



# INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR JUDICIAL SUPPORT EXCELLENCE



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**The Australasian Institute of Judicial Administration (AIJA)**

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[www.ncsc.org](http://www.ncsc.org)

**The State Courts of Singapore**

[www.statecourts.gov.sg](http://www.statecourts.gov.sg)

## Application of this Framework

This *Framework* is designed for Judicial Support Organisations. Courts and Tribunals should use the International Framework for Court Excellence.

## Resources

There are many measurement and improvement instruments or tools that can be used by judicial support organisations in shaping the path to excellence. The type of tools that a judicial support organisation might select depends on the nature and the needs of the judicial support organisation. References and links to some useful tools can be found on the International Consortium for Court Excellence website: [courtexcellence.com](http://courtexcellence.com). The site also contains considerable reference material, case studies and links to relevant court and organisational websites.

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# Development of the International Framework for Judicial Support Excellence

In 2008, the International Consortium for Court Excellence (ICCE), comprising international courts and court institutions, developed the International Framework for Court Excellence (IFCE)<sup>1</sup> on the basis that courts<sup>2</sup> around the world could use and adapt the IFCE as needed to meet unique local or court conditions.

There are many organisations that provide a range of support, administrative, education or research services to, or in relation to, judicial officers, court administrators and courts. Courts frequently rely on these judicial support organisations for a range of services that impact directly on the quality of services the courts provide.

With an increasing number of courts around the world implementing the IFCE there is now an opportunity for these judicial support organisations to join with the courts in implementing a continuous quality improvement process aligned to the IFCE.

This International Framework for Judicial Support Excellence (*Framework*) has been based upon the IFCE to enable sensible application by judicial support organisations. The content of the Self-Assessment Questionnaire is substantially different to the IFCE

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<sup>1</sup> See <http://www.courtexcellence.com/~media/Microsites/Files/ICCE/The%20International%20Framework%20E%202014%20V3.ashx>

<sup>2</sup> Reference throughout this document to ‘courts’ includes tribunals, “judicial officers” includes tribunal members and ‘court administrators’ includes tribunal administrators.

Questionnaire and is not designed for application to courts or tribunals. Some aspects of the IFCE document have been elaborated upon where necessary to do so.

The *Framework* follows the IFCE structure and content to enable judicial support organisations to adhere to an essentially similar process to the ‘IFCE-implementing’ courts they support and to encourage them to share their experience and learning with those courts.

## This Framework is for Judicial Support Organisations not courts.

Many organisations provide support to courts, judicial officers and court administrators as their primary function. These organisations would generally be classified as Affiliated Judicial Institutions under the ICCE membership policy.<sup>3</sup> For the purpose of this *Framework* these organisations are referred to as ‘judicial support organisations’.

Judicial support organisations provide broad support services and specific services such as research, performance management, records management, education, technology, finance, asset or personnel services to courts.<sup>4</sup> They play a significant role in supporting the administration of justice and invariably have indirect community accountability as well as direct accountability to their ‘client’ courts, judicial officers and court administrators.

In some court systems, judicial support organisations provide

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<sup>3</sup> The International Consortium for Court Excellence Membership Policy can be found at <http://www.courtexcellence.com/Members/Membership-Policy.aspx>

<sup>4</sup> Examples include the AIJA, NCSC, FJC, Singapore Judicial College, Commonwealth Judicial Education Institute, NSW Judicial Commission and Court Services Victoria,

court administrative services, including registry services/clerk's offices. This *Framework* applies to registry services/clerk's offices provided by a Judicial Support Organisation. This *Framework* is built on the premise that the 'primary clients' of judicial support organisations are the courts, judicial officers and court administrators they support. However, these organisations often also provide direct services to other 'clients' including citizens and communities more broadly.

Judicial support organisations may be funded directly by courts or through executive governments. They are organisations that, in providing a range of support services, are contributing to the advancement of best practices in judicial and court administration. Judicial support organisations are also cognisant of the important role played by the justice system in society and are specifically oriented to working closely with judicial officers and court administrators to meet their specific support and operational needs.

Judicial support organisations implementing the *Framework* can be flexible in how the *Framework* is applied to these differing roles but the important principle is that there is a consistent approach settled and applied throughout the implementation process.

## What is the Framework?

The *Framework* is a quality management system designed to assist judicial support organisations of any type wishing to assess and enhance their operations and services. It assists judicial support organisations to identify areas of their operations that could benefit from improvement and enables them to develop innovative improvement plans to address issues such as the need to lift service standards, make better

use of technology or enhance support to judicial officers, court administrators, the courts and the public. The *Framework* captures aspects vital to the culture of an organisation focused on improving its performance.

The content and structure of the *Framework* has been developed with the benefit of many decades of practical application of quality management methodology in both the public and private sectors.

The *Framework* is a methodology to assist judicial support organisations in assessing, identifying, planning and implementing improvements to their support and services. It provides practical guidance as well as tools and resources to a judicial support organisation that is intent on improving the quality of its services and organisation.

## Why use quality management?

Quality management is both a philosophy and a management process that ensures a standard of quality has been met and is being continuously improved. It involves a structured and systematic process for the whole of organisation in identifying, planning and implementing quality improvements.

To steer quality improvement efforts in the right direction there is a need to establish benchmark standards against which these efforts can be measured. The *Framework* provides both the methodology and the benchmark standards to assist judicial support organisations.

