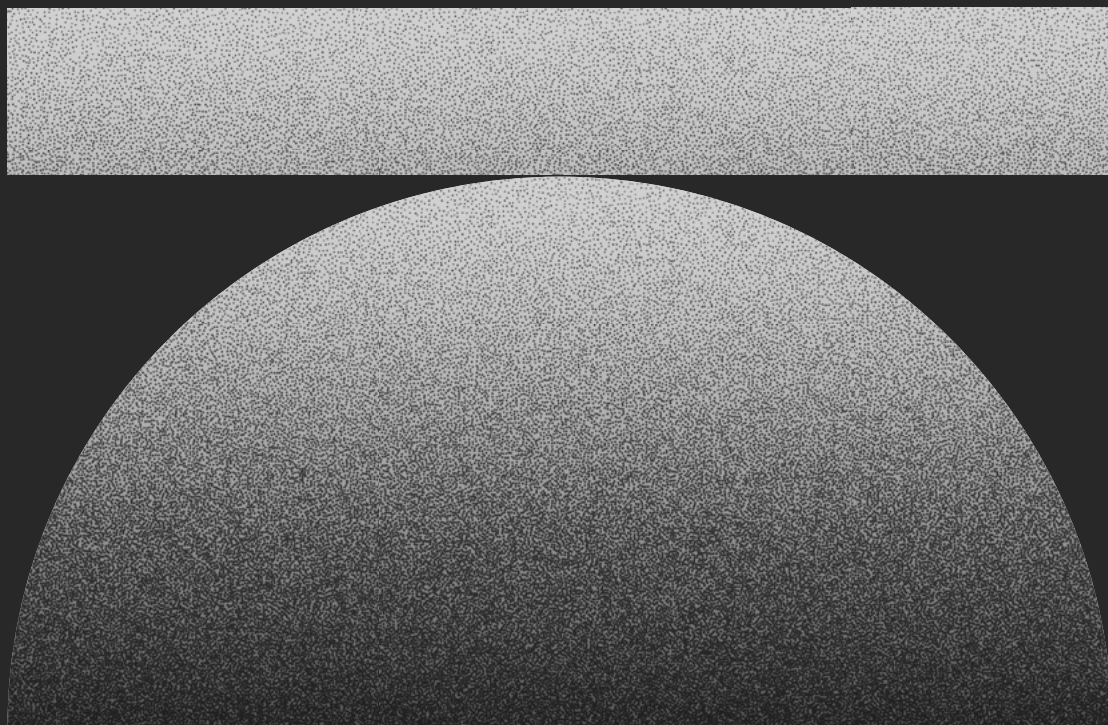




Federal Court of Australia Listed Entity

Corporate Plan 2024–2025

Covering the reporting period 2024–25 to 2027–28



Supporting the operations of the Federal Court of Australia, the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 1), the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 2) and the National Native Title Tribunal.



**FEDERAL COURT
OF AUSTRALIA**



**FEDERAL CIRCUIT AND
FAMILY COURT OF AUSTRALIA**
DIVISION 1 | DIVISION 2



**National
Native Title
Tribunal**

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Use of the Coat of Arms

The terms under which the Coat of Arms can be used can be found at: <https://www.pmc.gov.au/honours-and-symbols/commonwealth-coat-arms>

Contact details

National Communication

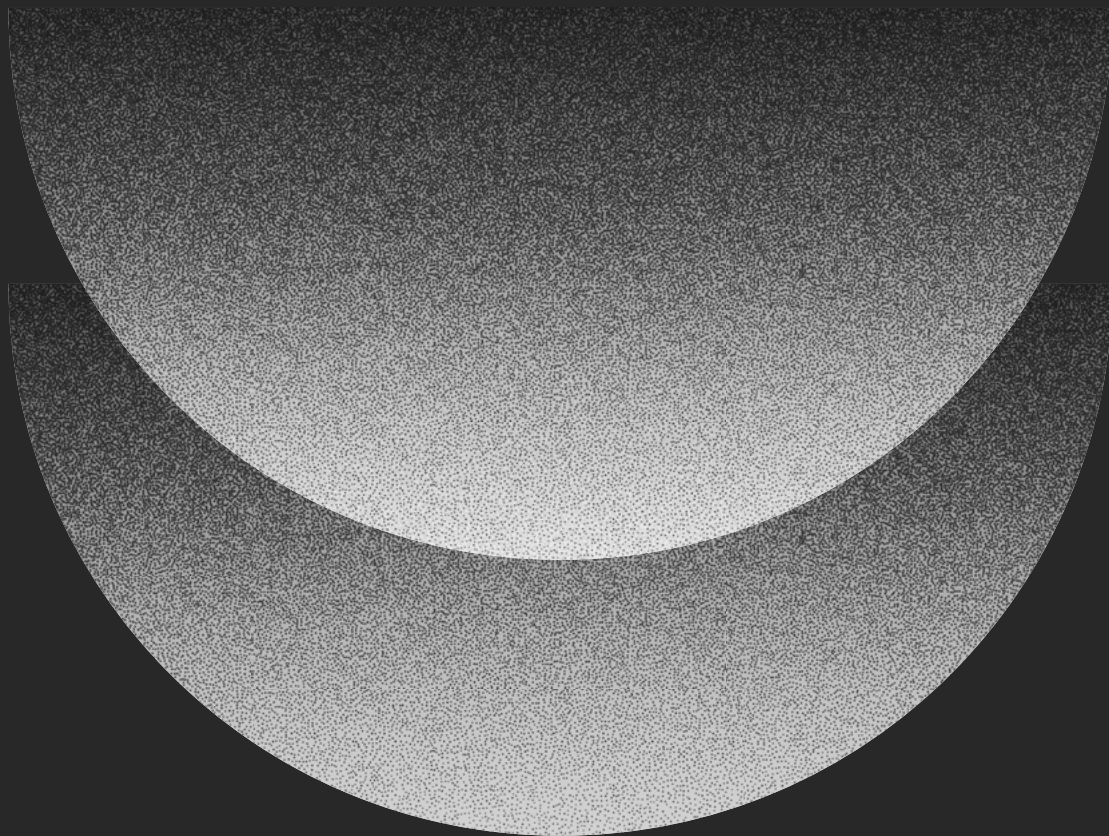
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Acknowledgment of Country

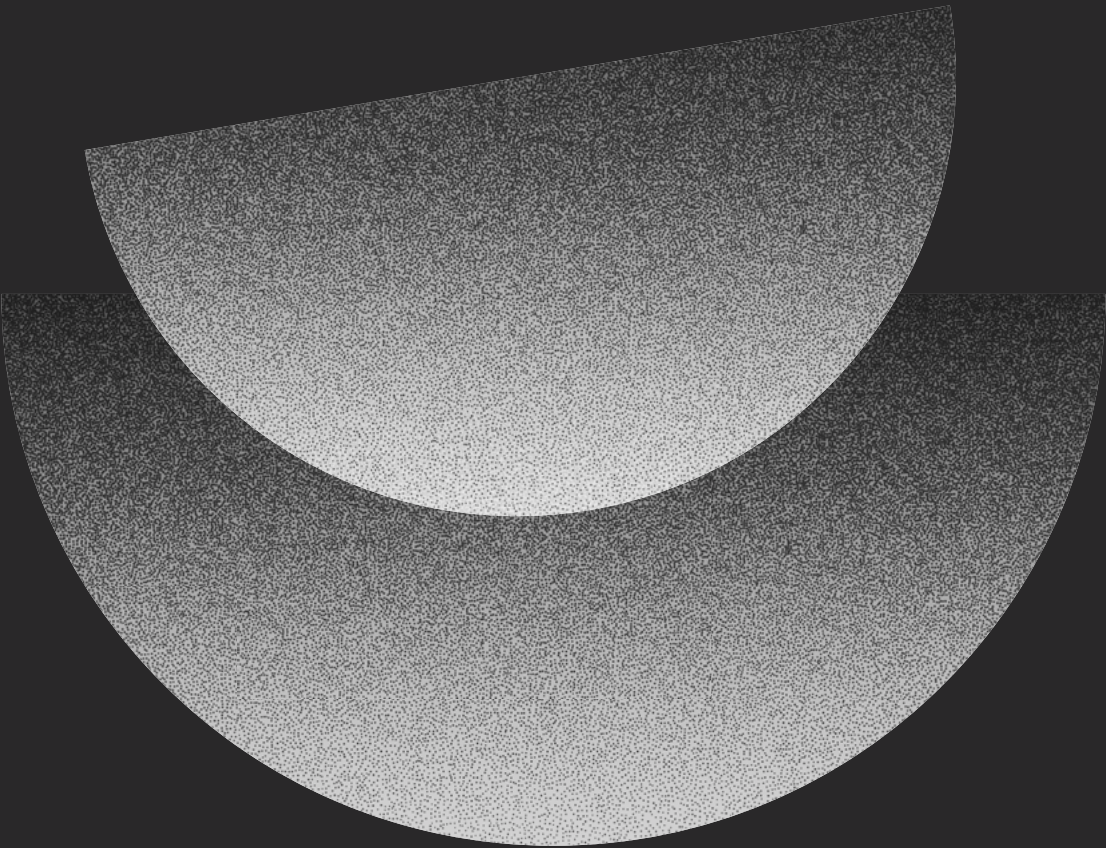
We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the land and acknowledge and pay respect to their Elders, past and present.



Contents

Acknowledgment of Country	ii
Introduction	1
Statement of preparation	3
Operating context	4
Risk oversight and management	10
Cooperation	15
Capability	19
Program 1.1: Federal Court of Australia	23
Program 1.1 (cont'd): Native Title Tribunal	30
Program 2.1: FCFCOA (Division 1)	34
Program 3.1: FCFCOA (Division 2)	41
Program 4.1: Commonwealth Courts Corporate Services	50
Program 4.2: Commonwealth Courts Registry Services	63
List of requirements	74

Introduction



Introduction

The 'Federal Court of Australia Listed Entity' (the Listed Entity) refers to a group of persons who hold non-judicial positions in three separate courts and one tribunal¹. These people are:

- the CEO and Principal Registrar of the Federal Court of Australia, and certain officers of that Court and staff of its Registries²
- the CEO and Principal Registrar of the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 1) (FCFCOA (Division 1)), certain officers of that Court and the staff of its Registries³
- certain officers of the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 2) (FCFCOA (Division 2)) and the staff of its Registries⁴, and
- the Native Title Registrar, the Deputy Registrars of the National Native Title Tribunal (Native Title Tribunal), certain staff assisting the Native Title Tribunal and certain consultants⁵.

