

LEGAL AID BOARD



CORPORATE PLAN 1999-2002

Second Corporate Plan of the Legal Aid Board

Legal Aid Board

Corporate Plan 1999 - 2002

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FOREWORD BY CHAIRPERSON

I have great pleasure in introducing the Board's second Corporate Plan covering the period 1999 to 2002.

During the period of our first Corporate Plan, our focus was primarily on gearing the organisation to efficiently and effectively deliver on its mission. In the period of this Plan, I want our focus to be firmly fixed on the delivery of a quality service to our clients in a manner which represents clear value for money for the State.

If we are to achieve the very stretching goals which we have set for ourselves over the period ahead, it will be necessary for us to bring about real and fundamental change in the way we do our business. Successfully introducing such change will require the active cooperation, support and participation of the Board, its management and staff at all levels working together in partnership.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my fellow Board members, management and staff for their inputs and efforts in preparing this Corporate Plan. I would also like to thank the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform and his officials for their continued support over what has been a very challenging period of evolution for the Legal Aid Board.

I have no doubt but that the challenges which lie ahead will be successfully met and that this will be achieved to the benefit of all stakeholders.

Clare Connellan
Chairperson



OVERVIEW BY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

The period covered by our first Corporate Plan, 1996 to 2000, represented a difficult period in the history of the Board. Much of the functioning of the Board was overshadowed by unacceptable waiting lists, inadequate resources and a working environment having considerable scope for improvement.

We have come a long way in terms of addressing some of these issues. For example, in the period 1996 to 1999, our staff numbers have increased from 202 to 292 and our Grant-in-Aid has increased by 84% from £6.5m to £11.953m.

Despite the difficulties involved, we have extended the service geographically and we now operate in 30 permanent and 14 part-time law centres around the country. In addition, we have successfully introduced the Refugee Legal Service dealing with 1,200 cases in the current year.

However, we continue to face considerable challenges over the period ahead. While the introduction of a more widespread private practitioner scheme will help, our waiting lists continue to be too lengthy. One of our biggest challenges in addressing this matter is our inability to recruit and retain a sufficient number of experienced and qualified staff at all levels.

Our second Corporate Plan, which is designed to more definitively address all of the challenges which we face, has been prepared with considerable input by the Board, management and staff at all levels. It sets a very challenging agenda of change for the period ahead. We will have to meet the targets we have set for ourselves taking full account of some recent developments. These include:

- the Government decision in July last to decentralise the Board's headquarters to Cahirciveen, Co Kerry which will have to be implemented over the next two years with minimum disruption to the workload and to staff;
- the recently received report from the independent Labour Court assessors on PCW pay claims, the satisfactory completion of negotiations in relation to which will be a critical success factor for the future; and
- the establishment of our Partnership Committee as an integral part of our Strategic Management approach.

I look forward to working with the Board, management and staff in using our Strategic Management process, as set out in this Plan, to alter in a fundamental way the way we do our business in order to bring about an enhanced working environment for all our staff and a more efficient, effective and readily accessible legal aid service for our clients.



Frank Goodman
Chief Executive



Introduction



INTRODUCTION

Corporate Planning

The Government's Strategic Management Initiative (SMI) was introduced in 1994. A central feature of the SMI process is the production by Government departments and agencies of statements of strategy/corporate plans setting out their strategic direction, corporate goals and business objectives on a three-year cyclical basis. This Corporate Plan is the second such plan produced by the Legal Aid Board, under the overall SMI guidelines, and covers the period 1999 to 2002.

A highly participative approach, involving extensive staff consultation, has been adopted since the introduction of the corporate planning process in the Board in November 1995. The Board has been undergoing extensive change, particularly over the last five years. Such change can only be effectively absorbed in an environment where there is a high degree of interaction and concerted action by the Board, management and staff in meeting the very significant challenges involved.

This Second Corporate Plan seeks to further embed a strategic management approach to the way we go about our business, to provide clear guidance for all concerned, including our stakeholders, on our goals and objectives and to provide the overall framework for translating strategy into action at all levels within the Board's structures.

Our Mandate

The Scheme of Civil Legal Aid and Advice has been in existence since 1979. The Legal Aid Board was established as an independent body, initially on an administrative basis, to administer the scheme. The purpose of the scheme was to make the services of solicitors, and, where necessary, barristers, available to persons of modest means in relation to matters of civil law. The remit of the Board does not extend to criminal legal aid which is available under a separate scheme provided for in the Criminal Justice (Legal Aid) Act, 1962. The functioning of the Board on an administrative basis continued until 11 October 1996, when the Civil Legal Aid Act, 1995, establishing it on a statutory basis, was brought into effect. The mandate of the Board is based on the provisions of the Civil Legal Aid Act, 1995, and in particular, Section 5 (1) of that Act which states:

The principal function of the Board shall be to provide, within the Board's resources and subject to the other provisions of this Act, legal aid and advice in civil cases to persons who satisfy the requirements of this Act.

In November 1998, the Board agreed to a request from the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform to set up and run a dedicated legal service for those seeking asylum. Since February 1999 the service, known as the Refugee Legal Service, has operated from a centre located at Timberlay House, Dublin 2.

This is the largest of the Board's legal offices with a total staff of 28, including seven solicitors. Since it commenced operation, it has provided legal services to some 1,200 persons.

Structure and Staffing

The statutory scheme of civil legal aid is administered by the Legal Aid Board, the members of which are appointed by the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform. The Board consists of a Chairperson and twelve ordinary members, of whom two must be practising barristers and two practising solicitors, and two of whom must be representatives of the staff. The parent body for the Legal Aid Board is the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform.

The administrative structures of the Board are headed by a Chief Executive who is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the Board and for the execution of policies formulated by the Board.

The staff of the Board consists of just under 300 people, including 96 solicitors, who work in the Board's headquarters in Dublin, the Refugee Legal Service and in 30 permanent law centres throughout the country. Legal services are also provided through part-time law centres.

Below the level of the Chief Executive, the headquarters functions are organised under two Directors, one of whom is responsible for the central Board functions in relation to the provision of legal aid and the other of whom is responsible for all the corporate support functions.

The management functions associated with the day-to-day running of the law centres are discharged by solicitors-in-charge. The law centres themselves are staffed by solicitors at varying grade levels, by law clerks and clerical staff who, together with the solicitors-in-charge, provide the front-line service to clients.