A key advantage to using the *Framework* is that it is the

organisation that controls and undertakes the process and sets the targets it will measure its performance and success against.

The *Framework* builds upon international experience in the use of quality management methods specifically designed for government and public agencies. Its use enables an organisation to improve over time its current performance measured against its past performance.

A judicial support organisation wishing to improve its performance in terms of both its effectiveness and its efficiency will find the *Framework* to be particularly useful. The methodology assists an organisation to identify areas for improvement.

It is possible that organisations using the *Framework* will seek to share their experience with similar organisations in other regions or countries and even collaborate on establishing shared performance standards and details of initiatives or reforms. However, like the IFCE, the *Framework* is not designed for inter-organisation comparison but rather for internal comparison with past performance.

## The Framework Approach

Organisations generally adhere to a fundamental set of core values that drive their performance, their culture and the manner in which they deliver their services. These values need to underscore the activities and the performance of judicial support organisations if they are to

play their role in supporting judicial officers and courts in delivering quality justice.

The key values that have been identified include:

- Fairness
- Integrity
- Responsiveness
- Competency
- Timeliness
- Efficiency
- Transparency
- Accountability

The *Framework* provides a structured method for assessing operations and services under Seven Areas of Excellence drawn from the core values. Essentially, these seven areas are designed to capture all functions, operations and services of the organisation.

Each area has a critical impact on the ability of the organisation to deliver excellent performance in terms of its delivery of support and services.

The Seven Areas of Excellence for judicial support organisations are:

1. Leadership and Management
2. Planning and Policies
3. Resources (Human, Material and Financial)
4. Service Delivery
5. Satisfaction with Services
6. Accessible Services
7. Public Trust and Confidence

## Key Concepts

There are a number of references throughout the *Framework* document to ‘stakeholders’ and ‘clients’ that requires some reflection by a judicial support organisation before commencing the process. The *Framework* is naturally generic in its nature, and while it may presume a particular style of operation, organisations should consider how their operations best fit and the nature and identity of their clients and their stakeholders.

In many cases there will be other indirect stakeholders who have a significant interest in the performance of the organisation and will be keen to follow its improvement initiatives and progress. Invariably these stakeholders will include legal practitioners, the community and government. Judicial support organisations should remember that communicating with these broader stakeholders, no matter how indirect they may seem, will lend support to the proper functioning of the administration of justice.

## Three Basic Steps of the Framework

1. **Self-Assessment** – this is a health check of the organisation and involves analysis of performance in the Seven Areas.
2. **Analysis** – builds upon the assessment to determine the areas of the organisation’s work, which represent areas capable of improvement.

3. **Improvement Plan** – this plan details the areas identified for improvement, the actions proposed to be taken and the results sought to be achieved.

## How to undertake the self-assessment

Once organisations have committed to using the *Framework* they begin by undertaking an assessment of their organisation. The Self-assessment Checklist requires organisations to address aspects of each of the Seven Areas of Excellence through a self-assessment. The following is a guide to the process to be followed.

### Involve and Plan

Judicial support organisations should seek to involve as many of their executive, professional and support or administrative staff as possible in the self-assessment process. A copy of the Checklist must be given to each individual participating in the self-assessment. It is critical that support or administrative staff are actively involved in the process with professional staff.

The process should be highly collaborative as a team approach is essential to establishing a culture of continuous improvement within an organisation. Experience has shown that support or administrative staff are highly likely to be able to identify areas for improvement that professional staff may not have identified.

The Chief Executive of the judicial support organisation is ultimately responsible for the performance of the organisation as a whole and therefore for its implementation of the *Framework*. However, to ensure success it is recommended that a small Self-assessment Team be established to drive implementation of the *Framework*; the Chief Executive of the organisation should be an active leader of that team.

Proactive and inspiring leadership is critical to organisational excellence and therefore full engagement by the Chief Executive is essential. Active engagement with the organisation's key stakeholders (including the courts, government and other stakeholders) will ensure appropriate feedback and support for the organisation's improvement efforts. Many of the initiatives or reforms identified during the *Framework* process may depend in part on support from others.

The Self-assessment Team will need to convene at least one planning session to determine the procedures and schedule for carrying out the self-assessment exercise.

The role of the Self-assessment Team may include oversight beyond the assessment process to development of plans, implementation and review.

## Assess

Based on the information gathered and their observations and judgment, each individual completing the assessment process should consider the specific Checklist statements identified for

each of the Seven Areas of Excellence and determine whether the organisation has taken action to implement the item, the extent of success of each action taken and the results achieved. Face-to-face assessment sessions have the additional benefit of allowing ideas for improvement to be raised during the actual assessment process. However, it is quite acceptable to conduct the assessment through an on-line process.

It needs to be remembered that Checklist statements are simply broad descriptions of activities and a distinction must be made between things done and things done well. It is important in carrying out the self-assessment that the organisation asks itself whether a particular action could have been more effective or improved in some way. The appropriate item must be assessed and scored.

For a Checklist item to be substantially or fully met there must be documentary or other evidence to support the claim. Similarly, a claim that a particular action is effective requires evidence by way of measurement or other objective facts demonstrating the positive impact of the action. Reliance on anecdotal stories and impressions must be avoided, as they are invariably unreliable and misleading.

After completion, the assessment scores should be tallied and the distribution of scores on individual items identified. A representative sample of staff may be convened by the Self-assessment Team to discuss the scores they have given for each statement. If this occurs the focus should be on items where the scores given by individuals for a particular statement are quite different and an effort should be made to understand the differing perceptions, as this will be helpful in developing future initiatives.