The judicial officers of each Court, and the President of the Native Title Tribunal, are not part of the Listed Entity.

The accountable authority of the Listed Entity is the CEO and Principal Registrar of Federal Court of Australia⁶. Section 35 of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (Cth) requires the accountable authority to prepare a corporate plan for the Listed Entity, with that plan to include matters prescribed by rule 16E of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014* (Cth).

This corporate plan sits within a broader planning framework, modelled on the Commonwealth Performance Framework. It includes also publishing:

- Portfolio Budget Statements (in May 2024). These documents outline the Listed Entity's proposed allocation of funds to achieve our stated outcomes. They describe the planned key

activities to be undertaken in respect of each of the five budget programs, and describe the measures used to assess performance,

- a corporate plan (to be published in August 2024). This document is a non-financial strategic planning document, and
- an Annual Performance Statement (to be published in October 2025). This document is produced at the end of the reporting cycle and provides an assessment of how the Listed Entity performed against key activities and performance measures. It includes results against planned performance in both the Portfolio Budget Statements and the Corporate Plan. The Annual Performance Statement is included in the Listed Entity's annual report.

This corporate plan principally addresses how the group of people comprising the Listed Entity support the work of the Courts and the Native Title Tribunal through the provision of corporate and registry services. The plan outlines how officers and staff will undertake key activities to support the Courts and the Native Title Tribunal, and how the Listed Entity's performance will be measured.

This plan will be reviewed each year, allowing us to continue to refine and adapt our efforts and ensure we achieve our objectives.

¹ *Federal Court of Australia Act 1976* (Cth) s 18ZB(a), (b), (d).

² *Federal Court of Australia Act 1976* (Cth) s 18N(1), (7).

³ *Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia Act 2021* (Cth) s 103(1), (6).

⁴ *Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia Act 2021* (Cth) ss 259, 265.

⁵ *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth) s 130(1); *Federal Court of Australia Act 1976* (Cth) s 18ZI.

⁶ *Federal Court of Australia Act 1976* (Cth) s 18ZB(c).

Statement of preparation

I, Sia Lagos, as the accountable authority of the Federal Court of Australia Listed Entity, present the *Federal Court of Australia Listed Entity Corporate Plan 2024–25*, which covers the period 2024–25 to 2027–28, as required under section 35(1)(b) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (Cth).



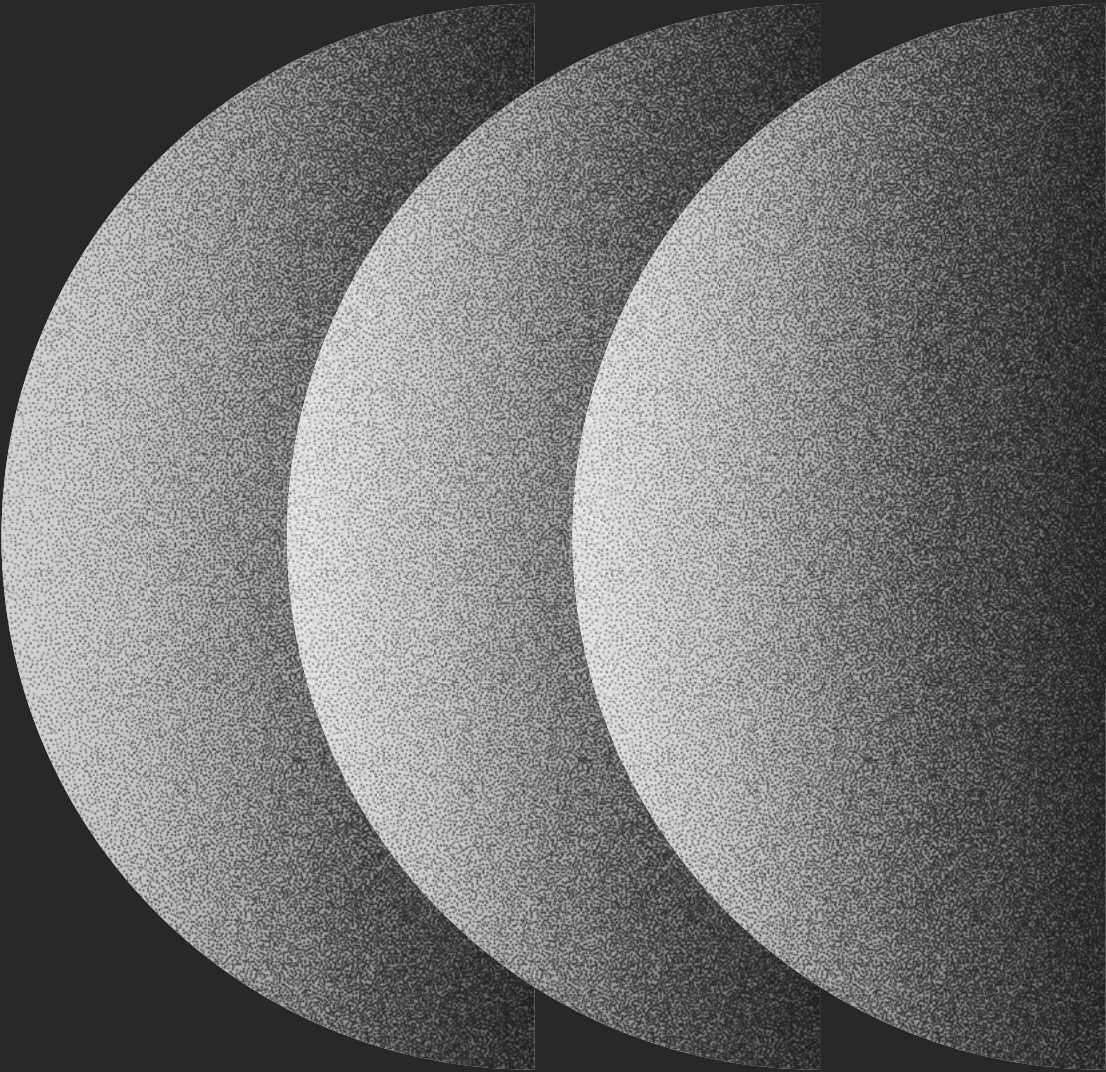
A stylized, handwritten signature in white ink that reads "Lagos".

Sia Lagos
Chief Executive Officer and Principal Registrar
Federal Court of Australia Listed Entity

13 August 2024

Operating context

This section describes the Listed Entity’s operating context, including the environment, cooperative relationships, key capabilities, and risk oversight and management strategies over the period 2024–25 to 2027–28.



Environment

The Listed Entity's operating environment shapes how we deliver on our purpose and key activities. Each year, the Listed Entity undertakes regular reviews of its operating environment, challenges, and risks to ensure its performance goals and operational plans are fit for purpose and can support the work of the Federal Court of Australia, the FCFCOA (Division 1), the FCFCOA (Division 2) and the Native Title Tribunal.

The main environmental drivers are government policy and legislative change, technological improvement, and social and economic change.

Government policy and legislative change

Government policy and legislative change affects not only the jurisdiction of the Courts and the Native Title Tribunal, but their workloads and operating environments. As a result, the Listed Entity needs agile and flexible resources, systems, and people, to ensure it can respond to change in the fastest and most cost-effective way. Existing legislative factors that could impact our environment over the period of this plan include:

- In the May 2024 Federal Budget, the Federal Court of Australia received funding under the 'Enhancing First Nations Justice Policy Outcomes' measure which will support the digitisation of records in the Federal Court's native title practice area, especially records of proceedings from the Court's early years in its native title work. These records are priceless to First Nations communities to whom they relate and are a critical aspect of Australia's historical record. They will eventually be available, in accordance with the Court's processes, to the native title holding communities whose evidence, narratives and stories contributed to the recognition of native title in their country. This funding will also, separately, enable additional case management, mediation, and determination of native title proceedings in ways which will emphasise traditional owner led agreement making, and give priority to working with First Nations facilitators and mediators, as well as enabling the Federal Court to do more on country work.

Operating context

- In the 2024–25 Federal Budget, the Courts received additional funding under a budget measure directed at the migration system.
 - For the Federal Court of Australia, these funds will cover additional judges and staff to support work in the migration practice area, to recognise the flow through effects that the federal government's policies to address migration backlogs in the Department of Immigration, the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT)/ Administrative Review Tribunal (ART) and the FCFCOA (Division 2) – have on the Federal Court.
 - For the FCFCOA (Division 2), funding to support the migration caseload, first as part of the October 2023–24 MYEFO, and second as part of the 2024–25 Federal Budget, provides a significant injection of resources to assist with efficiently resolving migration cases. This includes the appointment of additional judges and support staff, registrars, Cultural Liaison Officers, and other staff to assist with the handling of interpreter requests and referrals to pro bono legal assistance. It also includes capital funding that provides for purpose-built court facilities. The funding provided will not only assist the Court in being able to efficiently dispose of the migration caseload, but it will also have a significant impact on equitable access to the Court for litigants in the migration jurisdiction. Several related operational and infrastructure changes will be required to support these measures, and the Listed Entity will work closely with the Court to ensure that changes are implemented as seamlessly as possible.
- On 12 June 2024, following Royal Assent of the *Attorney-General's Portfolio Miscellaneous Measures Act 2024*, the Federal Court of Australia's jurisdiction to hear a wide range of indictable criminal offences was expanded. The Federal Court now has jurisdiction to hear a range of indictable criminal offences contained in the *Corporations Act 2001*, *Australian Securities and Investments Commission Act 2001*, *National Consumer Credit Protection Act 2009*, and *Superannuation Industry (Supervision) Act 1993*.