Legal services are, in the main, provided by solicitors in the full-time employment of the Board. In October 1993, however, a pilot project was introduced using private practitioners to provide legal aid services in District Court barring, maintenance and custody cases. The Review Group established to evaluate the effectiveness of this pilot project recommended the permanent establishment of this complementary service in District Court family law cases, and Ministerial approval was obtained to establish this service on a nation-wide basis. This scheme currently operates in Dublin and the nation-wide rollout of the private practitioner scheme will take place in late 1999.

The services of counsel are provided under an Agreement originally entered into in 1980 between the Bar Council and the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform. Barristers, whose names are on a panel drawn up by the Bar Council, are briefed by solicitors in the normal way. The agreement with the Bar Council was renegotiated during 1998.

Appendix I sets out in more detail the structure, staffing, location of law centres and contact telephone numbers, etc. relating to the Board.

Resource Allocation

The Grant-in-Aid for the Board in 1999 amounts to £11.95m, of which £6.13m represents pay and other staff-related costs.

The Board is funded through a Legal Aid Fund established under the 1995 Act. The Fund consists of:

- Grants-in-Aid in each year provided through the Vote for the Office of the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform; and
- all other payments made to the Fund, including contributions paid by clients and costs/damages recovered from legally-aided persons.

The Board has been undergoing a period of very extensive growth which has effectively seen a trebling of its resources since 1992. This growth reflects two factors. Firstly, it reflects the extension of the service to geographic areas where it was not previously available. Secondly, it reflects an underlying trend in the growth of demand for legal aid and advice. Despite the additional resources provided, which includes increases in 1998 and 1999 of 14.5 per cent and 24 per cent respectively in the Grant-in-Aid, demand for legal services has been outstripping the capacity of the Board to meet it. Addressing the extraordinary increase in demand therefore was the most significant challenge which faced the Board in recent years. Additional staff recruited during 1999 will help to address this issue and make the achievement of the programmes and actions set out in this plan a more realistic proposition.

Legislative Basis

The Board has a firm legislative basis under the Civil Legal Aid Act, 1995. This Act provides, for the first time, a statutory right for qualified persons to legal services in the civil area. The Board continues to monitor the impact of this relatively new legislation on its work and has a number of working groups addressing matters relating to the full implementation of statutory provisions in areas such as recovery of costs and appeal procedures. In addition, the introduction of the new refugee service required a Ministerial Order to allow the Board to provide services before a tribunal.

Apart from its own primary legislation, the Board is also impacted upon by other legislative developments in the area of civil law and, in particular, family law, such as the introduction of domestic violence legislation in 1996 and divorce in February, 1997. An indication of the extensive change which has taken place in this area can be obtained from a look at the twenty pieces of legislation passed between the two divorce referenda as listed in Appendix 2.

Additional recent legislation which will have serious implications for the Board is that concerning freedom of information. Although the Board does not at present come within the ambit of the legislation, it has set up a committee to consider the implications of this legislation for its operations and to prepare the appropriate documentation and procedures.

The Board's accounts are audited by the Comptroller and Auditor General. An annual report is produced and submitted to the Minister, who lays copies of the report before the House of the Oireachtas.

Environmental Analysis

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ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

Demand for Legal Services

The Board continues to be severely challenged in meeting overall demand for legal services. Despite considerable additional resources being made available and the introduction of new initiatives, such as the private practitioner scheme, the increase in demand has seen the Board face long waiting lists for its services in many of its 30 centres. The additional staff resources recently made available have been targeted at ensuring that this situation is now addressed. It is important to note, however, that a priority service is provided in a range of cases including domestic violence, child care and cases where the Statute of Limitations is about to expire.

The tables in relation to family breakdown, later in this section, set out a pattern of growth in demand and supply for the legal services provided by the Board.

Demand Drivers

The main drivers of increased demand to date are as follows:

- There have been extensive changes in Irish society and elsewhere since the Legal Aid Board was established in 1979. There are ever increasing numbers of separated individuals as a result of marriage breakdown. In addition, an increasingly young and mobile population means that it is not uncommon for a family to have substantial connections with more than one country, introducing an international dimension to family law. It is not unusual to have to consider the impact in Irish law and the jurisdictional implications of a scenario where a spouse, domiciled in Ireland and resident abroad, receives a divorce decree from another country.
- The Government's programme arising primarily from a review of the legislative changes required to deal with the circumstances which would follow on the introduction of divorce resulted in the enactment of 20 separate pieces of family-related legislation between 1986 and 1996.
- The Board's own development programme, which has seen the number of permanent law centres doubling in number, has in itself given rise to its own increase in demand. There is evidence to suggest that the availability of the service locally has allowed people, who otherwise might not have had full access to legal remedies, to avail of our services. The very substantial initial demand for the service in Newbridge and Tullamore, for example, provides adequate proof of this point.

Details of cases dealt with by category and by court together with a table showing the average waiting times in the years 1995 - 1998 are included in appendices 3, 4 and 5.

Future Demand

The Board expects that over the period of this Corporate Plan demand for its services will continue to be high. In addition to the factors already identified as driving the demand profile, the Board anticipates that other developments over the last 12 months or so will impact on the overall provision of civil legal aid. These developments include new legislation concerning children and the provision of services to asylum seekers.

In the area of family law the census figures for the years 1986, 1991 and 1996 show that there is no abatement in the level of increasing family breakdown. The following statistics have been extracted from the published figures for those years.

	Total married #	Total marriage breakdown *
1986:	1,527,662	40,347
1991:	1,572,274	58,999
1996:	1,628,805	94,433

(# The figures for "total married" includes married, remarried, separated, divorced and widowed categories)

(The figures for "total marriage breakdown" include deserted, annulled, legally separated, other separated, divorced and remarried following dissolution of previous marriage).*

The number of persons who stated that they had suffered marital breakdown increased by 134% in the 10 years between 1986 and 1996. The rate of marital breakdown in 1986 was 1 in 38. This increased to 1 in 27 by 1991. By 1996 it had further increased to 1 in every 17 (6 per cent).

By the next census in 2001, if the current trend continues, 1 in every 10 married persons are likely to disclose that they have experienced marital breakdown.

A key strategic objective for the Board in this planning period will be a submission by the Board to the Minister setting out its policy and views on the future of civil legal aid services. The preparation of an appropriate submission with all relevant statistics will represent a key priority task for the Board and its management team.

