

CORPORATE PLAN 2000 – 2003

WITHOUT CHANGE THERE CAN BE NO PROGRESS





INTRODUCTION

MISSION STATEMENT: TO DEVELOP AND DELIVER APPROPRIATE ACCESS TO QUALITY LEGAL ASSISTANCE FOR THOSE ELIGIBLE, IN A COST EFFECTIVE MANNER.

OUR REVISED STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES ARE AS FOLLOWS.

- ▶ TO ACHIEVE CONSISTENT, TIMELY AND SOUND DECISION MAKING AT ALL STAGES OF AN APPLICATION FOR LEGAL ASSISTANCE.
- ▶ TO ACHIEVE CONSISTENT, TIMELY AND SOUND DECISION MAKING AT ALL STAGES OF ASSESSING AND PAYING ACCOUNTS.
- ▶ TO ENSURE EFFECTIVE FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT OF THE LEGAL AID FUND.
- ▶ TO IMPROVE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE DELIVERY OF OUR SERVICE WHILE ACHIEVING A REASONABLE BALANCE BETWEEN COST AND QUALITY.
- ▶ TO COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY WITH APPLICANTS, OPPONENTS, THEIR ADVISORS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS IN A CLEAR, CONCISE, TIMELY, INFORMATIVE AND PRO-ACTIVE MANNER.
- ▶ TO PROVIDE SOUND ADVICE TO MINISTERS AND PARLIAMENT ON THE CURRENT OPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROVISION OF LEGAL AID.

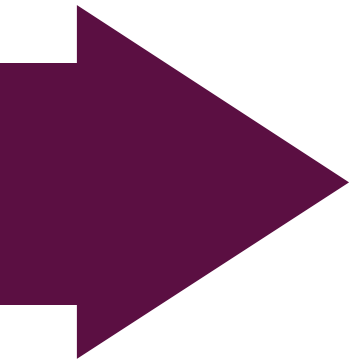
APR00

OCT00

New performance indicators and targets introduced at the Board

European Convention on Human Rights applies to the Board

THIS PLAN SETS OUT WHAT THE BOARD AIMS TO ACHIEVE DURING THE PERIOD 1 APRIL 2000 TO 31 MARCH 2003 AND HOW IT INTENDS TO DO SO. IT ALSO REVIEWS WHAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED IN 1999/00 AGAINST OUR PREVIOUS CORPORATE PLAN.



Over the next three years we aim to –

- improve significantly the operations of the Board, both in the quality and consistency of our decision making and the timeliness of handling cases
- assist the Scottish Executive in developing and implementing legal services for the community to provide improved access to legal assistance for those who need it
- communicate better and more fully with all those with whom we deal, including applicants, opponents, solicitors and advocates.

A key element of our work in 1999/00 has been to review the Board's aims and objectives and the way it operates to improve the service we provide. As part of that process we have consulted with those who have direct experience of aspects of the legal aid system and of the Board. We held a series of meetings with local faculties of solicitors throughout Scotland, as well as with the Law Society of Scotland and the Faculty of Advocates. We had open meetings for the public and met with organisations with an interest in legal aid such as Citizens Advice Scotland, the Scottish Consumer Council, Shelter Scotland and the Scottish Refugee Council. This consultation process will continue.

We have developed a new mission statement, strategic objectives and a set of performance indicators and targets which reflect the changes already taking place in the organisation and those planned for the future. Our mission statement and objectives are shown on the opposite page, and the performance indicators and targets are given at the back of this Plan.

The creation of the Scottish Parliament in July 1999 has already had a significant impact on the Board, and it will increasingly affect the way we operate. Public expectations of how Scotland and its public bodies will be run have been raised, and we must respond to that challenge. The new Parliament offers an exciting opportunity for the Board and others involved in the justice system to work in partnership with MSPs and the Scottish Executive to develop the policy and provision of legal aid, and achieve the standards expected by the public and taxpayers.