Furthermore, the Court also has jurisdiction in relation to various indictable offences contained in the Criminal Code (Cth).
- On 1 January 2024, funding received in the 2023–24 Federal Budget in relation to Hague child abduction matters provided for the FCFCOA (Division 1) to employ mediators and Court Child Experts to provide dispute resolution services for proceedings under the 1980 Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction. This allows the Court to make safe and effective alternative dispute resolution opportunities available at an early stage of the process with the aim of diverting families from contested proceedings under the 1980 Convention.
- On 6 May 2024, the commencement of the *Family Law Amendment Act 2023* (Cth) saw several significant changes to the *Family Law Act 1975* (Cth), particularly in relation to the framework for parenting cases. The amendments include new laws about what the Courts must consider when determining what is in the child's best interests; changes to the law about parenting arrangements, including removing the presumption of equal shared responsibility; simpler compliance and enforcement provisions for child-related orders; and new powers for the Courts to prevent harmful litigation. A substantial amount of related work was required to prepare the FCFCOA (Division 1) and the FCFCOA (Division 2) for the changes to the legislation, which has included updating Court Rules, forms, and practice directions, as well as related IT changes, the delivery of communications and external education.
- The further proposed legislative amendments to the *Family Law Act 1975* (Cth) articulated in the *Family Law Amendment Bill (No 2) 2023*, would have significant operational and budgetary implications if passed. The amendments are aimed at making the law simpler and safer for separating couples to resolve their property and financial matters, including identifying in the Family Law Act how the financial impact of family violence may be considered in property settlements. The proposed amendments would be of particular significance in the context of family law property proceedings, among other things, and would require significant adjustments to the Courts' operations.

Operating context

- On 6 May 2024, the commencement of the *Family Law Amendment (Information Sharing) Act 2023* (Cth) saw an enhanced information scheme as envisaged by the National Framework for Information Sharing between the family law and family violence and child protection systems. This required significant ongoing engagement with the States and Territories to facilitate implementation, as well as several IT, operational and infrastructure changes.
- On 3 June 2024, the *Administrative Review Tribunal Act 2024* received royal assent and came into effect. The Act abolishes the AAT and replaces it with a new federal administrative review body, the ART. The new Tribunal will commence on 14 October 2024. In 2023, the government made 116 additional member appointments to the AAT to address the existing backlog of cases and the appointment of 10 new members to boost the capacity of the AAT to deal with its significant protection visas and other migration-related caseloads. These reforms will likely result in a significant volume of matters flowing through to the Courts if there is an accelerated disposition of the ART's caseload following its commencement.

Technological improvement

The Listed Entity continues to focus on delivering improved digital capabilities to ensure efficient, contemporary technical services are provided across the Courts and the Native Title Tribunal.

Electronic court files and case management, along with eFiling and eLodgment services, reduce cost and time for litigants and enable efficient national operations for the Courts and the Native Title Tribunal. Since March 2024, all Court files are accessible through a modernised platform (CourtPath), with remaining case management functions to be integrated into the system throughout the 2024–25 financial year. Additionally, investigations are underway into how the Courts may better utilise cloud platforms to ensure services are efficient, secure, and reliably delivered.

Hearings, mediation, and dispute resolution are now often conducted remotely via Microsoft Teams or Cisco video conferencing, in court, or hybrid with in-person and remote participants. Over 80 per cent of courtrooms nationally have been upgraded to modern videoconferencing and audio.

Operating context

All courtrooms have standard hearing loop technology for hearing impaired participants. Judicial officers balance the complexity of the matter, and the benefits of in-person appearance and efficiency for participants. For example, case management and interlocutory hearings may be managed via video conference to progress efficiently through listed matters, and vulnerable parties can be securely connected to the Court without the potential impact of physical proximity to other parties.

In line with the principles of open justice, live streaming is now frequently used to allow the media and interested members of the public to view proceedings openly and transparently where appropriate. In some cases, such as where there are privacy or security issues, edited video of the proceedings is uploaded for later public viewing. This has been well received for high profile matters.

Technological improvements implemented throughout the COVID-19 pandemic are now normalised practice and provide greater access to justice to litigants in regional and rural Australia. Similarly, online tools provide improved safety for vulnerable litigants, and allow for the efficient and effective utilisation of judicial and registrar resources on a national basis.

The Listed Entity has made significant advancements in its digital practice, and further work will be conducted over the life of this plan to embrace and expand these new technologies. This includes:

- ongoing modernisation of core court case and file management systems
- redesigning court networks to better support remote and hybrid hearings and working
- ongoing improvements to video conferencing equipment and streaming technology
- enhancing cybersecurity to protect against current and emerging threats
- upgrading underlying platforms to enable improved robustness and effectiveness
- taking advantage of the benefits of digital litigation, and
- consolidating services and optimising costs.

The Courts have continued to utilise both in-person and remote hearings depending on what best serves the interests of justice. While most final hearings are being conducted in-person, remote hearings and dispute resolution events continue to be held often where it is efficient, where it provides increased access to justice, such as for legal practitioners and litigants in interstate or regional locations, or where there are safety concerns with respect to attending a court registry.

Extensive technological work continues to be undertaken in support of the expansion of Lighthouse to its two primary systems: the Lighthouse Application and the Family DOORS Triage Application. The focus of this work has been improving court user functionality, additional and improved data collection, improvements to existing workflows including identifying voided matters, access code reset processes, and reminder structures, and re-coding the existing Family DOORS Triage Application to allow for future integration into the Lighthouse Application and courts systems more broadly.

Social and economic change

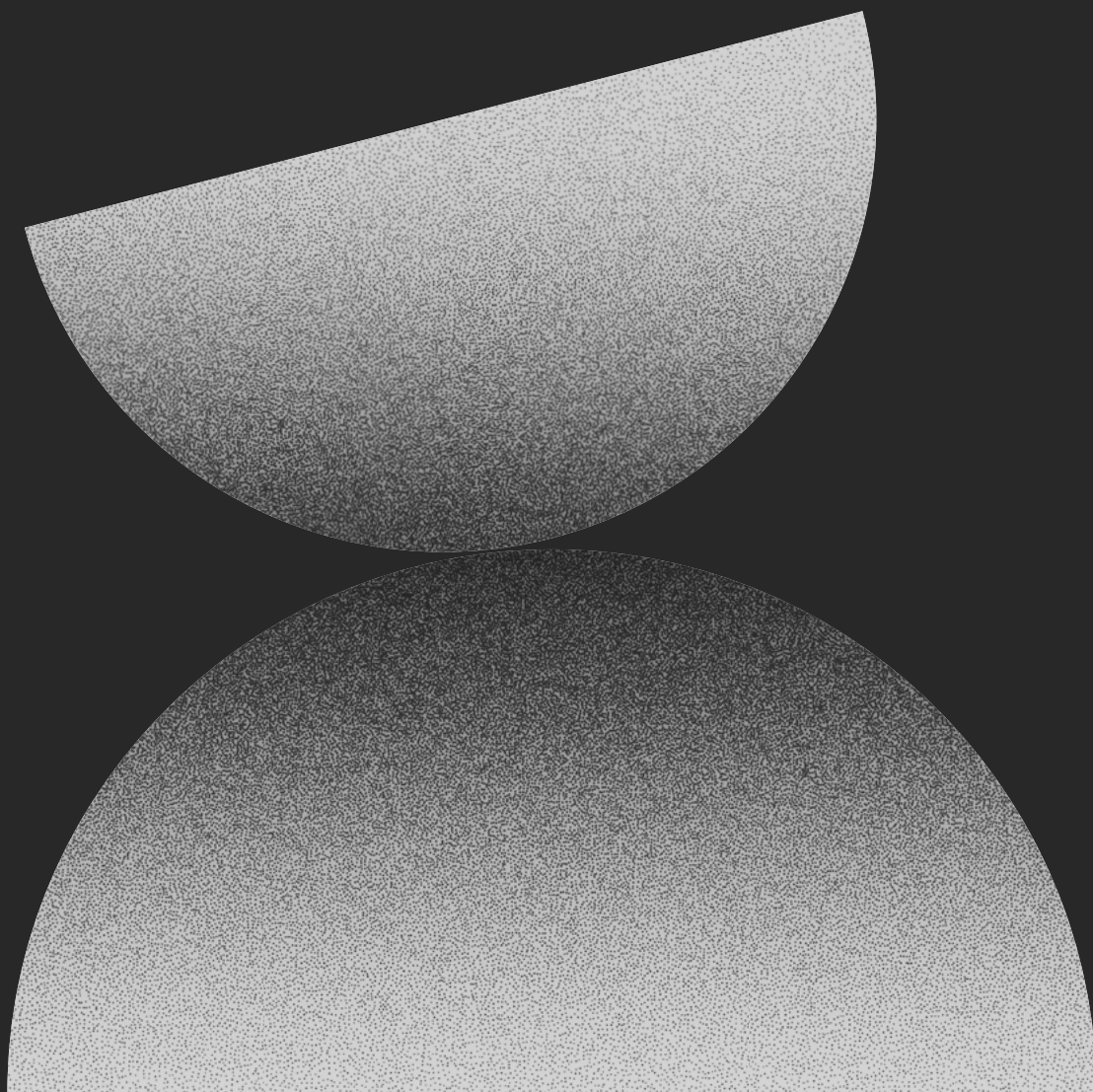
The expectations and types of court users, clients and stakeholders will continue to evolve over the next four years in an adjustment to the hybrid in-person/remote court environment. While technology provides a lower cost option to meet expectations, defining stakeholder needs and developing tailored responses creates significant workload.

For the Courts and the Native Title Tribunal, this also includes maintaining a balance between leveraging the benefits of technology to improve access, but also ensuring they meet the needs of clients in remote areas where access to technology can be not only cost prohibitive, but inaccessible in some areas. The result is a hybrid in-person/ electronic court environment, which has required flexibility and adjustment from the Courts and from court users and stakeholders. These changes are the subject of ongoing refinement and will remain a focus of the Listed Entity across the four years of this plan.