Nature and Character of the Service

The nature of the business undertaken by the Board presents its own unique challenges. In line with Government policy and the governing legislation, the Board is essentially a service organisation that seeks to respond to a set of demands made upon it over which, by definition, it exercises little control. Its only discretionary intervention is in relation to the determination of eligibility within the terms of the scheme as provided for in its governing legislation. Quite apart, however, from its inability to predict and/or control demand for the services it provides, the following issues must be recognised as key features of the environment in which the Board operates:

- the right to civil legal aid and advice is a statutory right which includes the rights of review and appeal for potential applicants denied such service or for those who might consider that they have not been provided with an adequate service in accordance with the Act;
- the Board, in providing such service, must balance on a continuing basis the merits of each case, the resources available to it, its waiting lists, the requirements of all its stakeholders including staff, its parent body, the individual needs of each applicant for service and its collective responsibility for all applicants for service;
- perhaps to a greater extent than in many organisations, the balances and trade-offs to be achieved in meeting all stakeholder needs requires the Board to address what are, in effect, competing and, in some instances, conflicting requirements;
- within a very geographically dispersed organisation, the Board must seek to deliver a quality service ensuring comparable treatment for all of its clients, irrespective of location;
- the nature of the service is such that the Board, its management and staff are dealing with a caseload which comprises individual cases, a vast number of which can arise in circumstances of stress for the applicants who present themselves for service to the Board;
- the work of its nature is also stressful for the staff of the Board. While, generally speaking, the caseload can be classified into broad categories, each individual case has its own unique set of circumstances, many of which are difficult and demanding. Furthermore, the Board must provide a service for all those who qualify under the terms of the Civil Legal Aid Act, 1995 and, unlike private legal practice, has no discretion in such matters;
- a priority service is accorded to cases involving domestic violence, risk to children and other specified categories.

Internal Capability

The most significant internal capability issue which arose during the period of the first Corporate Plan was the adequacy of the resources available to meet the remit of the Board. Considerable progress has been made on this front and the Board is determined to address this issue during the period of this plan in consultation and co-operation with the Departments of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, and Finance.

However, despite the resource shortfall constraints and other challenges to be faced as regards internal capability as set out below, the Board continues to provide a professional service to those clients it is in a position to serve. Priority cases are dealt with expeditiously and the service has been gradually extended to geographic areas where it was not previously available. The Board, its management and staff are committed to developing a quality service for all those who are entitled to apply for legal services.

A further matter to be taken into account in relation to the challenges facing the Board is the recent Government decision to transfer the Board's headquarters to Cahirciveen, Co Kerry. This decision was made in late July and since that date the Board has completed an impact assessment on the likely affect the relocation will have on the ability of the Board to provide legal services from that location. Since the completion of the impact assessment, discussions have taken place with the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform and the basis on which the transfer will take place within a two year period has been agreed. The Board has also agreed with the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform on an additional staffing complement to take account of the necessity of planning the transfer and maintaining a Dublin base after the bulk of the Board's functions are transferred to Cahirciveen. The full implications

of the transfer are set out in the Impact Assessment Report and must be considered in the implementation stage of this Corporate Plan.

During the period of the first Corporate Plan, considerable attention was, of necessity, focused on the internal capability of the organisation to meet its remit. Five key areas were identified as requiring improvement in order to position the organisation better to meet its key goals and objectives.

The five key areas involved were:

- (i) Staff Development; (Appendix 6)
- (ii) Information Technology; (Appendix 7)
- (iii) Communications; (Appendix 8)
- (iv) Professional Procedures; and (Appendix 9)
- (v) Administrative Procedures. (Appendix 10)

The issues and problems addressed in these areas were identified through a widespread consultation process involving staff at all levels leading to the production of our first corporate plan. Within the Plan implementation period, five workgroups were established, representative of staff at all levels, to address these five areas. Considerable progress has been made in each area; nevertheless, a substantial amount of work remains to be done in each of these areas during the period of this second Plan.

The details of the work completed in each area are set out in the appendices 6-10.

Current Issues

The key strategic internal capability issues which we face are:

- a combination of high staff turnover at all levels and our difficulties in recruiting suitable experienced and qualified staff to replace them within a reasonable time frame.
- caseload management and an increase in the throughput of cases remains high on the agenda of corporate challenges to be faced;
- while the Board has already achieved its original target spending of 3 per cent of payroll on staff training and development, recent significant developments in legislation and planned on-going improvements in the quality of service, including information technology developments, will dictate that this target may have to be exceeded during this planning period;
- internal communications, while improved, are in need of further development and it is intended to focus our work in this area through implementation of the recommendations of an externally commissioned communications audit;
- morale in the organisation is felt to be low and much work remains to be done including work in relation to career structures;
- progress continues to be made on standardising and rolling out, on an organisation - wide basis, administrative and professional procedures to achieve a more consistent, measurable and effective service;
- we are now putting in place a much needed three-phase information technology strategic plan and its implementation will be a critical success factor in providing a robust support structure for streamlining work and reducing some of the impacts of staff resource shortfalls;

- financial controls have been considerably strengthened. However, some weaknesses, particularly in the area of the Board's own internal audit function, remain to be addressed over the period of this Plan;
- the historical legacy of a strained industrial relations climate continues to impact on the culture of the organisation. Again, an externally commissioned report on staff relations issues will help us target our efforts to improve matters in this area over the period of this plan; and
- a particular feature of the service provided, which distinguishes it from a private legal practice, is the frequency with which different law centres can be required to represent both sides in a family law case.

Additional Issues

While the emphasis in this planning period will, therefore, remain to a large extent focused on further development in the areas targeted for attention under our original Corporate Plan, a number of critical additional internal capability issues now also fall to be addressed. These include:

- the need to review the overall management and staff structures as part of a process of change and organisational transformation;
- in particular, the need to target the level of experienced support staff available within law centres, the slowness with which staff become available because of difficulties within the current model of centralised recruitment for the Civil Service as a whole and a variety of issues concerned with temporary and contract employment;
- designing and implementing an agreed common management model for law centres of all sizes;
- individual management models for all headquarters' functions;
- developing further the partnership model to encompass all staff which is a critical factor in ensuring the Board's continued success;
- developing divisional or local business plans and embedding performance measurement and performance management in our overall management culture and process;
- strengthening further our links with our parent body and other external stakeholders; and
- developing an effective library/research service and other necessary back-up services.