## Score and Prioritise

For each action the scoring is:

“No”	- 0 points
“Considering Action”	- 1 point
“Can Improve”	- 2 to 4 points
“Yes”	- 5 points.

The scoring represents a sliding scale and individuals should assess whether some action has been taken and what remains to be done. A score for “can improve” should be positioned between 2 and 4 points to reflect how much improvement remains to be made. The appropriate score should be recorded in the column for each Checklist item.

Once the self-assessment process has been completed individual scores should be aggregated and divided by the number of participants to achieve an average score for each item. Similarly average scores can be calculated for each of the Seven Areas of Excellence. The Self-assessment Team will readily be able to identify the areas where improvement is required.

Some organisations may choose to concentrate their efforts in discrete areas while others may proceed with a full organisational review and reform. In either case, prioritising issues is highly recommended. This will allow the reform process to focus on specific key performance areas in an orderly manner and allow a sensible allocation of resources.

Clearly, those Areas with the lowest total score relative to the

possible maximum score should receive initial attention. The principal role of a judicial support organisation is the delivery of support and services to the judiciary, the courts, and the community and naturally, with areas 4, 5 and 6 accounting for almost half the total weighted score, they should receive appropriate attention.

In settling the priorities for improvement strategies organisations should consider the scores identifying greatest potential for improvement.

To assist the following table has been devised to enable proper weighting of scores obtained and to give a final total score out of 1,000 points. Scores should be retained and used as a benchmark to track progress when undertaking a subsequent self-assessment.

A sample of a completed scoring sheet follows the Weighted Scoring Table below.

## Self-Assessment

The Checklist commences after the two scoring tables below.

In the Checklist each of the Seven Areas of Excellence is listed together with *initial statements of practices* that embody the accepted values. These initial statements are simply broad statements to provide some direction and context for the detailed Checklist items. It is excellence in each of the Seven Areas of Excellence that an organisation should be striving for and as this is a continuing process there will always be new and innovative ways for improving



performance. The statements for each area are followed by a Checklist of actions or activities organisations are expected to have implemented to achieve *Framework* expectations. The actions/activities are not exhaustive but are indicative and provide initial guidance. Organisations are encouraged to add or substitute their own actions/activities as they become more familiar with the *Framework* approach. Some items appear in more than one Checklist area as they have relevance and application to more than one area.

**Note: For those comparing this *Framework* to the IFCE will notice the weightings do vary as judicial support organisations are primarily providing support services to the courts and this has been given greater weighting in the overall scoring. Areas 4 and 6 relating to services and their accessibility have a slightly higher weighting and areas 2 and 3 relating to policies and resources have a slightly lower weighting.**

## Weighted Scoring Table

	AREAS	MAXIMUM POINTS	SCORE ACHIEVED	MULTIPLIER	RESULTING SCORE	WEIGHTED SCORE
1	Leadership and Management	70		2		140
2	Planning and Policies	50		2		100
3	Resources (Human, Material and Financial)	75		2		150
4	Service Delivery	80		2		160
5	Satisfaction with Services	50		3		150
6	Accessible Services	50		3		150
7	Public Trust and Confidence	50		3		150
	<b>Total</b>					<b>1,000</b>

## Sample of Weighted Scoring Results

	AREAS	SCORE ACHIEVED	MULTIPLIER	RESULTING SCORE	MAXIMUM WEIGHTED SCORE
1	Leadership and Management	60	2	120	140
2	Planning and Policies	30	2	60	100
3	Resources (Human, Material and Financial)	50	2	100	150
4	Service Delivery	30	2	90	160
5	Satisfaction with Services	25	3	75	150
6	Accessible Services	30	3	90	150
7	Public Trust and Confidence	30	3	90	150
<b>Total</b>				<b>625</b>	<b>1,000</b>

# SELF-ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

## 1. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

- 1.1 We have published a statement of our vision and mission (purpose) together with details of how we meet our core values (such as accessibility, timeliness and fairness).
- 1.2 Our leadership is actively involved in setting time and service standards and reviewing professional and administrative performance against those standards.
- 1.3 We hold regular meetings with judicial officers, court administrators, staff and our stakeholders to provide information and seek feedback.
- 1.4 We actively inform the courts, government and community on our services, standards and performance and seek feedback to improve our services.
- 1.5 Data is kept and published on key aspects our work.
- 1.6 We plan for the future, review feedback on our performance and identify areas for improvement.
- 1.7 Our organisation and our leaders promote a culture of innovation.

# 1. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT (continued)

<b>ACTIONS</b>		<b>No (0)</b>	<b>CONSIDERING ACTION (1)</b>	<b>CAN IMPROVE (2 – 4)</b>	<b>YES (5)</b>	<b>SCORE</b>
	<b>Leadership and Management</b>					
1	Our leaders have defined the vision, mission and core values of our organisation.					
2	Our leaders communicate the vision, mission and core values to all staff, clients, including judicial officers and court staff, and stakeholders.					
3	Our leaders demonstrate the core values of our organisation.					
4	We have developed an organisational culture consistent with our values.					
	<b>Setting Performance Standards and Obtaining Feedback</b>					
5	We set time and service delivery standards and targets and aim to meet and exceed expectations.					
6	We measure, maintain and publish data on our performance against these standards and targets.					
7	We obtain feedback from clients, including judicial officers and court staff, and stakeholders regularly.					
8	We review our performance data and feedback on a regular basis.					
9	We use data and feedback to plan improvements in our performance, procedures and processes.					
	<b>Engaging Staff and Community</b>					
10	We regularly provide information to staff and the community.					
11	Our staff are actively involved in our review, planning and communication processes and we incorporate feedback from the community.					
	<b>Innovation</b>					
12	Our leaders actively plan for the future and promote a culture of innovation.					
13	We seek to identify and adopt innovative ideas and practices to improve our performance.					
14	Our leaders demonstrate and reinforce their commitment to innovation in day-to-day activities.					
<b>TOTAL</b>						