The most significant development in the justice system in the past year has been the European Convention on Human Rights. The Convention does not apply to the Board until October 2000. We are reviewing our policies and procedures so that they are compatible with the Convention. There have been a number of challenges to the law under the terms of the Convention, and we have monitored carefully the progress of these as they affect legal aid. We expect that there will be more challenges to Board decisions and policies, particularly after October, and we must be ready to respond to these.

Key features of the coming three years will be change and new challenges. By our own efforts and by working in partnership with the Scottish Executive, the Law Society of Scotland, the Faculty of Advocates, the voluntary sector and others, we will meet those challenges. We will continue to work to develop a legal aid system in Scotland which allows access to justice for all those who need it and which makes the process of accessing justice as straightforward as possible.

The Board is committed to the Modernising Government principles of providing high quality, efficient, integrated public services which are responsive and meet the needs of users. We will utilise the framework set out in the Modernising Government agenda to improve our service and make best use of technology to increase access to these services.

MAR01

Implementation of pilot projects under Part V of the Legal Aid (Scotland) Act 1986

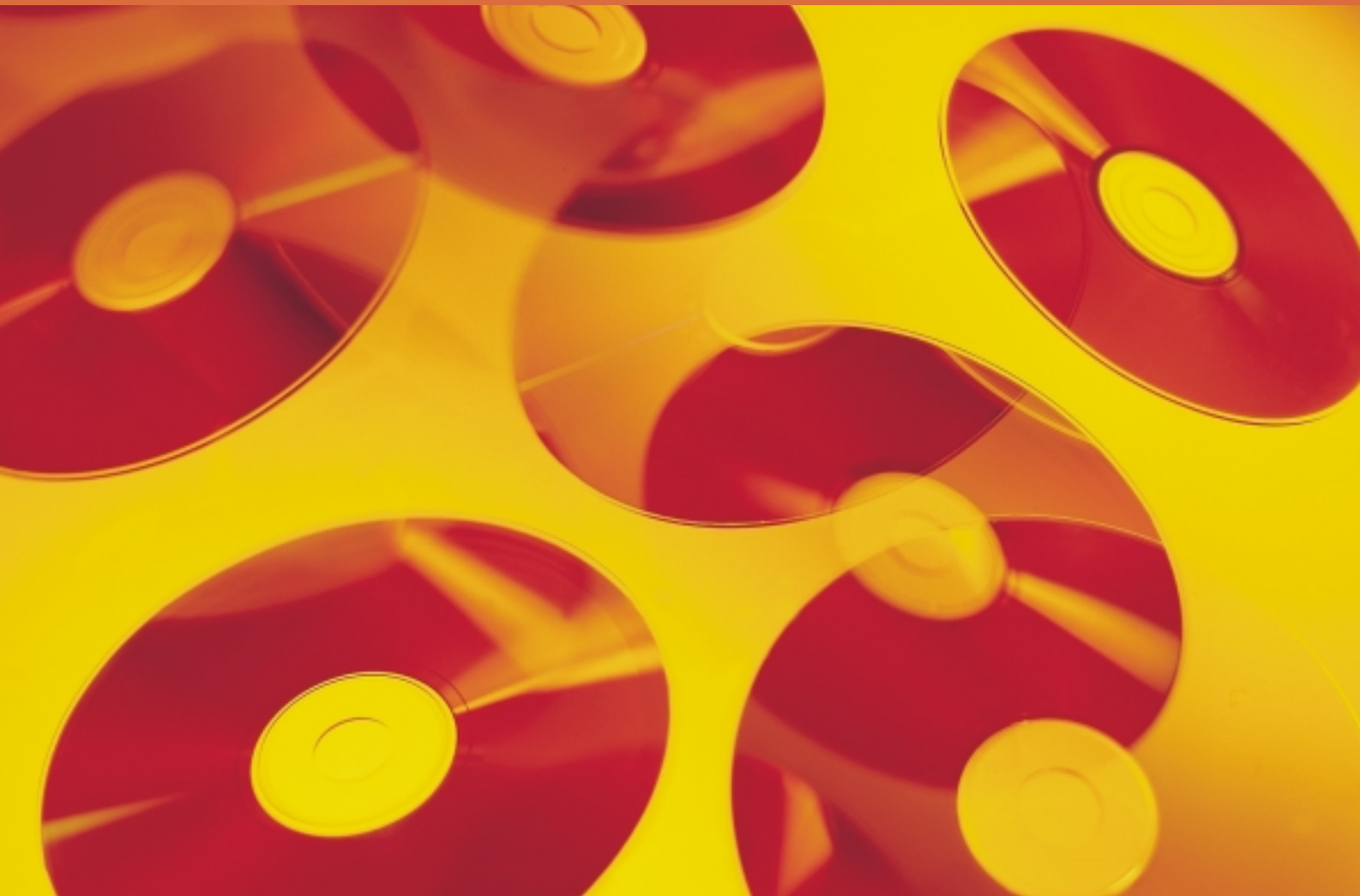
APR01

APR02

APR03



THE BOARD IN 1999/00



APR00

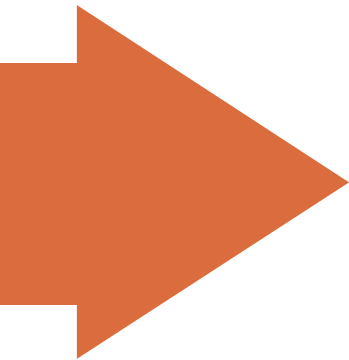
JUL00

Phased implementation of new financial systems begins

SEPT00

New complaints procedure introduced

THE PAST YEAR WAS ONE OF TREMENDOUS CHANGE FOR THE BOARD. WE FACED A NUMBER OF DIFFICULTIES, PARTICULARLY DELAYS IN THE PAYMENT OF CRIMINAL LEGAL AID ACCOUNTS, THE LOSS OF EXPERIENCED STAFF, AND MAJOR CHANGES IN THE SENIOR MANAGEMENT.