The Listed Entity is committed to proactively contributing towards achieving the priority reforms articulated in the National Agreement on Closing the Gap. This includes supporting the Courts and the Native Title Tribunal in the development and implementation of further Reconciliation Action Plans, the continued development and delivery of tailored cultural learning, cultural safety and cultural competency training and education for Judges and staff, improved collection, maintenance, and use of Indigenous data to promote Indigenous Data Sovereignty and Governance, in alignment with the Framework for the Governance of Indigenous Data, and continued community engagement and consultation to ensure that policies and initiatives are appropriately co-designed and culturally responsive to the needs of communities.

Risk oversight and management

Risk management in the Listed Entity identifies and addresses the uncertainty in achieving our purpose. The goal of risk management is to appropriately mitigate risk and assist with identifying opportunities, thereby enhancing our ability to respond to the Heads of Jurisdiction requirements, Australian Government policy and legislative change, and to assist in providing the public with efficient and effective delivery of justice.



Success depends upon developing our people, strengthening and adapting systems, and forging strong relationships with stakeholders. By carefully applying appropriate risk management principles that have been recognised by our Internal Auditors as fit for purpose, we will maximise the efficiency and effectiveness of planning, decision-making, managing uncertainty and our use of resources to achieve the desired outcomes.

The risk management framework supports the identification, analysis, assessment, treatment, monitoring, and review of all strategic, financial, reputational, personnel, political and operational risks. These include risks to our stakeholders and emerging risks.

The Listed Entity's risk framework is designed to:

- ensure risk management supports our purpose
- support a culture which encourages people to report incidents and take ownership of problems
- ensure risk management thinking is embedded in all activities; enabling the achievement of better outcomes
- ensure stakeholders are consulted to enable the consideration of a broader perspective
- identify and manage entity-wide strategic risks and program or project-specific risks
- promote sharing of risk information and experiences within the Listed Entity and across the Australian Government Community of Practices to develop more consistent approaches to managing risk, and
- align with the PGPA Act and the Australian Government's expectations as detailed in the Commonwealth Risk Management Policy.

The Risk Management Framework and Plan, developed in accordance with the methodology set out in Commonwealth Risk Management Policy 2014 and the Australian/New Zealand Risk Management Standard (AS/NZS ISO 31000:2018), have been recently reviewed by Internal Audit which confirmed the framework and plan are fit for purpose.

Risk management priorities

The Listed Entity's risk management priorities are established based on seven broad risk categories:

- 1. Strategic risks** – risks that affect performance against identified strategic objectives.
- 2. Financial risks** – risks that affect the financial outcomes of the Listed Entity or have detrimental financial impact.
- 3. Risks to reputation** – risks that affect the reputation of the Listed Entity and its ability to perform, or which may impair the community's trust with the Courts, Tribunal and the judicial system.
- 4. Operational risks** – risks that affect the management of and accountability for performance, including the Listed Entity's service delivery obligations, regulatory framework and business relationships.
- 5. Legal and compliance risks** – risks arising from statutory and other compliance and reporting obligations as well as current or pending litigation to which the Listed Entity is a party.
- 6. People risks** – risks that affect staff ethical behaviour, the integrity of decisions, processes and information, or affect the work, health and safety and wellbeing of our personnel, including psychosocial risks.
- 7. Information Management and Information Technology** – risks associated with information and communication services and the delivery of those services, programs, and functions and includes business continuity, IT disaster recovery and external events, including cyber-attacks, impacting on the Listed Entity's ability to deliver services.

Oversight

The Audit Committee is established in accordance with section 45 of the PGPA Act and provides specific functions to assist with meeting the Accountable Authority obligations.

The functions of the committee are to:

- provide independent assurance of the effectiveness of the Listed Entity's Risk Management Framework
- review compliance with the Listed Entity's Risk Management Policy and monitor and understand the potential impact of emerging risks on the Listed Entity's ability to achieve its objectives
- monitor the implementation of the Listed Entity's Risk Management Plan
- review compliance with finance law, including financial and performance reporting, risk reports periodically (quarterly and annual reports) and the internal control programs and advise whether key controls are appropriate and are operating effectively, and
- provide assurance that the Listed Entity has well-designed business continuity and IT disaster recovery arrangements in place and that these are tested periodically.

The Enterprise Risk Management Committee (ERMC) was established to provide oversight of the implementation and operation of the Listed Entity Risk Management Plan and is accountable to and supports the Accountable Authority by making recommendations concerning:

- the Listed Entity Risk Management Framework including the policy and plan
- the Accountable Authority's Enterprise Risk Appetite Statement
- the Enterprise Wide Risk Register, and
- risk treatment strategies and action plans.

The ERMC also has responsibility for monitoring the effectiveness of controls where the Entity's risk appetite has been exceeded.

Risk management oversight, together with broader responsibility for governance and compliance matters, has now been consolidated into a single Governance, Risk and Compliance area within Corporate Services.



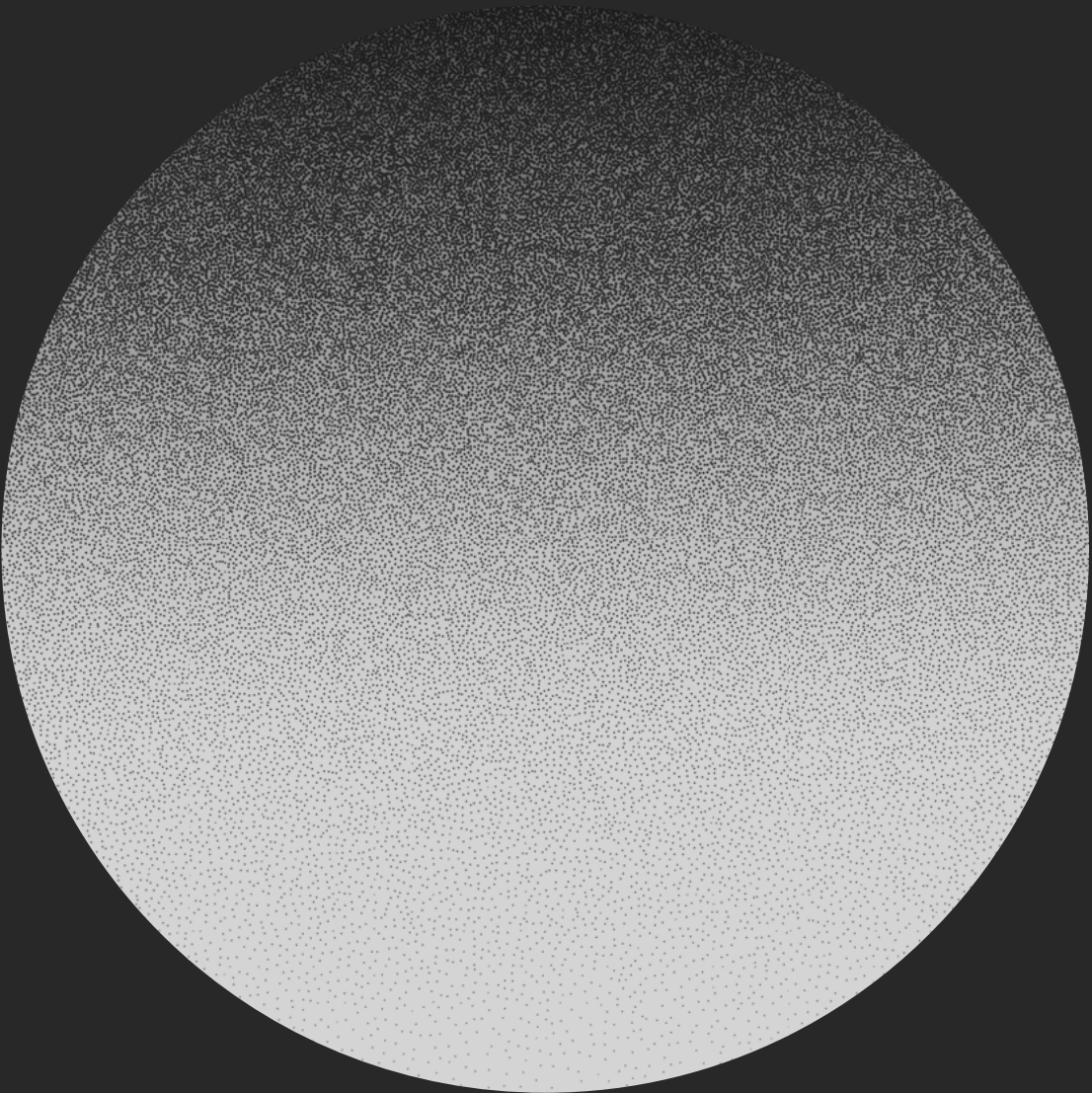
Figure 1. Federal Court Listed Entity risk management structure.

Risks	Area of risk	Risk description	Mitigation strategy
Strategic (Technology)	Information and/or Information system compromise.	Risks from all threat types to ICT assets which impact either the financial, operational, reputation, confidentiality, integrity and availability of information technology systems.	- Centrally manage the detection and response to cyber security incidents. - Information Security policies, procedures, plans. - Improved cyber security culture with focused cyber awareness campaigns. - Cyber Security Certification and Accreditation.
Financial	Funding insufficient at Entity, Outcome or Program levels.	Insufficient Commonwealth funding levels or reductions to funding.	- Robust budgeting and disciplined financial management practices. - Ongoing communication and consultation with Commonwealth key stakeholders and key government agencies. - Revision of the Court's outcomes and related performance indicators and reporting.
Operational (Security)	Failure of protective security.	Substantial breakdown of security arrangements critical to foster a positive security culture.	- Entity wide Security Framework, Policy Plan and procedures. - Dedicated security resources including contracted security services (guards). - Fit-for-purpose Commonwealth Protective Security Policy Framework requirements. - Entity wide security personnel policies.
People	Employee health, safety, and wellbeing.	Failure to meet employee safety and wellbeing obligations.	- Work Health and Safety consultative committees. - Work Health and Safety policies fit-for-purpose. - Regular communications and consultation with staff of the Listed Entity. - Availability of online sessions for mindfulness, stress reduction exercises, and yoga.

Table 1. Risk faced by the Listed Entity.