## 2. PLANNING AND POLICIES

- 2.1 We have a strategic plan identifying our goals, targets and plans and we allocate resources to our improvement actions.
- 2.2 We actively involve judicial officers, court administrators and staff in planning and problem solving tasks.
- 2.3 We regularly review the plan and our performance against our targets.

- 2.4 We have published our policies.
- 2.5 We regularly review our policies to ensure their continuing effectiveness and adherence to our goals, targets and values.
- 2.6 We have an innovation strategy as an integral part of our strategic planning.

<b>ACTIONS</b>		<b>No (0)</b>	<b>CONSIDERING ACTION (1)</b>	<b>Can Improve (2 – 4)</b>	<b>Yes (5)</b>	<b>Score</b>
	<b>Planning</b>					
1	We have a strategic plan that identifies our values, targets and plans.					
2	We involve staff in our organisation's review and planning processes.					
3	We involve our clients, including judicial officers and court staff, and stakeholders in regular consultation and seek feedback to inform our planning process.					
4	We have a process for monitoring and reviewing the strategic plan.					
5	We allocate resources for actions identified in our strategic plan.					
	<b>Policies</b>					
6	We have policies that support our values, targets and plans.					
7	We publish our policies and monitor compliance.					
8	We review our policies regularly to ensure quality and efficiency.					
	<b>Innovation</b>					
9	We have put in place an innovation strategy, with short and long-term goals, as an integral part of our planning that is aligned with our organisation's goals.					
10	We undertake research and monitor developments in industry best practice to identify innovative policies and practices.					
<b>TOTAL</b>						

### 3. RESOURCES (HUMAN, MATERIAL AND FINANCIAL)

- 3.1 We manage resources proactively to balance our professional and administrative workloads to ensure timely and quality services.
- 3.2 We have identified the training needs of our staff and we meet them.
- 3.3 We conduct regular professional development programs for our professional and administrative staff.

- 3.4 We provide access to information to support our services to the judiciary, courts and community.
- 3.5 We effectively manage material resources.
- 3.6 Our facilities are adequate and safe.
- 3.7 We have an appropriate budget process and regularly monitor expenditure.
- 3.8 We provide training, support and recognition for innovation

<b>ACTIONS</b>		<b>No (0)</b>	<b>CONSIDERING ACTION (1)</b>	<b>Can Improve (2 – 4)</b>	<b>Yes (5)</b>	<b>Score</b>
	<b>Managing Resources and Workload</b>					
1	We manage the workload of our professional and administrative staff so matters are dealt with in a timely and quality manner.					
2	We have a risk management strategy and manage our resources to address those risks and manage our anticipated workloads.					
3	We manage our financial resources efficiently and effectively.					
	<b>Staff Training and Development</b>					
4	We have a professional development program for all professional staff.					
5	We provide continuing personal development training for all staff.					
6	Our staff learn from, and communicate with, each other.					
7	We provide all staff with information necessary to undertake their roles.					
8	We have identified the training needs of all staff and ensure our training program meets those needs.					
	<b>Employee Commitment</b>					
9	Our staff are committed to delivering quality support and services.					
	<b>Asset Management</b>					
10	We have an asset management plan that includes technology and is aligned to our goals and the timely delivery of our support and services.					

11	Our premises are safe and are equipped with appropriate technology to enable efficient delivery of services.					
	<b>Budget</b>					
12	We have a detailed budget and allocate our budget efficiently and effectively to support our work and innovation.					
13	We have a strategy for monitoring expenditure and identifying efficiencies/savings on an ongoing basis.					
	<b>Innovation</b>					
14	We have strategies and mechanisms to engage staff in innovation and to recognize and reward them for their contribution to innovation.					
15	We ensure innovation is built into all the learning and development programs for staff.					
<b>TOTAL</b>						

## 4. SERVICE DELIVERY (Corporate and Support Services)

NOTE: This section requires special attention.

This section includes four questions applicable to all types of judicial support organisations, and a number of specialty lists reflecting the variety of support services that may be provided. The specialty areas covered in the Schedule – Area 4 Specific Service Delivery Functions (from page 26) are Education, Research, Information Technology, Finance, Asset Management, Human Resources and Labour Relations.

When undertaking the self-assessment, organisations should identify the particular categories of services relevant to their organisation and assess each area. The total score for all the categories scored should be divided by the number of categories completed and added to the base score for item 4. So the total score for Item 4 is the sum of the 4 questions (maximum 20 points) and the average score for the categories assessed (maximum 60 points).

For example, a research and education body scoring 10/20 for the main questions and 45/60 for research and 35/60 for education would score:

- the average of 35 and 45 = 40 points; plus

- 10 points for the 4 main questions;

making a total of 50 points out of a maximum of 80 points.

