing information that is clear, timely and accurate, is available at all points of contact, and meets the requirements of people with specific needs. Ensure that the potential offered by Information Technology is fully availed of and that the information available on public service websites follows the guidelines on web publication.*

*Continue the drive for simplification of rules, regulations, forms, information leaflets and procedures.*

The CSSO is committed to:

- the introduction of an electronic case and records management system so that all information can be received into and transmitted by the CSSO in electronic form.
- the integration of a new financial management system into the work process with the result that financial data will be readily available.
- the production of documentation that is accurate, reflects customer instructions, and is professional in layout and appearance.
- using plain, non technical language in communications with customers.
- ensuring that customers are given as much advance notice as possible of consultations and court hearings.
- keeping customers up to date with developments in their cases on an ongoing basis.
- maintaining and updating on a regular basis a current organisation chart on the CSSO website [www.csso.ie](http://www.csso.ie) (which follows the public service guidelines on web publication), so that customers can ascertain the Section and Division within which any matter is being dealt with.
- Expanding and developing the joint CSSO and Attorney General's Office intranet.
- Ensuring that staff receive information in relation to developments in the Office through MAC minutes, partnership and the internal magazine "Grapevine".
- Using the staff suggestion scheme as a mechanism for receiving feedback and suggestions from staff.
- Provide easily accessible information on the working of the CSSO through the publication of the Annual Report on a timely basis.



## 5. Timeliness and Courtesy

*Deliver quality services with courtesy, sensitivity and minimum of delay, fostering a climate of mutual respect between provider and customer.*

*Give contact names in all communications to ensure ease of ongoing transactions.*

The CSSO has set the following standards:

- customers will be treated with respect and courtesy.
- telephone calls will be answered promptly.
- members of staff will use answering machines on their telephones and telephone messages will be returned where possible, within 24 hours.
- when a member of staff is out of the office, a message to that effect will be left on his/her telephone answering machine together with an "out of office" response to incoming emails.
- when a new matter is referred to the CSSO, a new file will be opened, registered and assigned to a staff member within 3 working days.
- incoming letters and emails will be acknowledged within 7 working days.
- all correspondence coming from the CSSO will contain the name of the Officer dealing with the matter and his/her telephone extension and email address.
- when a different member of staff is assigned to deal with a file, a letter to that effect will issue to the customer as soon as possible.

## 6. Complaints

*Maintain a well-publicised, accessible, transparent and simple-to-use system of dealing with complaints about the quality of service provided*

- We are committed to delivering a high quality legal service in an ethical and confidential manner with efficiency and with a minimum of delay.
- We will address any complaint by a customer regarding the quality of service as follows:

- The complaint should first be made to the officer concerned in the CSSO and if it cannot be satisfactorily resolved, should then be brought to the attention of his/her Manager.
- In the event that the customer is still dissatisfied, he/she may require that the complaint be referred to the Human Resources Manager in the CSSO for examination and resolution.
- All complaints will be dealt with promptly, fairly and impartially.

\* When the CSSO has established a new system for the provision of legal services outside Dublin, following the transfer of the local State Solicitor prosecution service to the Director of Public Prosecutions, a procedure will be put in place for dealing with any complaints that may arise in relation to such services.

## 7. Appeals/Reviews

*Similarly, maintain a formalised, well-publicised, accessible, transparent and simple-to-use system of appeal/review for customers who are dissatisfied with decisions in relation to services.*

- If a complaint cannot be resolved satisfactorily through the intervention of the Human Resources Manager in the CSSO, then at the request of the customer the Human Resources Manager will arrange for a review of the complaint to be carried out by a member of MAC nominated by the Chief State Solicitor.
- The CSSO will monitor the number of formal complaints received and the number of reviews thereof.

## 8. Consultation and Evaluation

*Provide a structured approach to meaningful consultation with, and participation by, the customer in relation to the development, delivery and review of services. Ensure meaningful evaluation of service delivery.*

The CSSO will evaluate its performance against the service standards which it has set by:

- carrying out a further Client Survey in 2006.
- holding meetings with principal customers on a regular basis ranging from monthly to four

monthly intervals depending on customer requirements.

- consulting with customers on an ongoing basis whilst interacting with them.
- actively seeking feedback from customers to develop a better understanding of their requirements; the Customer Charter states that:

*“in order to evaluate our performance we would welcome any feedback or suggestions that you might have or if indeed our service has exceeded your expectations we would like to hear about it so that we can continue to provide you with a high quality service”.*

- examining internal customer service through regular staff surveys and through the partnership process.