Cooperation

Cooperative relationships are essential to help achieve the Listed Entity's purpose and deliver key initiatives and performance measures. Successful engagement and collaboration contribute to more effective connection of services, better cooperation and sharing of information and improved service delivery.



Cooperation

The Listed Entity will support each Court and the Native Title Tribunal to work with a broad range of stakeholders, including the legal profession, government agencies, other courts, non-Government organisations, First Nations individuals and representative bodies, research, academia, and community groups, to build partnerships to promote access to justice, early engagement with products and services, and more effective information to assist Court and Native Title Tribunal users.

For the Courts, relationships are managed either by the Chief Justice, Chief Judge, other judges or the respective CEO and Principal Registrar on behalf of the Chief Justice and Chief Judge. For the Native Title Tribunal, relationships are managed by the President and Native Title Registrar.

The Courts engage in a wide range of activities with the legal profession, including regular user group meetings. The aim of user groups is to provide a forum for court representatives and the legal profession to discuss existing and emerging issues, provide feedback to the Courts and act as a reference group. The Listed Entity supports the Courts by facilitating seminars and workshops on issues of practice and procedure and assisting with the hosting of advocacy sessions, bar moot courts, moot competitions, and bar readers' courses.

Court facilities are made available for many events for the legal community, including lectures, seminars, and ceremonies. Registries also host visiting delegations from overseas courts who are interested in learning more about the Courts' operations.

The Director Security as the Courts' Sheriff and Marshal, works closely with the Australian Federal Police and state and territory police. This is particularly important in the execution of orders originating from family law matters such as the recovery of children, the arrest of persons and the prevention of persons, including children, leaving Australia. The Sheriff and Marshal also works closely with these services to ensure that information relevant to the safety and security of the Courts and Native Title Tribunal staff and the community, is available at the appropriate time. In addition, the Marshal and Sheriff works with the Commonwealth's domestic security service on developing concerns regarding the Courts' and Native Title Tribunal's

security. The Sheriff and Marshal also maintain close and cooperative relationships with the Sheriffs of each State and Territory, to facilitate service and execute civil property, search and seize orders.

The Native Title Tribunal is in the process of settling its new strategic engagement strategy to better prioritise and manage its relationships with internal and external stakeholders. External stakeholders include Native Title parties and determined Native Title holders, Commonwealth agencies in the Native Title sector, representative bodies, industry bodies, state departments involved in resources and land use, local councils, and Prescribed Bodies Corporate. Stakeholder plans will also be developed in relation to specific programs and functions, including post-determination assistance work, the Indigenous Estate project, and the Preservation of Evidence projects. The Native Title Tribunal conducts information sessions on request to educate and assist stakeholders in understanding their legal obligations and participation in the native title system.

Registrars, Court Child Experts and other staff continue to regularly engage with numerous external groups such as local family law pathways networks, legal aid, bar associations and law societies, local practitioners and practitioners' associations, community legal centres, family relationship centres, community organisations and support groups, child protection agencies, family violence committees and organisations, state courts, universities and police services.

Through the engagement of Indigenous Family Liaison Officers, the FCFCOA (Division 1) and the FCFCOA (Division 2) have facilitated increased engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, court users and stakeholders. This has enabled a dialogue in relation to access to justice initiatives which will allow the Courts to continue to improve the levels of engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and ensure that initiatives are culturally responsive to the needs of these communities. The Listed Entity will support the Courts to continue to focus on the development of tailored responses and initiatives for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families, as well as the expansion of the Indigenous Family Liaison Officer cohort to assist in achieving these important aims.

Listed Entity stakeholders

State and territory governments

- Child welfare agencies
- Courts
- Local government organisations
- State and territory governments – key policy departments

International

- Overseas jurisdictions particularly in relation to Hague matters
- International courts
- International partnerships and development

Private sector

- Alternative Dispute Resolution providers
- Consultative bodies
- Property service providers
- Family violence providers
- Professional service providers
- Migrant/refugee services
- Judicial education and research organisations
- Universities
- Research centres
- Peak bodies

Law enforcement

- Australian Federal Police
- State and Territory Police
- Security services

Australian government

- Attorney-General
- Attorney-General’s Department
- Department of Social Services
- Department of Finance
- Office of Parliamentary Counsel
- Department of Home Affairs
- Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
- Office for Women, Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet
- Relationships Australia
- Family Relationship Centres
- Workplace health and safety agencies
- Ombudsman
- Domestic Family and Sexual Violence Commissioner
- eSafety Commissioner
- National Indigenous Australians Agency
- Office of the Registrar Indigenous Corporations
- Northern Australia Infrastructure Facility
- Australian Public Service Commission

Australian public

- Litigants
- Migrants and refugees
- Special interest groups

First Nations

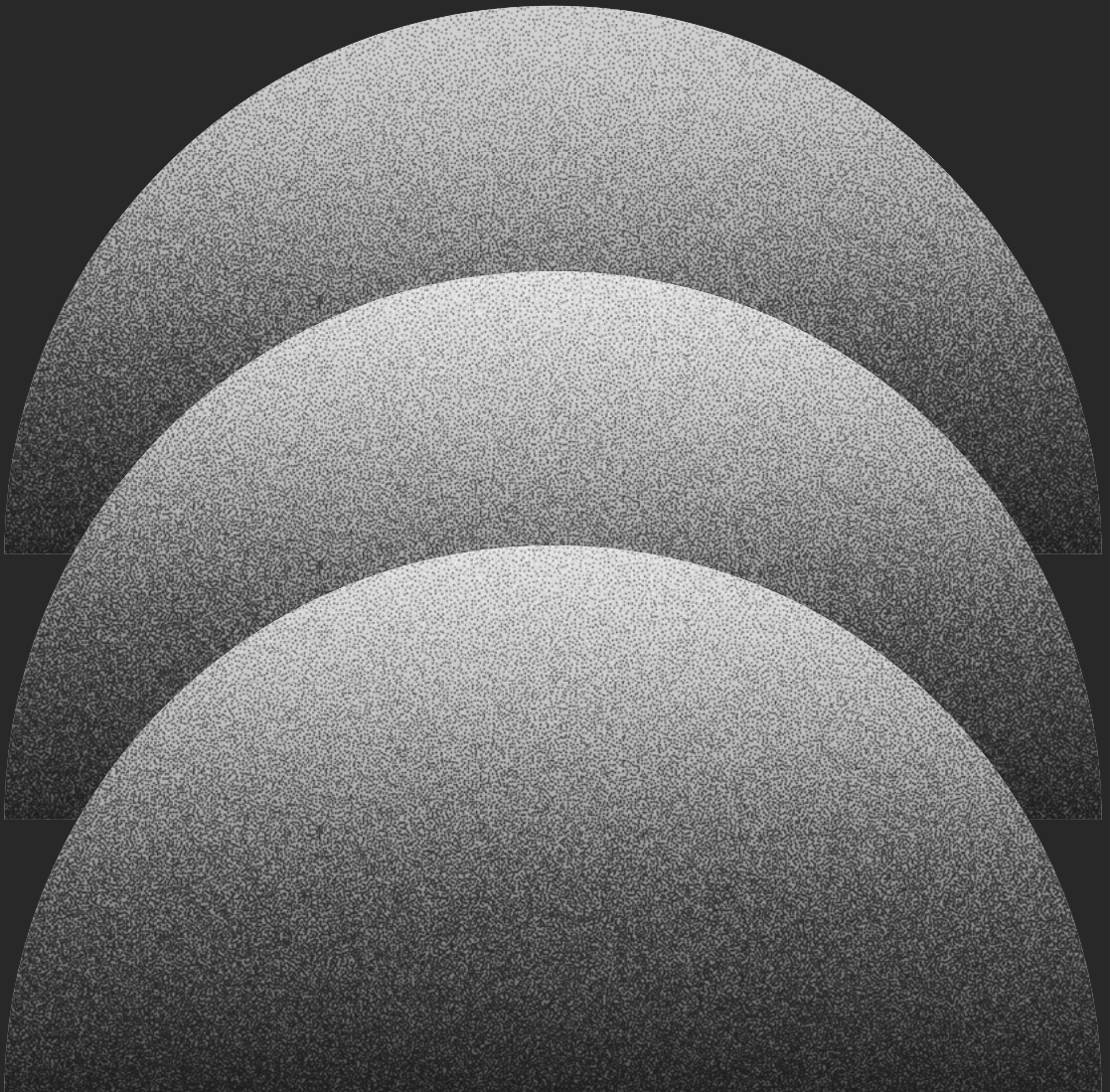
- First Nations individuals
- Prescribed Bodies Corporate
- Native Title Representative Bodies
- National Native Title Council

Legal community

- Other jurisdictions
- Australian Bar Association
- Law Council of Australia
- Bar associations
- Law societies
- Legal Aid
- Women’s legal groups
- Aboriginal Legal Services
- Community Legal Services
- Migrant/refugee services

Capability

The Listed Entity's success in achieving our goals over the next four years depends on how well we can deliver on our capabilities and functions. The Listed Entity will focus on critical capabilities such as legislative, administrative, ICT and people.



Legislative

Government policies and legislative changes can significantly impact the jurisdiction, workload and operating environments of the Courts and the Native Title Tribunal. To support the Courts and the Native Title Tribunal meet these evolving needs, the Listed Entity needs agile and flexible resources and systems.

Over the four years of this plan, we will:

- Maintain and develop additional capacities for case management of the migration and corporate crime jurisdictions.
- Maintain and build capabilities and efficiencies to support the Courts and the Native Title Tribunal to meet the demands for a range of increased jurisdictional requirements.
- Support the FCFCOA (Division 1) and the FCFCOA (Division 2) to continue to implement and improve the family law case management pathway.
- Support the FCFCOA (Division 1) and the FCFCOA (Division 2) to continue to build a national structure for family law Registrars and Court Child Experts, including support structures.
- Support the FCFCOA (Division 1) and the FCFCOA (Division 2) to continue to implement the significant reforms to the *Family Law Act 1975* (Cth).
- Assist the Native Title Tribunal in acquitting its statutory functions under the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth) in relation to case management and public register capability.