These had a significant impact on the operation of the Board and on the legal profession, the effects of which are still being felt in some areas. However, once we resolved the immediate difficulties, we identified and implemented real improvements to our service. Despite these difficulties the Board made significant progress.

- We implemented the procedures to allow the Government's system of fixed payments for summary criminal legal aid to be implemented on time.
- As part of a consultation with those who use our services, we held a series of meetings throughout Scotland. These allowed the legal profession and the public to discuss matters of interest with the Board and give feedback on the provision of legal aid and the services we provide.
- We issued a consultation paper to the profession on development of the *Code of practice in relation to criminal legal assistance*. As a result, a number of changes to simplify the requirements for time recording in fixed payment cases were submitted to Scottish Ministers and approved. More changes are planned to ensure the Code complies with the European Convention on Human Rights.
- We pay criminal legal aid accounts on offer where we have made abatements and have increased the number of payment runs from one to two a week. We now pay properly prepared and vouched criminal accounts within 30 calendar days (excluding public holidays).
- We issued to the profession CD-ROMs containing digital application forms and a digital version of the Scottish Legal Aid Handbook. This was the first step towards introducing e-commerce between the Board and solicitors.
- More than 50% of firms registered under the *Code of practice in relation to criminal legal assistance* were

audited by our Compliance Auditors. In general, firms have responded positively to the audits.