## 4. SERVICE DELIVERY

- 4.1 We deliver timely and quality services against agreed best practice standards.
- 4.2 We have a system for actively managing our workload and look for improved ways to deliver our services more effectively.
- 4.3 We report to our clients on performance and progress on improvement initiatives.
- 4.4 We maintain accurate and comprehensive database, filing and record systems.
- 4.5 We encourage innovation and continuous improvement in support and service delivery.

<b>ACTIONS</b>		<b>No (0)</b>	<b>CONSIDERING ACTION (1)</b>	<b>Can Improve (2 – 4)</b>	<b>Yes (5)</b>	<b>Score</b>
	<b>Efficiency and Effectiveness of Services</b>					
1	We deliver services against established benchmarks for quality and timeliness and report regularly to our clients.					
2	We review the roles of our staff to ensure efficiency of processes and roles.					
3	We maintain accurate and comprehensive data, filing and record systems.					
4	We monitor the quality of our services and continually look to improve and innovate.					
<b>BASE SCORE</b>						
<b>(ADD AVERAGE OF CORPORATE SERVICES)</b>			<b>CATEGORY SCORE</b>			
<b>TOTAL</b>						

This area has a total maximum score of 80 comprising the 4 questions above and 12 questions from a category in the Schedule. Where a judicial support organisation provides services across multiple categories, all the relevant categories in the Schedule should be assessed and an average score (i.e. out of a maximum of 60) added to the base score above.



## 5. SATISFACTION WITH SERVICES

- 5.1 We survey and seek regular feedback from our clients, including judicial officers, court staff, stakeholders and the community on our services, policies and processes.
- 5.2 We implement changes identified by surveys and feedback.

- 5.3 We report regularly to judicial officers, court staff and stakeholders on changes made in response to surveys and feedback.
- 5.4 We use technology and innovation to ensure we deliver higher quality professional services.

ACTIONS		No (0)	CONSIDERING ACTION (1)	Can Improve (2 – 4)	Yes (5)	Score
	<b>Feedback</b>					
1	We seek feedback on a regular basis (including surveys and dialogue) to measure satisfaction with our support and services.					
2	We seek feedback on a regular basis to improve our services to judicial officers, court staff and stakeholders.					
3	We analyse surveys and adjust policies and procedures.					
	<b>Communication</b>					
4	We report to judicial officers, court staff and stakeholders on changes we implement in response to the results of surveys.					
5	We communicate clearly with both our clients and our partners.					
6	We listen to our clients and stakeholders and treat them with respect.					
	<b>Satisfaction</b>					
7	Judicial officers, court staff and stakeholders assess our services as professional and timely.					
8	There is a high level of satisfaction with the quality of our support and services.					
9	There is a high level of satisfaction with our interaction among our suppliers.					
	<b>Innovation</b>					
10	We have applied innovation and technology to enhance the delivery of our services.					
<b>TOTAL</b>						

## 6. ACCESSIBLE SERVICES

- 6.1 We have processes in place that promote access to information on our support and services.
- 6.2 We publish information on services and access.
- 6.3 Physical access to our offices and facilities is easy.
- 6.4 We provide support for people with disabilities to ensure easy access to our services.

- 6.5 We have policies to ensure equal treatment for all staff and clients.
- 6.6 We use plain language in all documentation.
- 6.7 We use technology to drive efficient interaction with judicial officers, courts, other stakeholders and the community.
- 6.8 We use technology and innovation to improve access.

<b>ACTIONS</b>		No (0)	CONSIDERING ACTION (1)	Can Improve (2 – 4)	Yes (5)	Score
	<b>Accessible Services</b>					
1	We review our policies to ensure that information on our services is readily accessible.					
2	We ensure our services are delivered in a timely manner to minimise delays.					
3	We use innovative technology to fully satisfy our clients' requirements.					
4	We provide clear descriptions of how to access and use our services.					
	<b>Accessibility of our Premises and Website</b>					
5	We make it easy for people to access our services, contact us or visit our premises.					
6	We provide appropriate support and access to our services for people with disabilities.					
7	Our website is easy to navigate, contains relevant and useful information on our role, services and standards.					
8	We endeavour to meet the special needs of our clients to ensure equal access to our services.					
9	We provide information in plain language to assist our clients.					
	<b>Innovation</b>					
10	We use innovation and technology to make our services more efficient and accessible.					
<b>TOTAL</b>						

## 7. PUBLIC TRUST AND CONFIDENCE

- 7.1 We publicly account for our role and performance.
- 7.2 We publish information on performance against time and service standards.
- 7.3 We endeavour to ensure our clients and members of the public understand our processes, services and any decisions we make that affect them.
- 7.4 We have a complaints policy and report on our handling of complaints.
- 7.5 We conduct regular independent audits on expenditure and programs.