Administrative

The Listed Entity's 1400+ strong workforce operates in 22 locations across Australia, fostering close collaboration with the Courts and the Native Title Tribunal and supporting them to deliver a national service to the Australian community.

Over the four years of this plan, we will:

- Maximise efficiency in managing national enquiries.
- Deliver services via a range of locations throughout Australia, including regional and remote.
- Develop enhanced practices and processes that ensure the safety of litigants, particularly in the family law jurisdiction.
- Implement and maintain strong governance arrangements to ensure we are accountable, open, collaborative, and responsive.
- Achieve financial sustainability by realising further savings to achieve balanced budgets.
- Invest in leadership and management to ensure our leaders are responsible, visible, respected, and trusted.
- Provide best practice information management systems to ensure adequate document storage, protection, and governance.

Information and Communications Technology

Our environment demands agility and responsiveness to be able to effectively support the Courts and the Native Title Tribunal's evolving priorities. A key driver of this agility is the Listed Entity's robust Information and Communication Technology (ICT) capability and we remain committed to ongoing investment in our ICT systems.

Over the four years of this plan, we will:

- Improve service delivery through aligned digital platforms that are efficient, easy to use and tailored to the needs of the Courts and the Native Title Tribunal.
- Increase our ICT capability and align our ICT strategies to whole-of-government initiatives and standards.
- Strengthen cybersecurity protection to mitigate risks from current and emerging threats.
- Modernise systems and processes with the capacity to navigate and respond to change.
- Standardise systems and processes that allow us to rapidly respond to changes in organisational processes and client needs.
- Assist the Native Title Tribunal to reinvigorate applications and website to allow streamlined services to stakeholders.

People

We recognise that our people are the foundation of our success. The Listed Entity is committed to cultivating a diverse workforce with a rich blend of skills and life experiences. This will be instrumental in supporting the Courts and the Native Title Tribunal to deliver on their stated purpose and fulfil their goals and objectives.

Over the four years of this plan, we will:

- Commit to cultivating a workplace where employees feel valued, safe, and empowered to reach their full potential.
- Invest in our people and leaders to deliver the best outcomes and support a strong and respectful organisational culture.
- Implement and maintain a dynamic workforce planning model that attracts and retains talent, establishes career pathways, and provides development opportunities for all employees.
- Improve awareness and access to health and wellbeing resources, ensuring our workforce is productive, resilient, and safe.
- Enhance diversity awareness and promote inclusiveness through cultural competency training and the establishment of employee networks and diversity champions.
- Recognise and celebrate the achievements and milestones of our employees, instilling a sense of purpose and commitment to deliver government outcomes.
- Commit to reconciliation through a refresh of the Listed Entity's Reconciliation Action Plan, focusing on relationships, respect, and opportunities.
- Provide timely and accurate support services to enable the Native Title Tribunal to implement corporate and capability frameworks.

Workforce capability

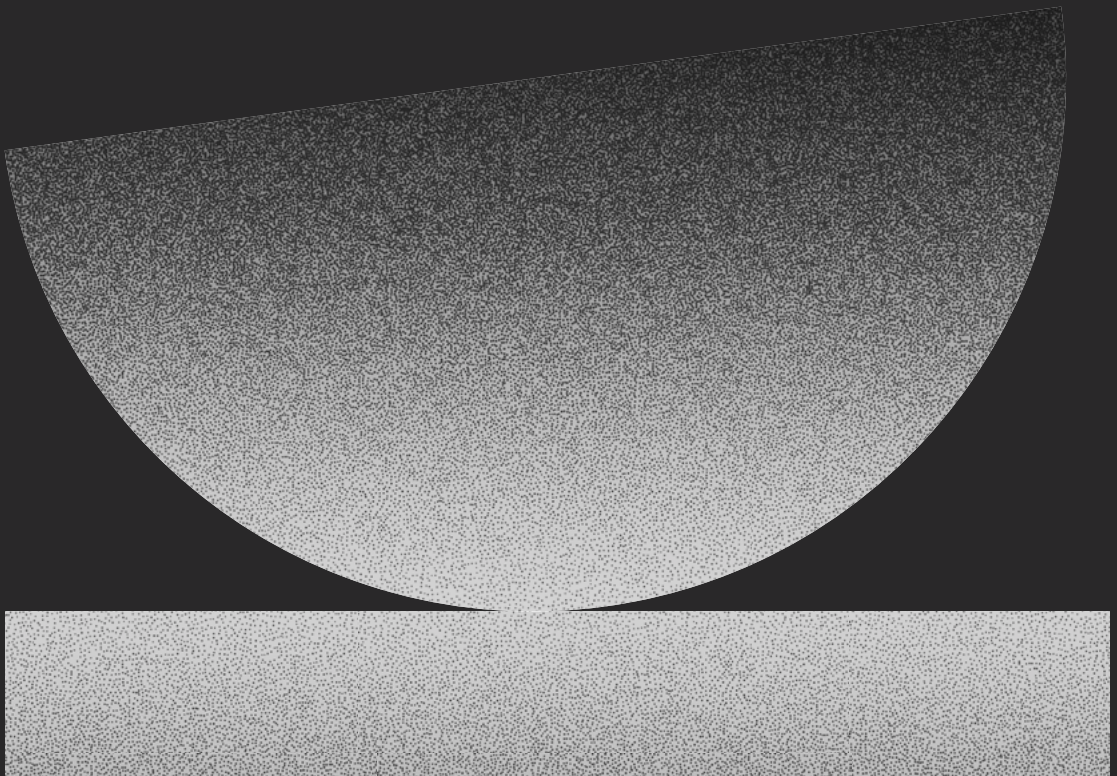
The Strategic Commissioning Framework is part of the Government's commitment to reduce inappropriate outsourcing and strengthen the capability of the APS. The framework's focus is on reducing outsourcing of core work. As such, under the framework APS employees will increasingly deliver the core work of the APS as outsourcing is reduced.

In 2024–25, the Listed Entity will reduce outsourcing of core work in line with the APS Strategic Commissioning Framework. Our targets for 2024–25 focus on reduced outsourcing of Human Resources, IT and Procurement work, with an expected reduction of \$547,106.00 in 2024–25 in outsourcing expenditure. This will support the Listed Entity to build capability in-house and create additional development opportunities for the current workforce.

Program 1.1:

Federal Court of Australia

The Federal Court of Australia was created by the *Federal Court of Australia Act 1976* (Cth) and began to exercise its jurisdiction on 1 February 1977. It assumed jurisdiction formerly exercised in part by the High Court of Australia and the whole jurisdiction of the Australian Industrial Court and the Federal Court of Bankruptcy.



Program 1.1: Federal Court of Australia

The Federal Court of Australia is a superior court of record and a court of law and equity. It sits in all capital cities and elsewhere in Australia from time to time. The Court's jurisdiction is broad, covering almost all civil matters arising under Australian federal law, and some summary and indictable criminal matters.

The Court's workload is organised by National Practice Areas and, where applicable, sub-areas based on established areas of law.

The Chief Justice is the senior judge of the Court and is responsible for managing the administrative affairs of the Court. The Chief Justice is assisted by the CEO and Principal Registrar, who is appointed by the Governor-General on the nomination of the Chief Justice.

The Federal Court of Australia has a substantial and diverse appellate jurisdiction. It hears appeals from decisions of single judges of the Court, decisions of the FCFCOA (Division 2) in non-family law matters, decisions of the Supreme Court of Norfolk Island and certain decisions of state and territory supreme courts exercising federal jurisdiction.

Since July 2012, the Federal Court of Australia has had responsibility for corporate administration of the Native Title Tribunal, however the Tribunal remains an independent body established under the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth).

Performance and key activities

The key outcome measures for the Federal Court of Australia are contained in Outcome One of the Portfolio Budget Statements.

Purpose

Decide disputes according to law – promptly, courteously, and effectively and, in so doing, to interpret the statutory law and develop the general law of the Commonwealth, to fulfil the role of a court exercising the judicial power of the Commonwealth under the Constitution.

Outcome

Apply and uphold the rule of law for litigants in the Federal Court of Australia and parties in the National Native Title Tribunal through the resolution of matters according to law and through the effective management of the administrative affairs of the Court and Tribunal.

Guiding principles

- Deliver efficient and just dispute resolution.
- Improve access to justice.
- Contribute to the Australian legal system — strengthen relationships with court users.
- Build public trust and confidence.

Key activities

For 2024–25 (and the outlook period through to 2028), the Listed Entity will provide support for the Federal Court of Australia to progress the following key activities:

Key activities	2024–25	2025–26	2026–27	2027–28
Exercise the jurisdiction of the Federal Court of Australia and support the operations of the National Native Title Tribunal.	•	•	•	•
Increase mediation and case management support for judges through the implementation of a national arrangement for registrars.	•	•	•	•
Align judicial registrars to directly support National Practice Area (NPA) coordinating judges in the management of each NPA, and judges within each NPA generally.	•	•	•	•
Further develop and refine the best practice model that forms the basis for online hearings conducted by a suitable platform.	•	•	•	•

Table 2. Program 1.1 key activities, 2024–25 to 2027–28.

2024–25 significant initiatives

- Commence phase three of the Digital Court Program (CourtPath) – Casetrack replacement.
- Pilot a new National General Protections List to allow the initial case management of proceedings filed under the general protections provisions of Chapter 3 Part 3-1 of the *Fair Work Act 2009* (Cth) to generally be undertaken by Registrars of the Court.
- Develop and deliver seminars, lectures, and training to improve access to justice, education on new services and other topics of relevance.
- Commence a project to digitise native title records held by the Court and the National Native Title Tribunal.
- Implement improved registrar and legal support arrangements to ensure direct and greater engagement and interaction with judges, staff, and the legal profession.
- Continue to extend the National Court Framework to ensure national allocation of registrar work and dedicated registrars to assist self-represented litigants.
- Continue to collaborate and build on international relations work to deliver project management, technical expertise, and judicial education, particularly in the Asia and Pacific region.

Performance measurement

The key outcome measure for the Federal Court is contained in the Portfolio Budget Statements. Across its jurisdiction, the Court will apply and uphold the rule of law for litigants in the Federal Court and parties in the Native Title Tribunal through the resolution of matters according to law and through the effective management of the administrative affairs of the Court and the Native Title Tribunal.