- We carried out a review of our systems and procedures for dealing with legal aid applications and employed consultants to look at our handling of solicitors' and advocates' accounts to highlight ways to improve our efficiency and effectiveness.
- We have reviewed our complaints procedure to make sure that we deal with complaints fairly and effectively and that we take action to remedy the situation and make improvements where necessary. New procedures will be in place later this year.
- We have restructured the senior management posts, reducing the number of Directors from six to four. We also reorganised the line management responsibilities for operational areas to establish a more effective structure.
- We have begun to design and implement a new financial and management system, which will provide more effective management of the Legal Aid Fund and our Grant-in-Aid budget.
- All systems were tested to ensure they were Year 2000 compliant and the necessary software installed. Business continuity plans were put in place in case of a major utility failure. This work proved effective and there were no problems in any systems following the millennium.

In addition to these key initiatives, the Board instigated a review of the role, responsibilities, objectives and focus of the organisation. The immediate outcomes of this review have informed the process of corporate planning for the financial year 2000/01. However, the process of review will continue and provide a focus for ongoing planning and development through the life of this Corporate Plan and beyond.

Fund expenditure for 1999/00 was £117 million, net of receipts. This compares with a final outturn for 1998/99 of £129 million. Numbers of civil applications continued to fall slightly, although criminal applications increased slightly and there was a marked rise in the numbers of advice and assistance intimations and applications for increases in expenditure. Numbers of accounts fell in both civil and criminal, although advice and assistance rose slightly.

APR01

APR02

APR03



MISSION STATEMENT, CORPORATE OBJECTIVES, PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AND TARGETS

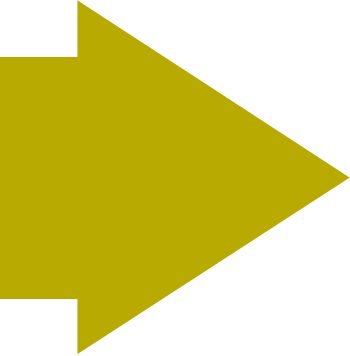


APR00

OCT00

Service standards published for
all aspects of our work

MISSION STATEMENT: TO DEVELOP AND DELIVER APPROPRIATE ACCESS TO QUALITY LEGAL ASSISTANCE FOR THOSE ELIGIBLE, IN A COST EFFECTIVE MANNER.



The Board reviewed its strategic objectives, performance indicators and targets. We have looked at the service we provide and the standards expected of the Board, as well as assessing the resources, including staffing, required to carry out these new objectives.

As part of the review process we have listened to the views of those who receive our services, including solicitors, advocates, assisted persons and opponents in cases to ensure that the Board

- has a clear focus
- understands the needs of its customer
- is able to monitor the service it provides and ensure it meets agreed standards, and
- is efficient and effective in the way it operates.

However, the Board can only achieve its objectives through the consistent efforts of our staff. An integral part of the review, therefore, was to discuss the issues and proposals with managers in each operational area to ensure that the changes and targets developed were practical and achievable.

From this consultation and review, we have developed a mission statement for the Board which we believe will provide a clear focus for all at the Board on the way forward for the organisation and the high quality of service we should strive for. It also gives a clear message to users of our services about our aims and the service they can expect to receive.

Our strategic objectives have been revised to reflect the changes we have already introduced at the Board and the further developments we want to see in future.

We have developed a revised series of both internal and external performance indicators and targets which will give a much more complete and balanced review of the Board's performance. The new indicators include targets for all aspects of the application process, rather than concentrating only on first instance decisions. They now cover timeliness, accuracy and consistency at all stages

of the process. We will also monitor applications and accounts which do not meet the targets to identify why this has happened and to ensure that they will be processed as quickly as possible. The revised performance indicators and targets will come into effect from 1 October 2000. This will allow for necessary changes to systems and data collection systems within the Board. Details of the indicators and targets are given at the back of this Plan.

The Board recognises that we must become more customer focused and therefore, as part of our aim to improve communication with all those we deal with, we are developing a series of service standards. These will complement the performance indicators and set out clearly the level of service that each of our customer groups can expect at each stage of their dealings with the Board. These standards will cover areas such as the time taken to deal with correspondence and to assess different types of applications and accounts, and the quality of our decision making. These standards will be published in 2000/01.