Client Focus

The corporate goals, objectives and action plans set out in this Corporate Plan place particular emphasis on service to the client. To date we have not been able to concentrate to the extent we would wish on client service, particularly in relation to access to the service, and we hope now to achieve substantial improvements in this area over the period of this Plan.

Essentially, the organisation exists to provide a service to our clients. The challenges we face in providing a quality service within a developing organisation are considerable. We must continually strive to meet our obligations having regard to the following three key factors:

- each client should get a service of an acceptable quality consistent with the terms of the statutory scheme which we are charged with operating and the need to provide value for money;
- we must ensure that standards of service are as uniform as possible across the whole organisation while recognising that each individual case is a case in its own right; and
- our case management and case monitoring systems must enable us to ensure that we use resources efficiently and effectively to achieve value for money and maximum throughput without compromising acceptable appropriate professional standards to which we must adhere in processing individual cases.

Corporate Mission and Goals

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CORPORATE MISSIONS AND GOALS

Mission

Our mission statement is as follows:

To provide the clients of the Legal Aid Board with a professional, efficient and cost-effective legal aid service.

Our Values

The values which underpin the operations of the Board may best be summarised as follows:

- Confidentiality
- Client Care and Quality Service
- Integrity / Ethical Values / Professional Standards
- Staff Development and Care - allied to Good Management
- Cost Effectiveness

High Level Goals

The following high level goals form the basis on which our Corporate Plan has been developed and, in this regard, they underpin all of our specific actions and programmes:

- to contribute to the national social infrastructure by providing an efficient comprehensive and quality civil legal service, particularly in the area of family law;
- to contribute to the integration of our actions with those of other bodies involved in all civil law areas including family law;
- to contribute to the effectiveness of new and existing legislation by providing ready access to legal services for people of modest means;
- to develop a comprehensive human resource policy to include motivation/reward, development, training of staff and equality of opportunity at all levels;
- to develop an effective library, information technology service and research facility to support and enhance the work of staff and Board members;
- to develop a range of performance indicators, in consultation with all staff, which are relevant and which will ensure a quality service and serve as proof that we are providing an efficient and effective service giving value for money; and
- to develop an appropriate management structure, to ensure good support and control with appropriate quality assurances in all areas of the Board's operations.

Focus

Our focus must be to provide a service to our clients and meet the requirements of all our stakeholders while recognising that we are also a public service organisation which is subject to the constraints, controls and exigencies inherent in operating in that milieu.



Specific Programmes and Actions

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SPECIFIC PROGRAMMES AND ACTIONS

The Board's original Corporate Plan recognised that the initial concentration of our strategic management approach would have to be on overcoming many shortcomings in our internal capability which affect our ability to discharge our remit, having regard to the high-level goals we have set.

Through extensive staff involvement and concerted inputs from the Board members, we have come a long way since we launched our strategic management process in 1995. However, we recognised from the outset that we were starting from a low base. To this extent, our strategic focus over the next period must remain on the critical areas requiring further improvement and development to enhance our ability as an organisation to face the challenge of providing a quality service against a background of ever increasing demand.

While we recognise that the ultimate aim of our strategic focus has to be directed towards our clients and other stakeholders in the external environment, we are clearly not yet in a position to direct our full attention towards this arena. We are still at the stage where much of our effort must be focused on ensuring that we have put everything in place to ensure we are maximising the resources available to us and operating procedures and controls which will enable us to objectively establish that we are optimising throughput while adhering to quality standards consistent with our statutory mandate.

In brief, achievements to date include: -

- substantial progress has been made on the development of a comprehensive computer system including the completion of the Applications package which is currently being installed in law centres. Professional procedures have been adapted for computerisation and the computer development work for this phase will be contracted out in the near future.
- an entirely new approach to training, including a training needs analysis, has been put in place for all staff. The development of new training programmes to meet the work needs of the Board and the personal development of staff continues on an ongoing basis. As part of the implementation programme for this Plan the training need analysis is being reviewed to ensure that training programmes are aligned with the objectives and strategies of the Board.
- agreement on, and documentation of, a substantial range of administrative and professional procedures. This work will assist in training and computerisation as well as in identifying best practice for all staff; and
- developing a range of new communications practices including regular staff meetings, access to minutes of management meetings and the commissioning of an independent communications audit, the recommendations of which are currently being considered.

In the remainder of this section of our Corporate Plan, we set out, therefore, the specific programmes and actions to be pursued over the next three-year period in delivering on our high-level goals and values.

These programmes and actions comprise a broad framework through which strategy will be translated into action over the period of this Plan. An outline of progress to date and ongoing work programmes covering the five key areas for development targeted in our original Corporate Plan and based on the outputs of our workgroups is, as already pointed out, set out in appendices 6-10.

An Efficient, Comprehensive and Quality Legal Service

The main programmes and actions which we will continue to develop in this area are:

- continue/complete the standardisation of professional and administrative procedures and use these to ensure uniformity of approaches and eliminate the unnecessary waste of resources;
- introduce a management model for law centres of all sizes to enable more active case load management to take place;
- develop detailed operational plans for each law centre and for each division at headquarters;
- develop procedures to enable systematic prioritisation of cases to take place;
- introduce agreed performance measures and indicators in law centres and at headquarters;
- develop a Customer Service Action Plan and implement it at all levels in the organisation;
- undertake a programme of client surveys to ascertain levels of satisfaction with the service; and
- develop a system of quality control as an integral element of the management model.

Success in the foregoing areas requires taking our overall strategic management process down to a more micro level in terms of detailed operational plans and performance measurement. We have been constrained to date in terms of our ability to develop and implement key performance indicators by the absence of information support systems. Within our overall three-phase IT development plan we are moving towards developing comprehensive comparative statistics between law centres, including time measurement on cases and more flexible and active workload management. We will also aim to develop towards accurate costing of procedures and case processing. In addition, we are increasingly progressing to the stage where we can introduce similar key performance indicators for all our headquarters and support functions.

During the currency of this Plan, therefore, we expect to achieve a major shift in focus towards detailed operational plans and key performance indicators. However, the full benefit of our work in these areas will only be realised as Phase 3 of our information technology strategy is implemented.

