

SERVICE DELIVERY AGREEMENT FOR THE CROWN PROSECUTION SERVICE

A. Statement of Accountability

This Service Delivery Agreement covers the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) and describes the key commitments of the service. The CPS is headed by the Director of Public Prosecutions and is superintended by the Attorney General. The Treasury has appointed the Director of Public Prosecutions as the Department's Accounting Officer and the Chief Executive as an Additional Accounting Officer.

The promotion of race equality in public services is a statutory duty and a key priority for this Government. The Attorney General is personally committed to making equality a core issue in the implementation of this Service Delivery Agreement.

This agreement sets out the key objectives for the CPS over the period 2001-2004 which will contribute to the delivery of the outcomes contained in the CPS Public Service Agreement (PSA) and the criminal justice system PSA.

B. Delivering Key results

B.1 Delivering PSA Targets

PSA Target	Delivery
<p>1. Reduce by 2004 the time from arrest to sentence or other disposal by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Reducing the time from charge to disposal for all defendants, with a target to be specified by March 2001;Dealing with 80% of youth court cases within their time targets; andHalving from 142 to 71 days by 2002 the time taken from arrest to sentence for persistent young offenders (PYOs) and maintaining that level thereafter <p>TARGET CONTRIBUTING TO CJS PSA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Work with other criminal justice system (CJS) agencies to reduce delays through the Narey reformsIntroduce joint CPS/police Criminal Justice Units between July 2000 and April 2002 including the indictable only initiative from January 2001Establish CPS Trials Units to focus and work with Case Progression Officers to improve case management by April 2002Deliver the IT modernisation programme including the introduction of a case management system in 2003/04Implement new training programme for Youth Specialists by January 2002
<p>2. Improve the standard by which the CJS meets the rights of defendants, by achieving by 2004 100% of targets in a basket of measures as defined in the CJS Business Plan</p> <p>TARGET CONTRIBUTING TO CJS PSA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Comply with the revised Code for Crown Prosecutors from October 2000 which takes account of the Human Rights Act 1998, public policy and other key CJS developmentsTake forward recommendations in the CPSI's report on disclosure by December 2001 to improve performance

<p>3. Increase the number and proportion of recorded crimes for which an offender is brought to justice</p> <p>TARGET CONTRIBUTING TO CJS PSA</p>	<p>Work will continue with the other CJS departments to devise an accurate baseline and set a target so that we will predict the impact that the factors influencing the rate of attrition will have on increasing the number and proportion of recorded crimes for which an offender is brought to justice.</p> <p>In addition the CPS shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce joint CPS/police Criminal Justice Units and set up CPS Trial Units (see above) • Introduce a unified fee scheme with LCD for the payment of prosecution and defence advocates by April 2001 to equalise the fees paid to prosecution and defence counsel • From April 2001 CPS will communicate directly with victims about decisions affecting their case
<p>4. Ensure by 2004 that the levels of fear of crime in the key categories of violent crime, burglary and car crime, reported in the British Crime Survey (BCS), are lower than the levels reported in the 2001 BCS</p> <p>TARGET CONTRIBUTING TO CJS PSA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The actions listed under target numbers 1,2,3,5 and 6 will contribute to the achievement of this target.
<p>5. Improve by 5 percentage points the satisfaction level of victims and witnesses with their treatment in CJS by 2002 and thereafter at least maintain that level of performance</p> <p>TARGET CONTRIBUTING TO CJS PSA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From April 2001 CPS will communicate directly with victims about decisions affecting their case • Implement initiatives arising from the Speaking up for Justice Report to provide better support for vulnerable or intimidated witnesses (expected between late 2000/early 2001)
<p>6. Improve the level of public confidence in the CJS by 2004, including improving that of ethnic minority communities</p> <p>TARGET CONTRIBUTING TO CJS PSA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The actions under target numbers 1, 2, 3 and 5 will contribute to the achievement of this target • Increase public confidence by ensuring that cases with a racial element are prosecuted effectively by: • taking forward the recommendations of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report • maintain the CPS Racist Incident Monitoring Scheme and publish annual results by October each year • introduce ethnic monitoring in prosecutions