Strategic objectives

Our revised strategic objectives are

- To achieve consistent, timely and sound decision making at all stages of an application for legal assistance.
- To achieve consistent, timely and sound decision making at all stages of assessing and paying accounts.
- To ensure effective financial management of the Legal Aid Fund.
- To improve the effectiveness of the delivery of our service while achieving a reasonable balance between cost and quality.
- To communicate effectively with applicants, opponents, their advisors and other stakeholders in a clear, concise, timely, informative and pro-active manner.
- To provide sound advice to Ministers and Parliament on the current operation and development of the provision of legal aid.

Our plans for achieving each of the strategic objectives are set out in the following pages.

<p>APR01 Implementation of new efficiency performance measure</p>	<p>JUL01 Publication of performance against these new targets in Annual Report 2000/01</p>	<p>APR02</p>	<p>APR03</p>
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TO ACHIEVE CONSISTENT, TIMELY AND SOUND DECISION MAKING AT ALL STAGES OF AN APPLICATION FOR LEGAL ASSISTANCE

We will shortly complete a review of how we deal with all aspects of applications for legal aid. We have looked at the complete process from receipt of the initial intimation of a grant of advice and assistance, through the assessment and decision making process and requests for increases in authorised expenditure to the final conclusion of a case. We have also considered how the applications process links with other departments such as Accounts Assessment, Treasury and Legal Services.

We work closely with the Law Society of Scotland and the Faculty of Advocates on legal aid matters generally, but we will consult with them specifically on proposed changes and developments resulting from this review. We want to make sure that any proposals for change are discussed thoroughly with those who will see the direct impact of any changes in procedures and policy.

Some of the initiatives we will implement are –

- ▶ providing solicitors and applicants with more detailed reasons for our decision to refuse an application for legal aid
- ▶ making it easier for solicitors to contact directly the Board staff who are making decisions on applications, including our in-house team of solicitors, to enable them to discuss cases in detail
- ▶ speeding up the process of issuing legal aid certificates, including the possibility of issuing legal aid certificates automatically by fax or e-mail when a decision is made
- ▶ making available to applicants' solicitors the internal guidance used by staff in assessing applications
- ▶ reviewing the way we deal with solicitors' requests to employ counsel in serious or complex cases with a view to improving our procedures.

The implications resulting from the European Convention on Human Rights and the Human Rights Act 1998 will have a significant impact on the way we deal with applications. A significant amount of work has been done to prepare for the introduction of the Act in October 2000. This will continue in the first half of 2000/01 and an important element of this will be a programme of training for staff so that they are fully aware of the implications of the Convention. In addition, we must try to anticipate the number of applications and other work which will arise as a result of the Convention, and we will be working with other organisations in the justice system to do this. We will also communicate the changes arising from the Convention both to the legal profession and applicants. From now on all aspects of the Board's work will be considered in terms of the ECHR to ensure we continue to comply.

We have also reviewed our targets for dealing with applications and our performance against these targets. As a result we have a new set of measures which we believe give a more informative view of our performance and provide more meaningful information to the public, the legal profession, the Scottish Executive and the Board.

During the next year we will look, in particular, at the areas where we are not achieving our performance targets. We will investigate why we are not meeting those targets and review our procedures and resources to determine how we can further improve our performance.

APR00

JUL00

Publish guidelines for the profession on assessment of accounts

OCT00

Ensure all our processes comply with the European Convention on Human Rights and, after consultation with the profession, implement changes to applications systems and procedures



TO ACHIEVE CONSISTENT, TIMELY AND SOUND
DECISION MAKING AT ALL STAGES OF ASSESSING
AND PAYING ACCOUNTS

During 1999 we had considerable problems with the processing of accounts, particularly criminal accounts. This was caused by the loss of a number of experienced staff and the introduction of a more rigorous assessment procedure. Considerable resources were invested in this area to resolve these difficulties.