ACTIONS		No (0)	CONSIDERING ACTION (1)	Can Improve (2 - 4)	Yes (5)	Score
	<b>Public Trust and Confidence</b>					
1	We publish our performance against time/service standards and other benchmarks.					
2	We respond promptly to requests for information from clients and stakeholders.					
3	We can demonstrate that members of the community value the services we deliver to them.					
4	We have a policy, which we adhere to, that outlines the process for making and dealing with complaints and we report on complaints received and their resolution.					
5	We publish information on our procedures and our complaints policy.					
6.	We publish details of our services, requirements and any fees.					
7	Our accounts/expenditures are independently audited annually.					
8	Our published annual report includes: a) Details of our purpose, role and procedures b) Performance data and survey feedback c) Information on reforms and improvements.					
9	The community has a high level of public trust and confidence in the performance of our organisation.					
	<b>Innovation</b>					
10	We engage members of the public in an innovative manner to build up public trust and confidence.					
<b>TOTAL</b>						

# Identify Areas for Improvement and Measure Progress

## 1. Develop an Improvement Plan

It is essential for an organisation's leadership to ensure that the improvement process provides ample opportunity for all staff and clients and stakeholders to be consulted and involved. The assessment will have identified a range of issues for the organisation to address in developing an improvement or action plan, such as:

- > **Does the organisation have a vision statement and/or a mission statement expressing its fundamental values and purposes?** If not, this is the place to start because implementation of the *Framework* depends upon the organisation having articulated values and vision.
- > **What are the deficiencies in the organisation's management, operations, and services** and why do they need to be improved?
- > **What issues can and must be addressed quickly and in the short-term?** What issues call for more intermediate or long-term planning?
- > **Whose support and cooperation is most relevant in making changes** (e.g., courts, suppliers, funders, policy makers or government agencies)?

- > **What resources will be needed in order to successfully institute those changes** (e.g., funding for additional personnel or equipment; cooperation of the judges; effective communication with other components of the justice system)? How will those resources be secured? What sources of support can the organisation draw on?
- > **What resistance to the plan or obstacles may be encountered?** How might this resistance or these obstacles best be overcome?
- > **What is the time schedule for instituting the changes?**
- > **How will the success of the changes be measured?** What information will be needed for this evaluation? Who will collect the information and how will it be analysed? Will the assistance of an outside consultant be needed to develop measurement tools and analyse results?

The following table is an example of a template for an Improvement Plan and this may be a useful guide for an agency in developing its own Improvement Plan. The template identifies a few actions that could be proposed in relation to the Satisfaction with Services area.

Each column progressively details the steps needed to implement the action, who will have responsibility for it, when the action will be completed and finally a clear performance indicator enabling measurement of implementation/outcome.

## Template Improvement Plan

	<b>Areas of excellence (&amp; self-assessment scores)</b>	<b>Action to be undertaken and expected outcome</b>	<b>Steps to achieve action and outcome</b>	<b>Responsibility/ participants</b>	<b>Timing of steps</b>	<b>Performance Indicator</b>
5	<b>Area 5: Satisfaction with Services</b>	<b>We survey and seek regular feedback from clients, including judicial officers and court staff, and stakeholders</b>				
5.	Satisfaction with Services					
5.1	We use feedback on a regular basis (including surveys and dialogue) to measure satisfaction with our support and services	Develop a survey to assess satisfaction with our services.	Engage survey designer to consult and settle e-survey.	Framework Working Group	30.04.15	Action taken by target date.
		Undertake survey and assess results.	Promote survey to all clients; assess results and feed into the improvement/review process.	Framework WG and Director Communications	31.07.15	Action taken by target date.
		Establish benchmark satisfaction level and set target for improvement	Agree on survey result as benchmark. Set target of 5% improvement of satisfaction level for one year's time.	CEO and Executive Committee	31.08.15	Benchmark and target published to clients.
		Conduct new survey.	Refine survey in light of feedback, promote and assess results.	Director Communications	31.07.16	5% improvement on 2015 survey result.

## 2. Measure Progress—Collect Data

It is important to distinguish between performance measurement indicators (and tools) and performance management policies and tools. Performance measurement indicators and tools assist in the quantitative and qualitative assessment of the functioning of organisations. These indicators and tools capture both internal and external aspects of performance with surveys being a good example of direct user feedback on performance.

On the other hand, performance management policies and tools are part of the arsenal of tools and processes available to effect change. These levers, procedures and policies can be adjusted through various strategies directed to improving performance. Relevant organisational performance measurement indicators will measure whether these changes have had a positive effect.

Excellent judicial support organisations systematically measure the quality as well as the efficiency and effectiveness of the services they deliver. They establish a set of targets and measures not only to assess their performance but also to determine the effectiveness of improvement strategies.

In addition to quantitative performance indicators, qualitative indicators should be used to address such issues as satisfaction

with services; quality and relevance of educational programs; responsiveness of staff; usefulness and simplicity of documentation; ease of use of technology and accessibility of website information. Data regarding these indicators can be based on surveys, feedback, structured observations and expert assessments.

Organisations without adequate or reliable data collections, appropriate survey instruments or employees trained in research methods and analysis should seek assistance. Consultants may be engaged to assist or if resources are limited there are many experts to be found within universities, colleges and government statistical and research agencies.

It is important that data relied upon is of a high quality, reliable and the integrity of the data is guaranteed. A successful and well-managed organisation requires data that not only focus on inputs, but also provide clear information on outputs, outcomes, and impact – that is the extent to which service delivery is actually achieved.

Electronic service systems (such as payroll, leave, recruitment, procurement, training) should be structured to make it possible to monitor and evaluate performance regularly. It is important that common definitions and standards are established across all databases to ensure consistency.

An Improvement Plan must contain clear measures (or targets) for each action to enable the organisation to

measure whether the action has been successful. Agencies should avoid adopting measures that simply identify whether a particular action or step has been conducted.

For example, providing management education sessions for twenty staff and measuring that this has been done says nothing about whether the sessions were valuable, of high quality or indeed raised the skills of staff. Equally setting the target as a date for completion of a task alone does not ensure the task was a success.