Additional targets/measures	Delivery
Objective 1: <i>To deal with prosecution cases in a timely and efficient manner in partnership with other agencies</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • serving committal papers on defence within agreed timescales in 82% of cases by 31 March 2004, with an interim target of 78% by 31 March 2002 • submitting briefs to Counsel within agreed timescales in 85% of cases by 31 March 2004, with an interim target of 82% by 31 March 2002
Objective 2: <i>To ensure that the charges proceeded with are appropriate to the evidence and to the seriousness of the offending by the consistent, fair and independent review of cases in accordance with the Code for Crown Prosecutors</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to reduce to 5 per 100,000 the number of cases dismissed on a submission of no case to answer in the magistrates' courts which are attributable to failures in the review process by 31 March 2004 with an interim target of 7.5 cases per 100,000 by 31 March 2002 • to reduce to 4 cases per 1,000 the number of non-jury acquittals in the Crown Court which are attributable to failures in the review process by 31 March 2004 with an interim target of 6 cases per 1,000 by 31 March 2002
Objective 3: <i>To enable the courts to reach just decisions by fairly, thoroughly and firmly presenting prosecution cases, rigorously testing defence cases and scrupulously complying with the duties of disclosure</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to increase to 10% the proportion of advocates whose performance is significantly above normal requirements by 31 March 2004, with an interim target of 7% by 31 March 2002
Objective 4: <i>To meet the needs of victims and witnesses in the criminal justice system, in co-operation with other criminal justice agencies</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to improve performance using the findings of the CJS survey of witness satisfaction, and the measurement of victim satisfaction by the British Crime Survey, in particular to capture the views of women, disabled people, and ethnic minority groups • to increase to 95% the proportion of replies to complaints which are made within 10 days by 31 March 2004 with an interim target of 93% achieved by 31 March 2002

Improving Performance

C.1 Strategies for Improving Performance

The CPS will take a fresh look at its approach to planning and driving change from 2001-2004. We will:

- develop a corporate plan setting a clear path for the next three years
- identify a set of key success measures at a strategic level
- ensure that the CPS Vision and Values Statements (which set out the sort of organisation the CPS seeks to be and the behaviours it wants to encourage) become a reality
- improve understanding and implementation of performance indicators at a local level
- take account of recent and wider developments such as Government-wide modernisation

Initiatives designed to improve performance for the current planning year are outlined in the CPS Business Plan 2000-2001, which can be found on our website at www.cps.gov.uk.

A new performance improvement programme was launched in July 2000, and will continue over the following three years. Specific areas of CPS performance will be targeted for improvement through the programme. The first year of the programme, 2000-2001, will set the baseline for future years.

C.2 Value for Money

Value for money (VfM) in the provision of legal services cannot be expressed easily in money terms. Much can be achieved by focussing resources on priority needs and on quality assured services. The department recognises that developing methodologies for measuring VfM to assist in achieving the criminal justice system value for money target to be published by March 2001 will require new research. The introduction of Resource Accounting and Budgeting will also provide better management information on costs and assets and an opportunity to focus more on outputs and outcomes.

The CPS will review services and activities over a five-year period in line with the stated government policy as set out in the handbook, Better Quality Services (BQS). A BQS Plan was prepared in November 1999 setting out the Service's plans to review 60% of services over the following five years.

A programme of EFQM excellence model self-assessments is underway. On running costs, the intention is that price increases in future will be found from efficiency savings. The sources of these future running cost efficiencies will include the following:

- continuing work on activity based costing and bench-marking of Area performance will help Areas improve performance and reduce costs
- continuing rationalisation of the CPS estate including reductions in vacant space and high cost buildings
- procurement savings through national call off contracts, the development of new contracts and the renegotiation of existing contracts to improve value for money
- reducing sickness absences in line with the targets agreed with the Cabinet Office and the Treasury (see Section E below)
- continued monitoring of the level and cost of HCA usage, in comparison with the use of external advocates
- secure savings through the benefits of the Narey reducing delay initiative and the establishment of CPS/police Criminal Justice Units
- putting in place modern information technology in all 42 CPS Areas

C.3 Variations in performance

Variations in performance are regularly monitored against a robust performance system. As part of its commitment to improve performance the Service collects performance data on its key targets at quarterly intervals, publishes league tables, and works with underachievers to raise their level of performance. Performance results are published in the Director's Annual Report to the Attorney General, which can be found at www.cps.gov.uk, and also in Area Annual Reports, which are distributed to the local community.

HM CPS Inspectorate conducts inspections of all CPS Areas on a regular bi-annual cycle. In addition the Inspectorate produces reports on thematic issues aimed at helping the CPS and the criminal justice system to identify weaknesses and lift its performance.

C.4 Procurement

The CPS acquires supplies and services through competition in the market place and awards business on the basis of value for money. It continues to work towards implementing the recommendations contained within the Gershon Report. The CPS will continue to improve its procurement practices through:

- actively looking at e-commerce solutions to reduce administrative costs
- moving towards electronic tendering through the Government Secure Intranet

- ordering and paying for low value items such as stationery through desk-top computers using the Government Procurement Card
- working more closely with procurement staff in other government departments and agencies.

C.5 Fraud

In February 2000, the CPS's departmental fraud policy was published to all staff. The statement describes the ways in which the Service aims to detect and respond to fraud. The level of fraud is very low. The Service is committed to eliminating fraud altogether.

D. Consumer Focus

D.1 Consumer tests

A survey of witness satisfaction within the CJS is being developed with CPS involvement. The survey will report in Autumn 2000 and provide the baseline for future years. The Service will use the resulting data to improve its performance. Victim satisfaction is being measured as part of the British Crime Survey. These surveys will also capture the views of women disabled people, and ethnic minority groups.