We also took the opportunity to look at our procedures for dealing with accounts and introduced a commitment to deal with properly prepared and vouched criminal accounts within 30 calendar days (excluding public holidays). During 2000/01 we will look at further ways of making the accounts assessment process more efficient; a priority area will be the quality and consistency of assessment and decision making. For example, some of the improvements planned are –

- issuing the guidance notes used by our accounts assessment staff to the profession, giving solicitors a clearer view of the standard of accounts required by the Board and the approach taken in the assessment of specific aspects of legal work
- carrying out a programme of training and issuing enhanced guidelines for staff, to improve the consistency of assessment in criminal legal aid accounts
- putting in place independent quality control systems to monitor the levels of abatement of accounts and our decision making.

The new financial and management systems being introduced within the Board will have a major impact on the accounts assessment area. The new system will give a range of benefits both to staff and to solicitors and advocates. It offers single point data entry and will incorporate all aspects of the payment process from registration of accounts, through assessment, to payment to solicitors' bank accounts. The Board will have one seamless payment system instead of a number of separate systems, giving greater accuracy of data and efficiency of operation.

We will be working closely with the Law Society of Scotland and the Faculty of Advocates to review the process of assessing and dealing with payments to solicitors and advocates. Consultants are carrying out a review of our procedures, and the results of this will be implemented over the coming year.

Since the introduction of the fixed payments system for summary criminal legal aid cases in April 1999, we have monitored the numbers of these type of accounts and the way they are processed. Fixed payments now make up around 60% of all criminal accounts received by the Board. In the coming year we will amend the fixed payment synopsis forms completed by solicitors, to take account of planned changes and in response to suggestions from the profession.

APR01

SEPT01

Implementation of new computer system for civil applications

DEC01

Solicitors can begin to submit applications and accounts electronically

APR02

APR03



TO ENSURE EFFECTIVE FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT OF THE LEGAL AID FUND

The introduction of improved financial and management systems will provide the Board with a significantly improved system for managing the Legal Aid Fund and our Grant-in-Aid budget. The planned management information system will also give us more data and information with which to monitor trends and plan future developments. A phased implementation of the new system will be carried out towards the end of this year.

The computer system which deals with contributions, expenses and sums recovered from assisted persons is to be upgraded and extended during 2000/01. This will allow more effective debt management and an improved service for assisted persons.

The process of dealing with recovering the costs of a case from the money won or preserved in a civil case is complex. During our meetings with the public and solicitors it was highlighted as an area that many people did not understand and where more guidance would be welcomed. We are in the process of developing leaflets for assisted persons explaining the possible options at the end of their case, and we will provide guidance to solicitors on this matter.

During the past six months we consulted with solicitors and the Law Society of Scotland on revisions to the *Code of practice in relation to criminal legal assistance*, both in terms of the introduction of fixed payments and the European Convention on Human Rights. We published revisions to the Code relating to time recording in fixed payment cases in September 1999 and, subject to approval by Scottish Ministers, we plan to issue a second edition of the Code with a number of amendments arising from the consultation process and the implications of the ECHR.

The Board has a duty to monitor solicitors' continued compliance with the Code. Our Compliance Auditors will continue with a rolling programme of visits to solicitors' firms. We will use the feedback from questionnaires issued to audited firms to identify ways of ensuring the visits are effective and constructive for the Board and the solicitors.

The Board also has a responsibility to protect the Legal Aid Fund by investigating any instances of suspected fraud or abuse of the legal aid system. Our investigators monitor applications and accounts to detect any abuse by assisted persons or solicitors. In 1999/00 such investigation of abuse of the system by people applying for legal assistance has saved an estimated £481,316 from the Fund. We have increased the number of staff engaged in investigations work to increase our effectiveness in this area and to assure taxpayers that we have robust processes to protect the Fund.