The question should always be asked: ‘why are we doing this?’ and a measure or indicator should be identified which reflects the desired outcome.

The second question to be asked should be: ‘if we are successful what will success look like and what will be different?’

In many cases the measurement of the success of an initiative may well be its impact on a measure of organisational performance but that may not always be the case. As the *Framework* requires an evidence base to decision-making and planning, care must always be taken to identify sound measures of success.

## Communicate Plan and Results

To ensure public respect and confidence, a judicial support organisation must be open and transparent about its performance, strategies and processes.

In the early stages of *Framework* implementation an organisation’s performance against its targets or accepted measures may be less than desirable. It is important that

organisations are open about their current position but more importantly publish details of what actions they are taking to address the problems.

A judicial support organisation should communicate its commitment to undertaking *Framework* implementation not only to judicial officers and court administrators but also to its wider stakeholders including government and the community. An open commitment to continuous improvement alone will be recognized as a positive step towards excellence.

The organisation should publish the results of its evaluations and its plans for improvement. Annual Reports should also contain detail of the organisation’s role, processes, service standards and performance. Where practical, it should keep its clients and stakeholders informed of its performance and reform initiatives throughout the year.

An important aspect of an Improvement Plan should be the development of a Communication Plan identifying how the organisation intends to inform its clients and stakeholders.

The plan should include not only strategies for publishing material and information but also outline other forms of appropriate communication including:

- regular meetings with key judicial, court administrators and other clients
- the provision of information to the community
- website content and access
- use of social media
- publication of service standards and performance
- feedback and complaint processes.

Open communication on performance and strategy builds public trust and confidence.

## Continuous Improvement

The *Framework* is a methodology that is to be continually applied by a judicial support organisation. It is recommended that the Improvement Plan is regularly reviewed and progress regularly monitored. To identify what progress has been made it is recommended that a self-assessment be undertaken every 12 months, and that the incremental progress, or lack thereof, be reported to all staff. Each self-assessment should follow the same process outlined above and the Improvement Plan either amended or a fresh one developed.



# Schedule – Area 4 Specific Service Delivery Functions

## EDUCATION

<b>ACTIONS</b>		<b>No (0)</b>	<b>CONSIDERING ACTION (1)</b>	<b>Can Improve (2-4)</b>	<b>Yes (5)</b>	<b>Score</b>
	<b>EDUCATION</b>					
1	We consult and seek feedback on all aspects of our programs/curriculum development and delivery.					
2	We ensure our digital surveys allow free text space for detailed client feedback.					
3	We publish an annual education calendar of events.					
4	We have an education strategy linking our programs to our objectives.					
5	We use expert input in developing our programs.					
6	We maintain attendance records for all individuals attending courses.					
7	We employ a wide range of modes of delivery as needed, including: online, face-to-face, podcast, webinar and self-directed.					
8	We seek to maximize interactive learning within our programs.					
9	We maintain a knowledge repository of past presentations and papers and provide online access.					
10	We monitor trends in innovative and effective education methods.					
11	We have a policy on sponsorship of programs.					
12	We adhere to published best practice procurement processes.					
<b>TOTAL</b>						

# RESEARCH

## ACTIONS

		No (0)	CONSIDERING ACTION (1)	Can Improve (2 – 4)	Yes (5)	Score
	<b>RESEARCH</b>					
1	We consult with our stakeholders and clients in all aspects of our research program development and delivery.					
2	We comply with all applicable ethics policies and procedures in conducting our research.					
3	We seek feedback on the quality and usefulness of our research.					
4	We have a Research Strategic Plan linked to our corporate objectives and priorities.					
5	We engage with experts and establish expert project advisory groups where appropriate.					
6	We have a research budget linked to our Research Strategic Plan.					
7	We monitor our research expenditure, commitments and income on a continuing basis.					
	<b>RESEARCH GRANTS</b>					
8	We have a Grants Program Policy that details our objectives, processes, funding as well as acknowledgement and evaluation requirements.					
9	We have a process for dealing with grant applications to ensure expert analysis, an appropriate funding regime to ensure delivery, regular progress reporting and budget monitoring.					
10	We have a standard contract clarifying all grant requirements including intellectual property rights.					
11	We have a communications plan for publication of results of research/grants and notification of key stakeholders.					
12	We have published an ethics policy and procedures that we require grant applications and grant recipients to comply with and have established an ethics committee to oversee compliance of applications and recipients with our ethics policy.					
<b>TOTAL</b>						

# CORPORATE SERVICES

## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

<b>ACTIONS</b>		<b>No (0)</b>	<b>CONSIDERING ACTION (1)</b>	<b>Can Improve (2 – 4)</b>	<b>Yes (5)</b>	<b>Score</b>
	<b>INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY – CORPORATE SERVICES</b>					
1	We consult in all aspects of our IT development and delivery.					
2	We seek feedback on our IT services.					
3	Our IT Strategic Plan is developed in consultation with clients and users and is driven by their business needs.					
4	Our IT Strategic Plan identifies business goals and incorporates strategies, targets, measures of performance and standards (both time and quality).					
5	We provide an effective helpline.					
6	We adopt innovative technology to match business and service needs.					
7	Our IT procurement practices and our use of leased and owned IT equipment reflect best practice and value.					
8	We consider the security, value and effectiveness of a range of service provision methods including bring-your-own-device, big data analysis, open data, cloud and flexible access arrangements.					
9	We ensure appropriate security and backup arrangements are consistent with the systems and data we manage.					
10	We maintain auditable data on access to and use of our systems.					
11	We ensure our data storage, transfer and use meet statutory, privacy and security requirements.					
12	We have agreed service targets and standards and we report on them regularly to our clients.					
<b>TOTAL</b>						