The CPS monitors performance against those standards set out in the Victim's Charter which impact upon it. Performance against those standards is published in the Director's Annual Report to the Attorney General.

A study of the feasibility of a CPS customer (court) satisfaction survey to help measure and improve performance will be carried out in 2000-2001. Subject to the results, and funding being available, the aim is to launch the first of a programme of annual surveys during 2001-2002.

D.2 Consumer Access

A public enquiry point is advertised in the Director's Annual Report and on our website. There is also a facility for complaints to be sent over the internet.

D.3 Prompt handling of correspondence

The CPS aims to acknowledge correspondence from members of the public within 3 working days and to reply within 10 working days. A target of 15 working days from the date of receipt is applied to correspondence from Members of Parliament.

E. Managing People

E.1 Civil Service Reform

The CPS has produced a Civil Service Reform Action Plan setting out the action the Service will take to meet the reform agenda. The Action Plan will be regularly updated and will be published on the CPS website.

The Modernising Government initiative is reflected in the priorities for the Service which are set out in the CPS's Business Plan. The CPS's Human Resource Strategy focuses on enabling the organisation and individuals to achieve their objectives through stronger leadership; developing talent; better training and development; an active programme of interchange and secondments and by the end of 2000, gaining IiP accreditation throughout the Service.

E.3 Sickness absence

A target to reduce the average rate of sickness absence across the CPS has been set at 7.0 days by 2003 (maintained in 2004). Each of our 42 Areas, and Headquarters Directorates, have set individual targets for reduction of sickness absence, agreed against the overall Departmental target. Guidance on best practice in managing and reducing sickness absence has been issued to all Areas and HQ Directorates.

The Service aims to operate effective occupational health policies and sound management policies. By 2005 it aims to maintain or reduce levels of ill health retirements which currently are lower than the best quartile target of 3.72 retirements per 1,000 employees (allowing flexibility to take account of the age structure of the workforce). At the same time, the Service will recognise individual entitlements to ill health retirement where this is justified, following consistent, robust and fair application of the scheme criteria.

E.4 Diversity

Employment

Our diversity targets are

<i>Staff category</i>	<i>Ethnic minority staff</i>	<i>2002 target</i> <i>Women</i>
B2	4.5%	no target, sufficient representation
B3	1.5%	38%
D	2.5%	39%
E	2%	17%
Chief Crown Prosecutor	4%	22%
Senior Civil Service	5%	17%

In addition:

- All staff will be trained in diversity during 2001
- the CPS has revised its competence framework to include diversity awareness and management as a separate area of competence for its staff
- diversity objectives will be included in individual forward job plans
- performance appraisal markings are evaluated by ethnicity and gender
- we are developing monitoring in service delivery (prosecutions)

F. Electronic Government

The CPS has appointed an Information Age Champion. An Information Systems Strategic Plan has been developed for the CPS which will address the scarcity of information technology within the Service. The CPS has in place a two stage IT Modernisation Programme to raise its level of IT capability. Stage 1 is expected to be completed by late 2001, with Stage 2 reaching completion in 2003.

Public use of the CPS website is increasing, and the Service is beginning to receive complaints via e-mail. The CPS has few direct dealings with the public outside the courtroom, and has limited capacity for transacting business with the public by electronic means (around 15% during 1999-2000). The IT Modernisation programme will contribute to electronically joined-up government within the criminal justice

system, and via the GSI, other departments, and thereby to the overall progress of government towards the Prime Minister's target for 100% of services being capable of being delivered electronically by 2005.

By 2005 criminal justice services to the public will be available on-line, and all main criminal justice organisations will be able to exchange case information. Within the CPS, projects such as CONNECT 42 and COMPASS are contributing to the IBIS (Integrated Business Information Systems) Medium Term Strategic Plan (October 1999). IBIS seeks to improve information handling throughout the criminal justice process. Joined up systems (between the police, CPS, magistrates' courts, Crown Court, Probation and Prison Services) will give the criminal justice system ready access to accurate, up to date information, wherever it is held. Electronic communication of the information needed for decision making will improve the end to end process and the efficiency of case handling, reduce delays and enable more informed decisions.

G. Policy and Strategy

Setting of policy and strategy is informed by the direction of the whole criminal justice system and is designed to feed into the process of improving system-wide performance, while preserving the proper independence of CPS casework decisions. The CPS:

- makes policy in an open and inclusive manner by consulting widely on policy proposals, and by allowing the views of operational staff to be heard
- takes account of its commitment to providing a working environment that is fair to all
- recognises the benefits of using research and inspection as a tool for developing evidence-based policy
- manages risk through leadership by the Board
- sets departmental policy and strategy which reflects a commitment to race equality and diversity in our service to the public.