APR 00

OCT 00

Issue the revised Code of practice in relation to criminal legal assistance

JAN 01

Upgrade Debt 400 computer system which deals with all aspects of recovery of debt, payment of contributions and expenses, and consider extending to deal with principal sums



TO IMPROVE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE DELIVERY OF OUR SERVICE WHILE ACHIEVING A REASONABLE BALANCE BETWEEN COST AND QUALITY

The Board is committed to taking a strategic approach to the development of information technology to ensure that it contributes to the achievement of our corporate objectives. The increased use of information technology is one of the key ways in which the Board will improve its services during the period of this Plan. We aim to meet the Government's targets for at least 25% of business to be carried out electronically by 2002 and 100% of services to be available electronically by 2005.

We are currently reviewing our information systems strategy for the next three to five years. The key features of this are as follows.

- Develop the introduction of e-commerce between the Board and the legal profession to include applications and accounts being submitted by e-mail, solicitors being able to view the status of their accounts on-line and a range of information being exchanged electronically.
- Decision databases will be developed to allow staff to find and compare information on similar types of applications or accounts and to receive advice on the correct decision in the circumstances of the case, thereby improving consistency of decision making.
- The Board's web site for the legal profession will be enhanced to provide a wide range of practical information and services. Our public web site will also be improved to provide useful information for the public, people considering applying for legal aid and others.

A key feature of our plans for the period of this Corporate Plan is a drive for improved quality in the services delivered by the Board. We are setting up an independent checking unit to monitor the quality of decision making in relation to applications and accounts and will introduce a range of other quality initiatives. We will review the effectiveness of these new measures as part of our programme to deliver further improvements in the quality of our service.

In all our work we must ensure that the Board meets the standards expected of public bodies. We are committed to the principles of the Modernising Government initiative, which aims to –

- deliver high quality, efficient public services which can respond to the needs of users
- ensure that policy development is forward looking
- use new technology to develop public services and their availability, and
- value the public services offered.

We are working towards applying for Charter Mark, the Government's award scheme for encouraging and recognising excellence in public service, and we aim to be successfully reassessed against the Investors in People Standard in 2001. We will use the Business Excellence Model and other appropriate standards to benchmark our performance against best practice elsewhere in both the public and private sectors.

APR01

JUN01

Application for re-assessment against the Investors in People Standard

APR02

Review of decision making process for applications and accounts

APR03



TO COMMUNICATE WITH APPLICANTS, OPPONENTS, THEIR ADVISORS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS IN A CLEAR, CONCISE, TIMELY, INFORMATIVE AND PROACTIVE MANNER

The Board must operate in an open and transparent manner, consistent with the rules of confidentiality in our legislation and the new Freedom of Information legislation. We must provide our customers with the appropriate information, at the correct time, in a clear and concise style. Anyone involved in a legal case, whether or not they are receiving legal aid, needs clear information about the case and how it will affect them. Over the Corporate Plan period we will look at all the information that solicitors, advocates, applicants and opponents receive from the Board to identify where we can make improvements. We will also make information available in different languages.

We will continue to look at ways of improving and developing our communications through the following initiatives.

- ▶ We are developing service standards for all aspects of the legal aid process and for all those involved. These will explain to the applicant, opponent and solicitor the service they can expect from the Board and the time in which this work will be carried out.
- ▶ Our letters and other materials must be easily read and understood by the recipients and we will continue to invest in staff training to improve our correspondence.
- ▶ Information for opponents in civil cases is being developed to ensure that it answers their questions, explains their rights and provides the information needed to lodge an objection to a grant of legal aid in an effective way.
- ▶ We aim to deal with any complaints about our service in a way that satisfies the concerns of the complainant and allows us to make improvements to our procedures. To help us do this, we will launch a revised complaints procedure in 2000/01. This will provide information to anyone who has dealt with the Board and is not

satisfied with the way the matter has been handled. It will also give us the opportunity to encourage feedback about our service and ways in which we can improve.

- ▶ We are developing our internet services, particularly for solicitors and advocates, as we develop plans for e-commerce between the Board and the legal profession.