# CORPORATE SERVICES

## FINANCE

<b>ACTIONS</b>		<b>No (0)</b>	<b>CONSIDERING ACTION (1)</b>	<b>Can Improve (2- 4)</b>	<b>Yes (5)</b>	<b>Score</b>
	<b>FINANCE</b>					
1	We consult in all aspects of our development and delivery of finance services.					
2	We seek feedback on all finance services.					
3	We settle our budget annually before the financial year commences.					
4	We provide adequate reporting to our clients to meet their needs (such as monthly expenditure/revenue against budget and forecast cashflow).					
5	We have a debt management policy and report regularly on outstanding debt.					
6	We employ appropriate technology (such as automated payments and direct debit) to meet client needs.					
7	Our accounting system captures all online transactions of our clients.					
8	We have published our policy on authorities to incur expenditure and review them regularly.					
9	We have a system to ensure evaluation of revenue and expenditure by program/area/project.					
10	We have appointed an independent auditor to audit our accounts.					
11	We adhere to published best practice finance procurement practices.					
12	We have agreed service targets and standards and we report on them regularly to our clients.					
<b>TOTAL</b>						

# CORPORATE SERVICES

## ASSET MANAGEMENT

<b>ACTIONS</b>		<b>No (0)</b>	<b>CONSIDERING ACTION (1)</b>	<b>Can Improve (2 – 4)</b>	<b>Yes (5)</b>	<b>Score</b>
	<b>ASSET MANAGEMENT</b>					
1	We consult in all aspects of our development of asset plans and the delivery of asset management services.					
2	We seek feedback on all asset management services.					
3	We have a Asset Strategic Plan that sets out our strategies for managing all property and assets under our control.					
4	We have a budget that is aligned to implementation of our Asset Strategic Plan.					
5	We have detailed facility plans for all our client premises including cyclical maintenance.					
6	We maintain a register of and monitor all leasehold property and equipment to ensure all obligations are met.					
7	We maintain a register of any special value moveable assets (such as historical items, furniture or rare books).					
8	We have an up-to-date assets register and undertake an annual stocktake.					
9	We monitor the state of all assets on a regular basis and ensure adequate resources are committed to regular maintenance.					
10	We use project management software to continually review our progress on major projects.					
11	We regularly monitor and report on our progress against our plans and strategies.					
12	We have a Code of Conduct and adhere to best practice asset management procurement processes.					
<b>TOTAL</b>						

# CORPORATE SERVICES

## HUMAN RESOURCES

<b>ACTIONS</b>		<b>No (0)</b>	<b>CONSIDERING ACTION (1)</b>	<b>Can Improve (2 – 4)</b>	<b>Yes (5)</b>	<b>Score</b>
	<b>HUMAN RESOURCES</b>					
1	We consult and seek feedback on all aspects of our development of HR strategies and the delivery of HR services.					
2	We have a Code of Conduct and adhere to best practice procurement processes.					
3	We have developed best practice HR policies covering all of our services and responsibilities.					
4	We have developed a Recruitment and Retention Strategy.					
5	We have developed a Learning and Development Strategy (including assessment of needs and records of attendance and completion).					
6	We have developed statements of roles for all positions and identified required competencies and experience for them.					
7	We maintain a performance management system for all staff with six monthly reporting.					
8	We provide ready access to expert advice on HR issues to judicial officers, court administrators and staff.					
9	We provide all staff with access to education on workplace behaviour, values, safety and welfare.					
10	We provide access to support or counselling services for our staff.					
11	We adopt appropriate technology to drive efficient management and access to records and processes (such as online leave applications, personal development records and personal details).					
12	We have agreed service targets and standards and we report on them regularly to our clients.					
<b>TOTAL</b>						

# CORPORATE SERVICES

## LABOUR RELATIONS

<b>ACTIONS</b>		<b>No (0)</b>	<b>CONSIDERING ACTION (1)</b>	<b>Can Improve (2 – 4)</b>	<b>Yes (5)</b>	<b>Score</b>
	<b>LABOUR RELATIONS</b>					
1	We have a Labour Relations Policy.					
2	We seek feedback on all Labour Relations services.					
3	We ensure our digital surveys allow free text space for detailed client feedback.					
4	We consult on all aspects of our development of Labour Relations Policy and strategies and the delivery of Labour Relations services.					
5	We maintain records of matters and seek to identify systemic issues so as to improve our services.					
6	Our Labour Relations policy places an emphasis on non-adversarial resolution of disputes.					
7	We ensure all staff have access to negotiation and mediation training where appropriate.					
8	We hold regular meetings with appropriate union/executive officers to consult, discuss and resolve matters.					
9	We provide regular advice to clients on changes to workplace laws and best practices in preventing and managing LR issues.					
10	We work closely with HR officers to ensure best practice guidance and training is given to clients to promote harmonious workplaces.					
11	Our staff are well qualified and have access to professional development to ensure quality services.					
12	We have agreed service targets and standards and we report on them regularly to our clients.					
<b>TOTAL</b>						