Integrate Actions with those of other Bodies involved in Civil Law Areas

The main programmes and actions in this area will include:

- clarifying and prioritising the ongoing relationships of the Board with all stakeholders;
- developing our relationships with the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform and its associated bodies to ensure the most effective use of resources in areas of common interest including training, information technology and financial management;
- reviewing and agreeing all reporting relationships with the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform with particular reference to the requirements of the Civil Legal Aid Act, 1995;
- liaison with the Law Society and the Bar Council to ensure the appropriate level of co-operation and support in developing the Board's services for all those entitled to avail of them; and
- liaison with the Courts Service to ensure the most efficient use of resources, in particular, professional time and an appropriate level of service for the Board's clients.

Effectiveness of Legislation and Ready Access to Legal Services

The specific actions and programmes to be undertaken in this area include those set out below.

- participate in the process of ensuring the effectiveness of new and existing legislation;
- activate the case prioritisation system referred to previously;
- examine the establishment of stakeholders panels to better establish client needs;
- consider further delegation of legal aid decisions;
- develop the private practitioner scheme on a nation-wide basis;
- continue to network with relevant local private and public agencies;
- review and re-design the appeals system;
- continue to improve facilities at permanent Law Centres, particularly for those with physical disabilities;
- examine the further use of part-time offices and clinics in locations remote from our full-time Law Centres; and
- support the effective use of the new statutory Courts Service.

A Comprehensive Human Resource Policy

Our main focus in this area will include the following:

- implement the outcome of the training needs analysis and, in this regard, maintain and, if necessary, exceed the target of three per cent of payroll being expended on training and development;
- specifically support the introduction of new computerised systems with a comprehensive programme of staff training;
- develop and enhance our employee assistance and support services;
- provide specific training for staff in dealing with stress and develop a stress management programme;
- ensure that all staff at all levels are actively involved in our strategic management process;
- provide for continued equality of opportunity at all levels and ensure continued compliance with all equality legislation - a particular focus will be on the requirements of the Employment Equality Act, 1998;
- improve management practices, particularly those involved with the management of staff;
- delegate and devolve decision-making, particularly in relation to tasks involved with dealing with the public;
- inculcate a culture of internal customer care in all our dealings with staff, including the effective operation of all agreed procedures;
- develop an effective performance management system for staff at all levels; and
- develop actions to assist in the motivation and the retention of staff.

Much of the work we have been undertaking to date has been concerned with ensuring that we are achieving the maximum possible with the resources already allocated to us. We are fortunate that we have been highly supported by our staff in our efforts in this area. While we have made some progress in this regard, there are, however, a number of priority areas in relation to staffing needs which remain to be addressed during the duration of this Plan.

We, therefore, intend to work very closely with our parent Department and with the central authorities specifically in relation to the following action points:

- to achieve maximum flexibility in our ability to utilise increases in our Grant-in-Aid to address priority staffing needs;
- to increase the input of support staff in order to maximise the effectiveness of our professional staff;
- to explore means by which the system of recruitment of clerical staff can be made more responsive to our needs and help us overcome the inefficiencies associated with inadequately skilled/trained temporary staff, a significant number of whom leave on such a regular basis as to constitute a waste of the Board's resources;
- to explore the possibilities of gaining more leverage from a better system of outsourcing to meet work load peaks for all services particularly in administrative support areas including IT; and
- to allocate additional dedicated resources to S.M.I. related work.

An effective Library, Information Technology and Research Service

The main specific programmes and actions to be pursued in this area include those set out below:

- to implement, as a matter of urgency, the comprehensive three-phase information technology plan already developed;
- to continue to adapt our professional procedures for use in computerised packages;
- to develop or access an effective library service consistent with the needs of the Board. The absence of such a service can be a significant contributor to waste of professional time under our current arrangements;
- to utilise the library system to develop our research capability; and
- better dissemination of information in relation to our services.

A Performance-Based Value for Money Service

The main specific programmes and actions in this area are:

- introduction of the performance measures and indicators regime referred to earlier;
- develop an integrated system of performance review based on detailed operational plans incorporating targets and performance measures;
- complete the programme of addressing financial control weaknesses identified in the internal audit report undertaken by our parent Department;
- develop an overall Value for Money framework, introduce VFM auditing and provide VFM training for staff;
- develop the Board's internal audit function; and
- document and implement improved procedures in relation to purchasing and provision of services.

An Appropriate Management Structure

The main specific programmes and actions in this area are:

- to review the management and staff structures in the light of the Corporate Plan requirements, the independent reports prepared by Mr Ray Cass and Dr. Lee Komito and having regard to the findings of the independent assessors appointed by the Labour Court to report in relation to P.C.W. payclaims;
- to identify the primary areas of concern in existing management structures;
- to identify the specific services and areas of responsibility requiring management support and control at law centre and central level;
- to identify all legislative requirements, including those in the Civil Legal Aid Act, 1995, and the Comptroller and Auditor General (Amendment) Act, 1993, with which the Board is required to comply;
- to assess the existing competencies of the management and staff resources of the Board having regard to the foregoing;
- to identify the resources and services, including training, required to provide an appropriate level of management skills; and
- to review resource requirements and resource allocations to the different aspects of the Board's overall operations.

Implementation and Monitoring

5

IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

We are very conscious of the fact that our specific programmes and actions need to represent more than an aspirational wish list. We need to convert strategy into action in a concerted manner and to build on the very substantial base of participative strategic management established during the currency of the original Corporate Plan.

Critical Success Factors

The following factors will heavily influence our ability to convert strategy into action at this important juncture in our development:

- partnership with our staff and our external stakeholders;
- motivation, commitment and the calibre of our staff;
- making planning a more specific reality at divisional and local level through developing detailed operational plans and performance measures;
- professional management at all levels of the organisation based on collective action, accountability and driving by the management team;
- credibility with our clients; and
- retention of an adequate level of funding and approved staff levels in law centres and headquarters.

Planning Framework

We already have the basic organisational structures, management processes and consultative mechanisms in place for Corporate Plan preparation purposes and for necessary monitoring and review of implementation. We will, however, need to develop these further as new tasks arise and require to be driven during this planning period.

Monitoring and Review

The Strategic Management Steering Group and the Board's SMI Committee will be our primary mechanisms for ensuring ongoing monitoring and review. The Steering Group will undertake systematic progress reviews on a quarterly basis on all our programmes and actions.

Work groups, organising specific action programmes, will report to the Steering Group on a timescale which will enable progress reports to be built in to the quarterly Steering Group reviews. Once our detailed divisional and local operational plans are in place, solicitors-in-charge of law centres and divisional heads will also review and report on progress on a regular basis in their own areas of operation.