The Court maintains two (time) goals to measure the performance of its work. All strategies, priorities and key activities are designed to support the achievement of these performance goals. Performance against these goals is reported in the Listed Entity annual report and in the Annual Performance Statement, also published in the annual report.

Performance measure

Goal 1 – Timely completion of cases: 85% of cases to be completed within 18 months of commencement.

Planned performance result

2024–25 – 85% of cases to be completed within 18 months of commencement.

2025–26 – 85% of cases to be completed within 18 months of commencement.

2026–27 – 85% of cases to be completed within 18 months of commencement.

2027–28 – 85% of cases to be completed within 18 months of commencement.

Rationale

This measures the conduct of proceedings through the Federal Court and ensures the timely and efficient administration of justice.

Methodology/source

This target will be measured by reference to the date of each application and the date of the final judgment, sourced from Casetrack.

Performance measure

Goal 2 – Timely completion of cases: Judgments to be delivered within three months.

Planned performance result

2024–25 – Judgments to be delivered within three months.

2025–26 – Judgments to be delivered within three months.

2026–27 – Judgments to be delivered within three months.

2027–28 – Judgments to be delivered within three months.

Rationale

This reflects the timely and efficient administration of justice in a proceeding after the final hearing and/or final submissions of the parties.

Methodology/source

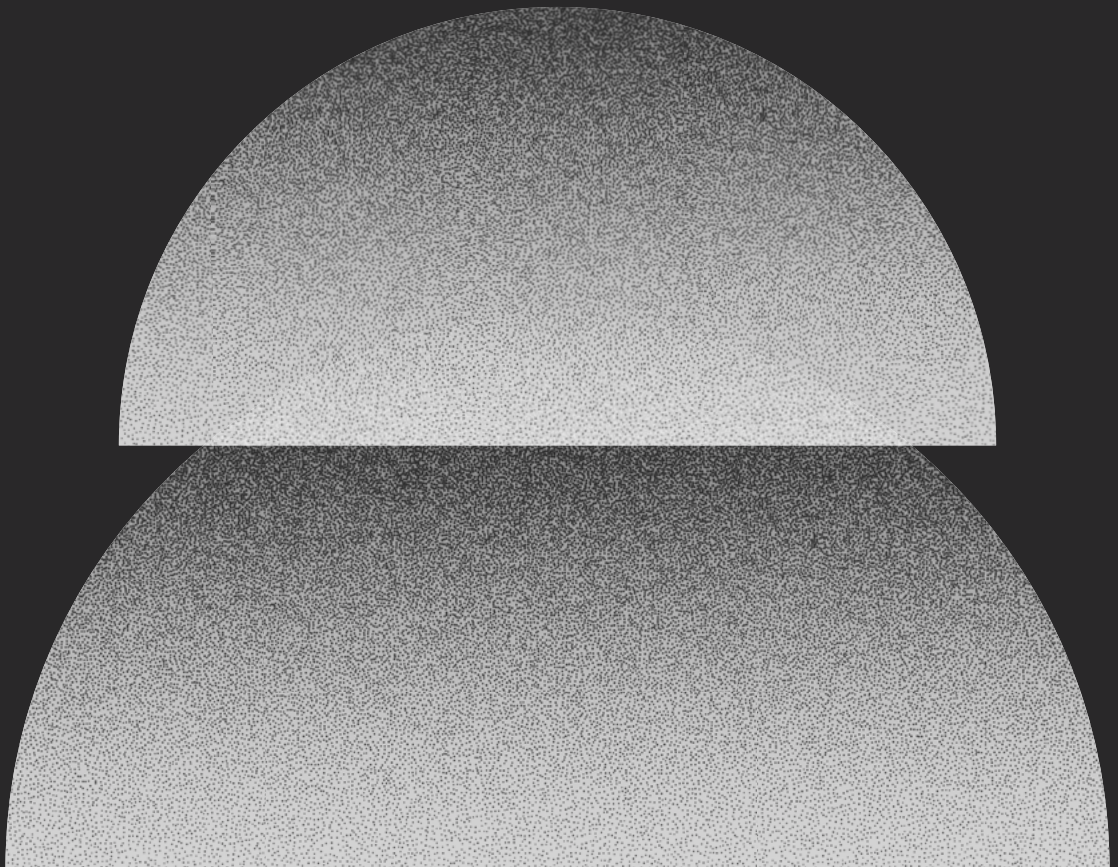
This target will be measured by reference to the last day of hearing or final submissions from the parties to the publication of the judgment, sourced from Casetrack.

Measures of success

- Ongoing delivery of new releases and improvements to the Digital Court Program (CourtPath) and progress towards a single case management system for the Courts.
- Improved consistency and efficiency in the case management of general protections proceedings.
- Expanded use of video conferencing and internet streaming to reduce barriers to access hearings for parties, witnesses, journalists, and members of the public.
- Increased mediation and case management support work for judges.
- Registrar resources utilised more effectively on a national basis to address workload demands.
- Improved facilities to accommodate remote hearings, enabling judges, witnesses, and parties to be linked in to matters being heard in other locations, thus minimising travel expenses, improving access to justice and freeing up courtrooms for other hearings.
- Established user groups for each NPA and improved liaison with the profession.
- Continued ongoing support for judges through judicial education.

Program 1.1 (cont'd): Native Title Tribunal

The *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth) established the Native Title Tribunal as an independent body with a wide range of functions. The *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth) is a special measure for the advancement and protection of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders and is intended to advance the process of reconciliation amongst all Australians.



Program 1.1 (cont'd): Native Title Tribunal

The purpose of the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth) is to provide for the recognition and protection of native title, establish a mechanism for determining claims to native title, and establish ways in which future dealings affecting native title (future acts) may validly proceed.

The Native Title Registrar and the Tribunal have numerous functions and powers under the Native Title Act to meet that purpose. The Registrar is responsible for notifying new applications under section 61 of the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth) and Indigenous Land Use Agreements (ILUAs). Where applicable, the Registrar and their delegates must also apply the registration test to new and amended applications to ascertain whether those applications meet a threshold standard entitling them to future act procedural rights. The Registrar must also maintain various public registers of applications, determinations, and registered ILUAs.

The Tribunal (consisting of a President and three Members) has functions under the right to negotiate part of the future act regime and well as other facilitation, review, inquiry, and mediation functions.

Since 2021, the Tribunal can also provide post-determination assistance to common law Native Title holders and Registered Native Title Bodies to assist reaching agreement in relation to any ongoing native title matters.

The President is responsible for managing the administrative affairs of the Native Title Tribunal with the assistance of the CEO and Principal Registrar of the Federal Court, who has delegated most administrative powers to the Native Title Registrar.

Performance and key activities

Purpose

The purpose of the Native Title Tribunal is to perform the functions conferred upon it by the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth) in a manner that accords with section 109; that is, ethically, efficiently, economically, and courteously. One of the primary purposes of the Tribunal's work is to facilitate reconciliation amongst all Australians, reflected in its' new vision statement 'A Reconciled Future – where Country thrives on recognised native title rights and respectful relationships'.

Guiding principles

- Facilitate protections and recognition of native title rights and interests pursuant to the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth).
- Improve the accessibility and quality of information to increase understanding of native title and the native title system.
- Enhance the delivery of services in a culturally appropriate manner.
- Continue to provide services that reflect an understanding of the current and evolving needs of stakeholders.

Key activities

For 2024–25 (and the outlook period through to 2028), the Listed Entity will provide support in respect of, or progress, the following key activities:

Key activities	2024–25	2025–26	2026–27	2027–28
Review the inaugural 2020–21 Federal Court/ Native Title Tribunal Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) and develop a revised Reflect RAP and ensure delivery according to embedded timeframes.	•	•	•	
Develop a First Nations employment and retention strategy in conjunction with the Federal Court and Attorney-General's Department portfolio and apply strategy.	•	•	•	•
Review and develop a new document management system in conjunction with the Listed Entity to enhance document management and security systems and improve information accessibility and operational effectiveness.	•	•	•	
Identify areas of service delivery where the use of technology can improve accessibility of information for Traditional Owners.	•	•	•	•
Develop internal knowledge, capability, and culture to focus on service excellence and responsiveness to emerging needs and trends.	•	•	•	•
Expand and update the online resources by continuing to assess the Tribunal's website, products, and services.	•	•	•	•
Continue to enhance and improve the NTV plus visualisation tool.	•	•	•	•
Deliver tailored and culturally appropriate services in response to stakeholder feedback.	•	•	•	•
Develop strategic partnerships with key stakeholders to focus resources for maximum educative and partnership impact.	•	•	•	•

Table 3. Program 1.1 (cont) key activities, 2024–25 to 2027–28.

2024–25 significant initiatives

- Modernise the Native Title Tribunal website and information management system.
- Build the section 60AAA service to assist more common law holders and Prescribed Bodies Corporates make agreements and develop processes to measure the Tribunal contribution in the post-determination space.
- Contribute and drive the native title system capability initiative of the Commonwealth Native Title Coordination Committee, including by active participation in the working groups.
- Settle a Native Title Tribunal Stakeholder Engagement Strategy and related stakeholder project plans.

Performance measurement

Success will be measured through a variety of sources including the APS census results, anecdotal feedback from stakeholders, data from the section 60AAA reporting model, the design of which is itself a focus for 2024–25, statistical analysis of stakeholder engagement and assistance requests and actual products developed by the Commonwealth Native Title Coordination Committee.