## 9. Choice

*Provide choice, where feasible, in service delivery including payment methods, location of contact points, opening hours and delivery times. Use available and emerging technologies to ensure maximum access and choice, and quality of delivery.*

- The normal Office hours for the CSSO are 9.15a.m. to 5.30p.m. Monday to Thursday and 9.15a.m. to 5.15p.m. on Fridays. Voicemail and email messages may be left for staff outside these times.
- Staff will be available to deal with urgent court procedures, such as Habeas Corpus, Extradition and European Arrest Warrant applications, outside normal working hours. This arrangement includes the use of an on-call panel of staff which is maintained to provide service at all times.
- The CSSO will make the maximum use of information technology to enhance the choice and quality of service to our customers.

## 10. Official Languages Equality

*Provide quality services through Irish and/or bilingually and inform customers of their right to*

*choose to be dealt with through one or other of the official languages.*

- The CSSO is committed to the promotion of the Irish language and will make every effort to facilitate customers who wish to conduct business through the medium of Irish.
- A survey of staff in the CSSO was carried out at the end of 2004 to assess their proficiency and interest in Irish and identified both a capacity and willingness to provide an Irish language service.
- In particular we will:
  - Reply in Irish to correspondence received in Irish.
  - Support and encourage staff participation in Civil Service Irish Language training initiatives.
  - Liaise with the Office of the Attorney General in briefing and working with Irish speaking Counsel in appropriate cases.
  - Place on our electronic bulletin board and review at regular intervals, the names of staff who are competent Irish speakers.
  - Maintain and update the list of individuals and firms who provide Irish translation services.
  - Ensure that the list of publications in Irish in the CSSO Library is expanded and updated on a regular basis.
  - Continue the process already commenced of translating frequently used legal documentation into Irish.
  - Provide information in Irish on the CSSO's website.
  - Publish our Statement of Strategy and our Annual Report simultaneously in both Irish and English.
  - Establish an in-house Language Committee to organise and ensure compliance with the CSSO's commitments under the Official Languages Act 2003.

## 11. Better Co-ordination

*Foster a more coordinated and integrated approach to delivery of public services.*

- The CSSO is committed to better integration of legal services in carrying out its functions.
- Specifically we will:



- Work closely with Advisory Counsel in the Attorney General's Office to ensure consistency of service.
- Hold regular meetings with our colleagues in the Attorney General's Office and meet with in-house Departmental Legal Advisors, where appropriate.
- Maintain panels of External Counsel with expertise in particular areas of work.
- Arrange for certain legal services to be outsourced to external firms of Solicitors and where appropriate manage the delivery of such services in-house as has been done to date with certain very large projects.
- Identify areas of law that are expanding and declining and correctly deploy resources within the Legal Divisions of the CSSO to ensure that customer requirements are met.
- Continue to deliver on our commitments to the Public Sector modernisation programme.
- Examine and establish a new system for the provision of certain legal services in civil matters outside Dublin following the transfer of the local State Solicitor prosecution service to the Director of Public Prosecutions.
- monitor and review internal customer service on an ongoing basis.
- encourage feedback on the service from staff.
- use the electronic bulletin board and the intranet to disseminate information to staff.
- continue to keep staff up to date with developments through publication of "Grapevine" the joint in-house magazine of the Attorney General's Office and the CSSO.
- make known the role and responsibility of each member of the internal support units to other staff in the CSSO.
- ensure that VDU work stations are set out following best practice and are safe for use by members of staff. Independent consultants have already advised the CSSO on this issue.
- ensure that staff are trained to the highest standard in the operation of the new case and records management system.
- provide technical information in a jargon free form intelligible to non-specialists.
- encourage the further development of staff through PMDS.
- continue to use the partnership process to ensure that there is full consultation with staff.
- alleviate overcrowding by transferring, following consultation with staff, an entire Legal Division to new accommodation in 2006.

## 12. Internal Customer

*Ensure staff are recognised as internal customers and that they are properly supported and consulted with regard to service delivery issues.*

- The CSSO has ensured that staff are recognised as internal customers in the service that they provide to one another and upon which, service to the external customer is based.
- The Heads of the Internal Support Units have undergone training in internal customer care and an Internal Customer Charter for the CSSO is being developed.
- In particular, we will:
  - ensure that all staff receive training in customer service and that internal customer care is included as part of such training.
  - make it a requirement that requests for internal service be clear and timely.
  - expect internal services to be provided efficiently and with courtesy.
  - hold regular meetings of the heads of the service areas.



## Contacting the Office

You may contact us at:

### Address

Chief State Solicitors Office,  
Osmond House,  
Little Ship Street,  
Dublin 8.

### Telephone

Our telephone number is 01 417 6100.

The Office also maintains a “direct line” system which enables a direct contact to the desk of the Officer concerned. If you know the Officer’s extension number, you should replace the last four digits of the main telephone number with the extension you require.