While the Board will be regularly appraised of progress and developments as a matter of course, it will also be our intention to have formal six monthly reports to the Board. This will enable us to take into account any adjustments to our Plan driven by changing circumstances and to rollover our Plan as necessary on a systematic basis.

In addition, we have established a Partnership Committee on the lines envisaged under the P2000 Agreement. This Committee will provide a further forum for taking on board feedback in relation to its implementation of our strategic plan.

Outline Implementation Programme

<i>Action</i>	<i>Relevant Dates</i>
1 Approval of Plan by Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform	July 1999
2 Setting up of work groups	September 1999
3 Identification of work programmes for groups	September/October 1999
4 Presentation of plans and work programmes to Board and staff (at one day seminar)	13 November 1999
5 Six month review for Board and staff	April 2000
6 One year review for Board and staff (at one day seminar)	October 2000

Appendices

APPENDIX 1

STAFF NUMBERS

HEAD OFFICE

Chief Executive	1
Director (Principal Officer)	2
Assistant Director (Assistant Principal)	4
Higher Executive Officer	9
Executive Officer	10
Staff Officer	1
Law Clerk	1
Clerical Officer	16
Accountant	1
Private Practitioner Scheme	2

LAW CENTRES

Solicitor Grade C (P.O. level)	9
Solicitor Grade B (A.P. level)	32
Solicitor Grade A (A.O. level)	48
Executive Officer	1
Staff Officer	1
Law Clerk	31
Clerical Officer	94

REFUGEE LEGAL SERVICE

Solicitor Grade C (P.O. level)	1
Solicitor Grade B (A.P. level)	4
Solicitor Grade A (A.O. level)	2
Staff Officer	1
Legal Clerk	3
Law Clerk	9
Clerical Officer	10

CONTACT NUMBERS

FULL TIME LAW CENTRES

LAW CENTRE

SOLICITOR-IN-CHARGE

CAVAN

Newcourt Shopping Centre, Church Street, Cavan
Tel: (049) 4331110 Fax: (049) 4331304

Stephanie Coggans

CLARE

Unit 6A, Merchant's Square, Ennis, Co Clare
Tel: (065) 6821929 Fax: (065) 6821939

Mary Cuffe

CORK

North Quay House, Popes Quay, Cork
Tel: (021) 551 686 Fax: (021) 551 690

Betty Dineen

1A South Mall, Cork

Tel: (021) 275 998 Fax: (021) 276 927

Brian Sheridan

DONEGAL

Houston House, Main Street, Letterkenny, Co Donegal
Tel: (074) 26177 Fax: (074) 26086

Geraldine O'Connor

DUBLIN

45 Lower Gardiner Street, Dublin 1
Tel: (01) 874 5440 Fax: (01) 874 6896

Kevin Liston

9 Lower Ormond Quay, Dublin 1
Tel: (01) 872 4133 Fax: (01) 872 4937

Gerard Kirwan

Tower Centre, Clondalkin Village, Dublin 22
Tel: (01) 457 6011 Fax: (01) 457 6007

Hugh Cunniam

Village Green, Tallaght, Dublin 24
Tel: (01) 451 1519 Fax: (01) 451 7989

Pauline Corcoran

44/49 Main Street, Finglas, Dublin 11
Tel: (01) 864 0314 Fax: (01) 864 0362

John Weston

47 Upper Mount Street, Dublin 2
Tel: (01) 662 3655 Fax: (01) 662 3662

Ray Finucane

Unit 6-8, Business Centre, Clonsilla Road,
Blanchardstown, Dublin 15
Tel: (01) 820 0455 Fax: (01) 820 0450

Frank Caffrey

GALWAY

5 Mary Street, Galway
Tel: (091) 561 650 Fax: (091) 563 825

Mary Griffin

LAW CENTRE

SOLICITOR-IN-CHARGE

KERRY

1 Day Place, Tralee, Co Kerry
Tel: (066) 7126900 Fax: (066) 7123631

Carol Ann Coolican

KILDARE

Canning Place, Newbridge, Co Kildare
Tel: (045) 435 777 Fax: (045) 435 766

Verona Lambe

KILKENNY

Maudlin Street, Kilkenny
Tel: (056) 61611 Fax: (056) 61562

Niall Murphy

LAOIS

Unit 6A, Bridge Street, Portlaoise, Co Laois
Tel: (0502) 61366 Fax: (0502) 61362

Marie Ni Cruadhlaoidh

LIMERICK

Lock Quay, Limerick
Tel: (061) 314 599 Fax: (061) 318 330

Fergal Rooney

LONGFORD

Credit Union Courtyard, 50A Main Street, Longford
Tel: (043) 47590 Fax: (043) 47594

Helen O'Reilly

LOUTH

The Laurels, Dundalk, Co Louth
Tel: (042) 9330448 Fax: (042) 9330991

Deirdre McMichael

MAYO

Humbert Hall, Main Street, Castlebar, Co Mayo
Tel: (094) 24334 Fax: (094) 23721

Tom O'Mahony

MEATH

Kennedy Road, Navan, Co Meath
Tel: (046) 72515 Fax: (046) 72519

John McDaid

MONAGHAN

Alma House, The Diamond, Monaghan
Tel: (047) 84888 Fax: (047) 84879

Cormac Faherty

OFFALY

Harbour Street, Tullamore
Tel: (0506) 51177 Fax: (0506) 51544

Patrice Cooney

LAW CENTRE

SOLICITOR-IN-CHARGE

SLIGO

Bridgewater House, Rockwood Parade,
Thomas Street, Sligo
Tel: (071) 61670 Fax: (071) 61681

Fiona McGuire

TIPPERARY

19 Pearse Street, Nenagh, Co Tipperary
Tel: (067) 34181 Fax: (067) 34083

Josephine Fair

WATERFORD

Canada House, Canada Street, Waterford
Tel: (051) 855 814 Fax: (051) 871 237

Aidan Lynch

WESTMEATH

Northgate Street, Athlone, Co Westmeath
Tel: (0902) 74694 Fax: (0902) 72160

Phil O'Laoide

WEXFORD

Unit 8, Redmond Square, Wexford
Tel: (053) 22622 Fax: (053) 24927

Terry Quinn

WICKLOW

Bridge Street, Wicklow
Tel: (0404) 66166 Fax: (0404) 66197

Frank Murphy

Applications for legal aid certificates under the private practitioner project are referred to:-