We will continue to consult those who use our service, and a key element of that is our service satisfaction project. In April 2000 we issued a questionnaire to 1,000 solicitors to ask for their views on all aspects of the Board's operations. This will be supported by focus groups and interviews with respondents to discuss issues in more depth.

We will also continue to hold meetings with the public to receive their feedback and views on our service and to examine other ways of seeking views from people who have received legal aid or have been opponents in a legally aided case.

The work being carried out on service satisfaction will contribute significantly to our plans to work towards applying for a Charter Mark award. This is the Government's award scheme for recognising and encouraging excellence in public service and its main emphasis is on the service the customer receives.

We have been pleased with the response of the profession to the initiatives we have undertaken to provide information and practical guidance through meetings and seminars, and we intend to increase the number of seminars offered to solicitors. We also plan to hold regular meetings with local faculties of solicitors to consult on issues as they develop, and to continue our close relations with the Law Society of Scotland and the Faculty of Advocates throughout the period of this Corporate Plan.

APR 00

SEPT 00

Development of our Policy Unit to enable us to carry out more research

JAN 01

Provision of information for the public about legal aid in ethnic minority languages



TO PROVIDE SOUND ADVICE TO MINISTERS AND PARLIAMENT ON THE CURRENT OPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROVISION OF LEGAL AID

Over the Plan period we will develop our policy and research function to provide more information to enable the Board and the Scottish Executive to plan effectively changes to the legal aid system, both in the short and longer term. We will increase the number of staff in this area to allow us to undertake a broader range of research work.

A key area of our research will be the current provision of civil legal services to inform policy development on specific areas such as civil legal assistance and legal services for the community. This is a wide ranging subject and we will consult with the many organisations who have a useful input to the debate.

The Government has made provision for pilot projects in the area of community legal services under Part V of the Legal Aid (Scotland) Act 1986. This legislation allows the Board to directly employ solicitors to work with other organisations, such as advice agencies, and assist them in their own work or to explore new ways of providing legal services in the community. We plan to introduce pilot schemes from 31 March 2001.

More widely we would like the opportunity to develop proposals to put to the Scottish Executive on how we could improve access to legal aid. There are a number of areas of legal aid which we consider require review. These include

- eligibility limits for advice and assistance and civil legal aid
- the level of contributions payable in civil cases
- operation of Regulation 18 arrangements for dealing with special urgency cases.

The number of applications for civil legal aid has decreased for the last three years. We will undertake research into the reasons behind this drop. In particular, we want to know whether it relates to the financial eligibility criteria and the amount of contributions an applicant may have to pay towards their case. This research will assist the Government in developing their future policy on access to justice.

The Board carried out a pilot scheme to investigate the effect of increasing the number of instalments over which assisted persons can pay their contributions. We have presented our final report to the Scottish Executive and they have agreed to extend the contribution payment period from 10 to 15 or 20 months. This will take effect from 1 July 2000.

The issue of rates paid to the providers of legal aid has been discussed with the Scottish Executive. The Law Society is currently looking at the rates paid in civil legal aid cases, and this will be discussed at the tripartite meeting between the Scottish Executive, the Law Society and the Board.

An initial report on the first three years of the pilot Public Defence Solicitors' Office in Edinburgh will be made to the Scottish Parliament in October 2001. The pilot is being independently evaluated against four criteria: cost effectiveness; quality of service; client satisfaction; and contribution to the efficiency of the wider criminal justice system. It will be for the Scottish Parliament to decide whether the pilot is extended beyond the full five year period and if public defence solicitors will be introduced elsewhere in Scotland.

APR01

OCT01

Initial reports to the Scottish Parliament on Public Defence Solicitors' Office pilot scheme in Edinburgh

APR02

Issue the service satisfaction survey to the profession

MAY02

Application for Charter Mark

APR03

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



We are open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. each weekday,
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