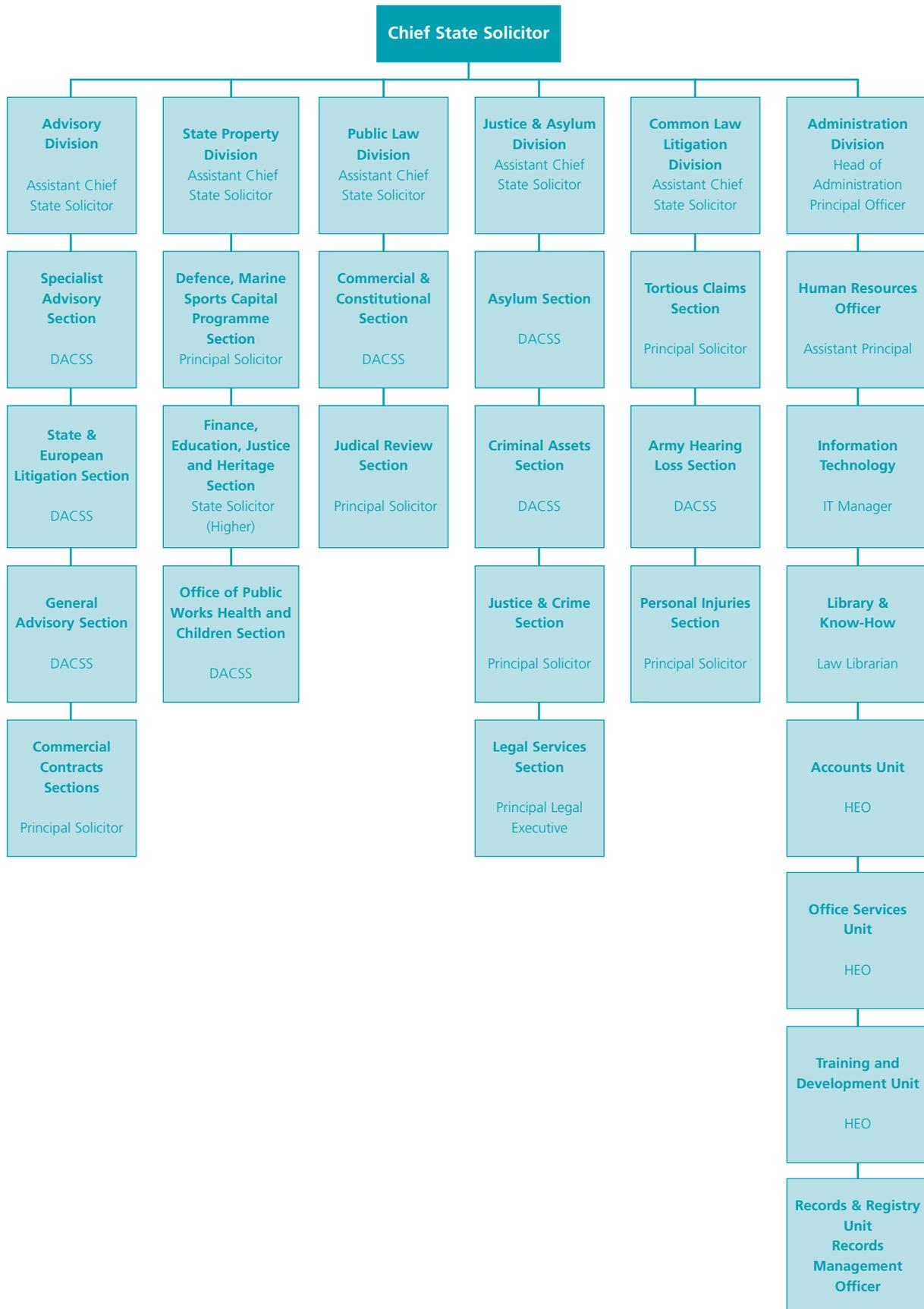
### Email

Staff in the Office can also be contacted at:

- [Forename\\_Surname@csso.gov.ie](mailto:Forename_Surname@csso.gov.ie)

# Appendix 1

## Organisation Chart



## Appendix 2

### Grading Structure

<b>Solicitor Grades</b>	Chief State Solicitor Assistant Chief State Solicitor Deputy Assistant Chief State Solicitor Principal Solicitor State Solicitor Higher State Solicitor
<b>Legal Technical Officer Grades</b>	Principal Legal Executive Deputy Principal Legal Executive Assistant Principal Legal Executive Higher Legal Executive Legal Executive Law Clerk (including internal trainee law clerk)
<b>Administrative &amp; Clerical Grades</b>	Principal Officer Assistant Principal Officer Higher Executive Officer Executive Officer Staff Officer Clerical Officer (incl. HCO) Service Officer Cleaner
<b>Other Grades</b>	Accountant Law Librarian Assistant Law Librarian Records Management Officer



Office of the Attorney General



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**Client Service Guide 2005-2007**