Private Practitioner's Centre, St. Stephen's Green House,
Earlsfort Terrace, Dublin 2
Tel: (01) 662 5680 Fax: (01) 662 5684

The Board's Refugee Legal Services, which provides legal services to persons applying for asylum, is located at:

Refugee Legal Service, Timberlay House,
79/83 Lower Mount Street, Dublin 2
Tel: (01) 631 0800 Fax: (01) 661 5011

PART-TIME LAW CENTRES

LOCATION and TELEPHONE	OPEN ON	LAW CENTRE
CARLOW St. Catherine's Social Services Centre, St. Joseph's Road, Carlow. Tel: (0503) 31354	First and Third Friday of every month	Kilkenny
CLARE Kilrush Community Centre, Toler Street, Kilrush. Tel: (065) 6821929	Fourth Wednesday of every month	Clare
CORK Health Centre, O'Brien Street, Mallow Tel: (021) 21484/ (021) 551686	Fourth Monday of every month	Popes Quay, Cork
DONEGAL The Courthouse, Donegal Town. Tel: (074) 26177	First Friday of every month	Donegal
DUBLIN Balbriggan Clubs Community Centre, Dublin Street, Balbriggan Tel: (01) 874544	Third Tuesday of every month	Gardiner Street, Dublin
KERRY Killarney Community Services 57 High Street, Killarney Tel: (066) 7126900	Every Friday morning	Kerry
LEITRIM North Western Health Board, Leitrim Road, Carrick-on-Shannon. Tel: (043) 47590	First Wednesday of every month	Longford
LOUTH Drogheda Community Services Centre, Fair Street, Drogheda Tel: (041) 36084/33490	First & Second Tuesday of every month	Ormond Quay, Dublin

LOCATION and TELEPHONE	OPEN ON	LAW CENTRE
MAYO		
Ballina Community Centre, Teeling Street, Ballina Tel: (094) 24334	First Monday of every month	Castlebar
Health Centre, Knock Road, Ballyhaunis Tel: (091) 561650	Fourth Tuesday of every month	Galway
ROSCOMMON		
Citizens Information Centre, Patrick Street, Boyle Tel: (071) 61670	First Monday of every month	Sligo
TIPPERARY		
Thurles Community Social Services, Rossa Street, Thurles. Tel: (067) 34181	Second Tuesday of every month	Tipperary
Citizen's Information Centre, 14 Wellington Street, Clonmel. Tel: (052) 22267	First, Second & Third Monday of every month	Tipperary
WESTMEATH		
Enterprise Centre, Bishopgate Street, Mullingar Tel: (0902) 74694	Last Friday of every month	Westmeath

APPENDIX 2

Family Law Legislation since 1986

1. Domicile and Recognition of Foreign Divorces Act, 1986
2. Status of Children Act, 1987
3. Jurisdiction of Courts and Enforcement of Judgements (European Communities) Act, 1988
4. Adoption Act, 1988
5. Family Law Act, 1988
6. Judicial Separation and Family Law Reform Act, 1989
7. Children Act, 1989
8. Child Abduction and Enforcement of Custody Orders Act, 1991
9. Adoption Act, 1991
10. Child Care Act, 1991
11. Courts Act, 1991
12. Jurisdiction of Courts and Enforcement of Judgements Act, 1993
13. Maintenance Act, 1994
14. Social Welfare (No. 2) Act, 1995
15. Family Law Act, 1995
16. Civil Legal Aid Act, 1995
17. Domestic Violence Act, 1996
18. Family Law Divorce Act, 1996
19. Children Act, 1997
20. Family Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1997

APPENDIX 3

Legal Aid Analysis of Proceedings by subject matter

	1995	1996	1997	1998
Barring	659	944	966	820
Safety	-	192	344	287
Maintenance	579	694	646	546
Custody	384	417	324	223
Access	361	482	369	316
Fit Person/Child Care	102	121	219	186
Guardianship	144	156	188	132
Judicial Separation	1234	1293	1249	1019
Injunction	118	94	65	30
Nullity	41	37	42	35
Child Abduction	68	58	99	80
Adoption	-	3	1	1
Wardship	-	13	17	10
Miscellaneous	157	86	80	63
Divorce	-	-	938	1317
Landlord & Tenant	11	7	3	-
Tort	29	44	41	30
Contract	5	8	7	6
Employer/Employee	2	1	1	1
Debt	12	31	21	2
Property	15	57	72	79
Total	3921	4738	5692	5183

APPENDIX 4

ANALYSIS OF LEGAL AID CERTIFICATES BY COURTS 1995 - 1998

1995

COURT	FAMILY	NON-FAMILY	TOTAL
DISTRICT	1,527	36	1,563
CIRCUIT	1,543	72	1,615
HIGH	194	33	227
SUPREME	9	1	10
TOTAL	3,273	142	3,415

1996

COURT	FAMILY	NON-FAMILY	TOTAL
DISTRICT	2,064	52	2,116
CIRCUIT	1,602	87	1,689
HIGH	154	38	192
SUPREME	6	0	6
TOTAL	3,826	177	4,003

1997

COURT	FAMILY	NON-FAMILY	TOTAL
DISTRICT	2,284	30	2,314
CIRCUIT	2,521	117	2,638
HIGH	175	26	201
SUPREME	4	2	6
TOTAL	4,984	175	5,159

1998

COURT	FAMILY	NON-FAMILY	TOTAL
DISTRICT	1,738	33	1,771
CIRCUIT	2,626	87	2,713
HIGH	113	26	149
SUPREME	7	-	7
TOTAL	4,484	146	4,640

PRIVATE PRACTITIONERS CERTIFICATES:

	1995	1996	1997	1998
DISTRICT COURT	645	655	862	804

APPENDIX 5

Average waiting time for an appointment with a solicitor

Law Centre	1995 Months	1996 Months	1997 Months	1998 Months
Cavan	-	-	0.5	0.5
Clare	1.5	1.5	3.5	5.5
Cork – Popes Quay	4.5	4.5	6	14.5
Cork – South Mall	3	3.5	7	16
Donegal	5	4	2	3
Dublin – Blanchardstown	2.5	4.5	5	6
Dublin – Clondalkin	1	1	7	10
Dublin – Finglas	1.5	2	3	3.5
Dublin – Gardiner Street	3	4.5	6	8
Dublin – Mount Street	2.5	4.5	8	9
Dublin – Ormond Quay	2	1.5	3	4
Dublin – Tallaght	2	1	5	14.5
Galway	1.5	2	5	15.5
Kerry	2	6.5	3	5
Kildare	-	-	9.5	15
Kilkenny	3	0	1	1.5
Laois	3	5	4	3.5
Limerick	1.5	3	3.5	6
Longford	0.5	1	1.5	1.5
Louth	6	3	3	5.5
Mayo	2	2	1	0
Meath	-	-	0.5	3
Monaghan	1.5	1	3	5
Offaly	-	-	10	7
Sligo	4	2.5	6	12
Tipperary	5	2	4	7.5
Waterford	0	0	0.5	0.5
Westmeath	2.5	3.5	5	12.5
Wexford	3	2	3	1
Wicklow	4.5	5	9	16.5

APPENDIX 6

STAFF DEVELOPMENT WORK GROUP

WORK COMPLETED BY GROUP

Training Needs Analysis completed in February 1997 and reviewed in December 1997 and December 1998.

Appointment of Training Officer.

Initial programme of development training carried out for all grades of staff.

Personnel Handbook and statement of policies prepared and forwarded to Unions for comment.

Induction training manual prepared and in use.

Target of 3% of payroll costs for staff development has been achieved.

A Sexual Harassment Policy Statement for the Board has been prepared.

ONGOING WORK OF THE GROUP

Provision of further training programmes in areas such as the use of Lotus Notes, management training, organisation/personnel development, continuing legal education and Health and Safety (including dealing with difficult clients).

Preparation of job specifications for each grade, the role of Law Clerks has begun to be addressed.

Implementation of Hay Recommendations.

- Introduction of a performance management system
- Introduction of a staff appraisal scheme.

Further work of the Group awaits

- the publication of the Hay proposals by the Government

APPENDIX 7

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY WORK GROUP

WORK COMPLETED BY GROUP

Three Junior Systems Analysts have been appointed to I.T. Section. One additional Clerical Officer has also been appointed to the Section.

Provision of PCs for all staff members including replacement of older equipment and the purchase of additional printers. Servers and network hardware have been installed in each law centre.

Cabling of all centres for networking is completed. Local area network has been established in each law centre.

Installation and configuration of Lotus Notes in each centre has been completed.

Lotus –123 software and licences purchased.

Phase 1 of Lotus Notes project developed and being pilot tested.

Initial IT training programme for all staff completed.

The Refugee Legal Service was equipped with hardware and software and a tailored computer system was developed and installed in February/March 1999.

Wordpro has been purchased as the WP package for the Board. A contract for the installation awaits Finance sanction and training in the product will be arranged.

The latest version of its Applications/headquarters Database was delivered and installed in August. The system is being tested in Cork North Mall and Blanchardstown law centres and at headquarters.

Training of staff from the contracted training company in the Applications database has now been completed.

Training of law centre staff in the Applications database will commence on 13 September.

E-Mail is available at all law centres and headquarters.

All PCs with processors less than P133 have been replaced.

The Year 2000 Compliance Project is complete.

A circulars database and a bulletin board database has been developed.

ONGOING WORK OF THE GROUP

Continued development of E-mail facilities and database access.

Phase 2 – development of the "professional file" database including professional procedures "packages".

Liaison with the Courts Service with a view to further developments.

Liaison with the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform on a secure data carrier.

APPENDIX 8

COMMUNICATIONS WORK GROUP

WORK COMPLETED BY GROUP

The introduction of monthly staff meetings in headquarters and all law centres.

The appointment of an Editorial Board to oversee the regular production of a Newsletter.

Minutes from management meetings, solicitor-in-charge meetings and Steering Group meetings are now made available to all staff.

Recommendation on timely availability of information from Personnel Section.

Regular visits to law centres by Personnel staff.

Attendance of Worker Directors at Regional meetings.

Introduction of a dedicated fax line in Legal Services Section.

Commissioned a report on communications within the organisation from Lee Komito.

Appointment of a communications officer.

Preparation of information leaflets.

ONGOING WORK OF GROUP

Implementation of recommendations from Komito report and relevant sections of Cass Report.

Development of client surveys.

APPENDIX 9

PROFESSIONAL PROCEDURES WORK GROUP

WORK COMPLETED BY GROUP

- Proposed complaints procedure
- Certification re: divorce proceedings
- Professional packages
wills, injunctions, deed of separation, nullity, divorce, judicial separation, district court applications, child abduction and adoption.
(packages to be returned to the Group after work on them is completed by the I.T. Group)
- Retention, release of original deeds and wills
- Standardisation of correspondence between law centres and headquarters
- Priority and emergency categories
- Consolidation of circulars 1980 – 1999
- Procedure for the making of various decisions on applications for legal aid, including reviewing and appealing decisions refusing legal aid
- Procedure for withdrawing legal services
- Procedure for determining applications for legal aid in cases concerning the welfare of children
- Procedure for granting legal aid for appeals and re-entry of cases and for the enforcement of court orders
- Recovery of the Board's costs and the statutory charge
- Information note on costs for applicants and undertakings as to costs
- Guidelines on the opening and closing of files
- Conveyancing discussion document
- The payment of a separate contribution for legal services for conveyancing as a connected matter
- Legal advice in relation to probate matters

ONGOING WORK OF GROUP

- Considering "hardship" in the context of the Civil Legal Aid Act, 1995
- Guidelines for the destruction of files
- Librarian – role of
- Law centre local lists for books
- Procedure for dealing with difficult clients
- Packages
- Conflict cases and the provision of legal services in professional negligence cases
- Time recording
- Case tracking
- Access to case files by Comptroller and Auditor General
- Construction of model family law file (as a qualitative measure)
- Affidavits of laws and witness expenses
- Review of internal appeals procedures.

APPENDIX 10

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES WORK GROUP

WORK COMPLETED BY GROUP

Four sub-groups established as follows:

Point of Contact Sub-Group

Purchasing Procedures Sub-Group

Applications Sub-Group

Financial Assessments Sub-Group.

A trial waiting list management system was introduced in a number of law centres

An applications flowchart has been prepared for the IT Group as a map for the development of the application system

A Purchasing Procedures Handbook has been prepared and issued to all law centres

A Financial Assessment Handbook has been prepared and issued to all law centres

A Capital Assessment Handbook has been prepared and issued to all law centres

The draft consolidation of circulars was agreed by the group

ONGOING WORK OF GROUP

A review of Services Order Form and Prompt Payments Procedures is underway.