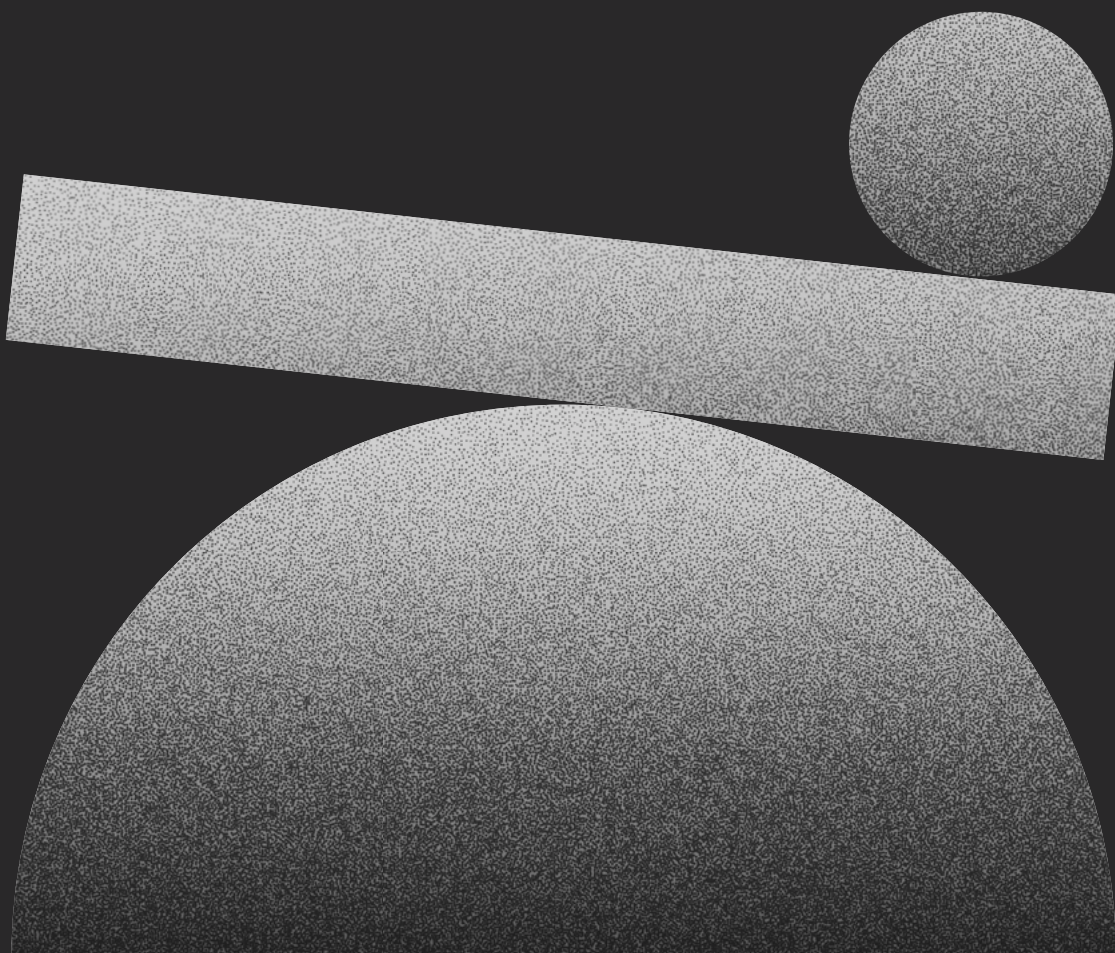
Measures of success

- Enhanced hits to the Native Title Tribunal website to access information and resources.
- Maintenance of a user-friendly tool that supports the visualisation of native title by the public and number of access hits.
- High quality geospatial services compliant with industry standards.
- Enhanced and focused stakeholder engagement.
- Number of assistance requests and mediation/facilitations conducted.
- Number of information sessions and educative meetings convened by the Native Title Tribunal.
- Indigenous workforce development opportunities identified and championed.
- Native Title Tribunal staff equipped and motivated to achieve high-quality results.
- A flexible workforce aligned to work needs and demands.

Program 2.1:

FCFCOA (Division 1)

The FCFCOA (Division 1) was established as the Family Court of Australia in 1975. In 2021, pursuant to the *Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia Act 2021* (Cth), the Court was renamed and continued in existence as the FCFCOA (Division 1), as part of a legislative reform that aligned the operations of the Family Court of Australia and the Federal Circuit Court of Australia. This included the introduction of a legislative single point of entry for family law matters, which are all filed in the FCFCOA (Division 2) at first instance.



Program 2.1: FCFCOA (Division 1)

These reforms received Royal Assent on 1 March 2021 and commenced on 1 September 2021.

The FCFCOA (Division 1) is a superior court of record and a court of law and equity established by Parliament in 1975 under Chapter III of the Constitution. The objective of the FCFCOA (Division 1) is, through its specialist judges, registrars, and staff, to assist Australians to resolve the most complex family disputes and family law appeals by deciding such matters according to the law, as promptly, courteously and effectively as possible.

The Court exercises original and appellate jurisdiction in family law, including in a number of highly specialised areas. From 1 September 2021, the Court's original jurisdiction is enlivened by the transfer of cases from the FCFCOA (Division 2). These matters include those with the most complex law, facts, and parties, including cases arising under the regulations implementing the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction.

The Court provides national coverage as the appellate court in family law matters, including hearing appeals from decisions of single judges of the Court, from judges of the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 2) in family law matters, the Family Court of Western Australia and state and territory courts exercising family law jurisdiction. The Court maintains registries in all States and Territories except Western Australia, including in regional locations.

The Chief Justice is responsible for managing the business and administrative affairs of the Court, assisted by the Deputy Chief Justice. The Chief Justice is assisted by CEO and Principal Registrar, who is appointed by the Governor-General on the nomination of the Chief Justice.

Performance and key activities

Purpose

Through its specialist judges, registrars, and staff, assist Australians to resolve their most complex family disputes and family law appeals by deciding such matters according to the law, promptly, courteously, and effectively.

Outcome

Apply and uphold the rule of law for litigants in the FCFCOA (Division 1) through the just, safe, efficient, and timely resolution of family law matters, particularly more complex family law matters including appeals, according to law, through the encouragement of appropriate dispute resolution processes through the effective management of the administrative affairs of the Court.

Guiding principles

- Deliver just, efficient, and effective dispute resolution in family law matters.
- Ensure best practice in judicial and non-judicial processes.
- Protect vulnerable parties and children.
- Build public trust and confidence.
- Improve access to justice.

Key activities

For 2024–25 (and the outlook period through to 2028), the Listed Entity will provide support for the FCFCOA (Division 1) to progress the following key activities:

Key activities	2024–25	2025–26	2026–27	2027–28
Just, safe, efficient, and timely resolution of family law matters.	•	•	•	
Appropriate response to risk and family violence and protecting vulnerable parties, including women and children.	•	•	•	•
Maximise the role of registrars to ensure they provide specialist services to families and to support judges to hear matters earlier.	•	•	•	
Continue to expand the provision of dispute resolution within the Court, utilising Registrars and Court Child Experts, to free up the Court's pathway for more cases to be heard quickly and cost effectively.	•	•	•	•
Continue Lighthouse to support families who may have experienced family violence and other risks (continuation beyond 2025–26 subject to continued funding).	•	•	•	•
Enhance collaboration with child welfare agencies and service providers to facilitate information sharing when risks are alleged in family law proceedings.	•	•	•	•
Improve the digital capabilities of the Court by enhancing the Digital Court File, eFiling and other online services and digital processes.	•	•	•	•
Improve access to justice for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander litigants and children through the Indigenous Liaison Officer program (continuation beyond 2025–26 subject to continued funding)	•	•	•	•
Improve access to justice for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander litigants and children through the role of Indigenous Liaison Officers and the development of tailored case management processes, including certain specialist Indigenous Lists.	•	•	•	•

Table 4. Program 2.1 key activities, 2024–25 to 2027–28.

2024–25 significant initiatives

- Ongoing review of the new case management pathway, with a focus on timeliness, efficiency of the new case management pathway and outcomes for at risk litigants and children.
- Ongoing revision and improvement of Lighthouse, with a focus on refining all aspects of risk screening and assessment, safety planning and service referral, and bespoke risk-based case management, including the high-risk Evatt List. Current funding until 30 June 2026.
- Continued engagement of Indigenous Family Liaison Officers and development of tailored case management processes for matters involving Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander litigants and children, including specialist Indigenous Lists. Currently majority of funding for Indigenous Family Liaison Officers until 30 June 2026.
- Continued expansion of the information sharing and co-location initiatives in family law.
- Ongoing review and refinement of the Court's Magellan protocol and processes.
- Development of specialised case management and dispute resolution processes for matters relating to the 1980 Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction.
- Establish a common platform based on the modernised Digital Court File to incorporate case management, workload management and dashboards within a single application

Performance measurement

The key outcome measures for the FCFCOA (Division 1) are contained in Outcome Two of the Portfolio Budget Statements.

The FCFCOA (Division 1) maintains two goals related to timely completion of cases. All strategies, priorities and key activities are designed to support the achievement of these performance goals.

Performance against these goals is reported in the Court's annual report and in the Annual Performance Statement.

Performance measure

Goal 1 – Timely completion of cases: 80-90% of final order applications resolved within 12 months.

Planned performance result

2024–25 – 80–90% of final order applications resolved within 12 months.

2025–26 – 80–90% of final order applications resolved within 12 months.

2026–27 – 80–90% of final order applications resolved within 12 months.

2027–28 – 80–90% of final order applications resolved within 12 months.

Rationale

This measures the percentage of final order applications that are resolved in less than 12 months from the date they are filed. This will assist the Court to monitor the efficient resolution of disputes, to ensure families are receiving timely access to justice.

Methodology/source

The target will be measured by reference to the percentage of final order applications finalised within the financial year that have been finalised within 12 months of their filing date.

Performance measure

Goal 2 – Timely completion of cases: 75% of all judgments delivered within three months.

Planned performance result

2024–25 – 75% of all judgments delivered within three months.

2025–26 – 75% of all judgments delivered within three months.

2026–27 – 75% of all judgments delivered within three months.

2027–28 – 75% of all judgments delivered within three months.

Rationale

This measures the percentage of judgments that are delivered within three months of the date of the hearing to which they relate, to ensure the Court is resolving matters in a timely way where that resolution requires the delivery of orders and reasons for judgment.

Methodology/source

This target will be measured by reference to the time taken between the conclusion of the hearing/submissions and the date the reasons for judgment are delivered, and the percentage of those judgments that are delivered within three months, out of all judgments delivered during the financial year.

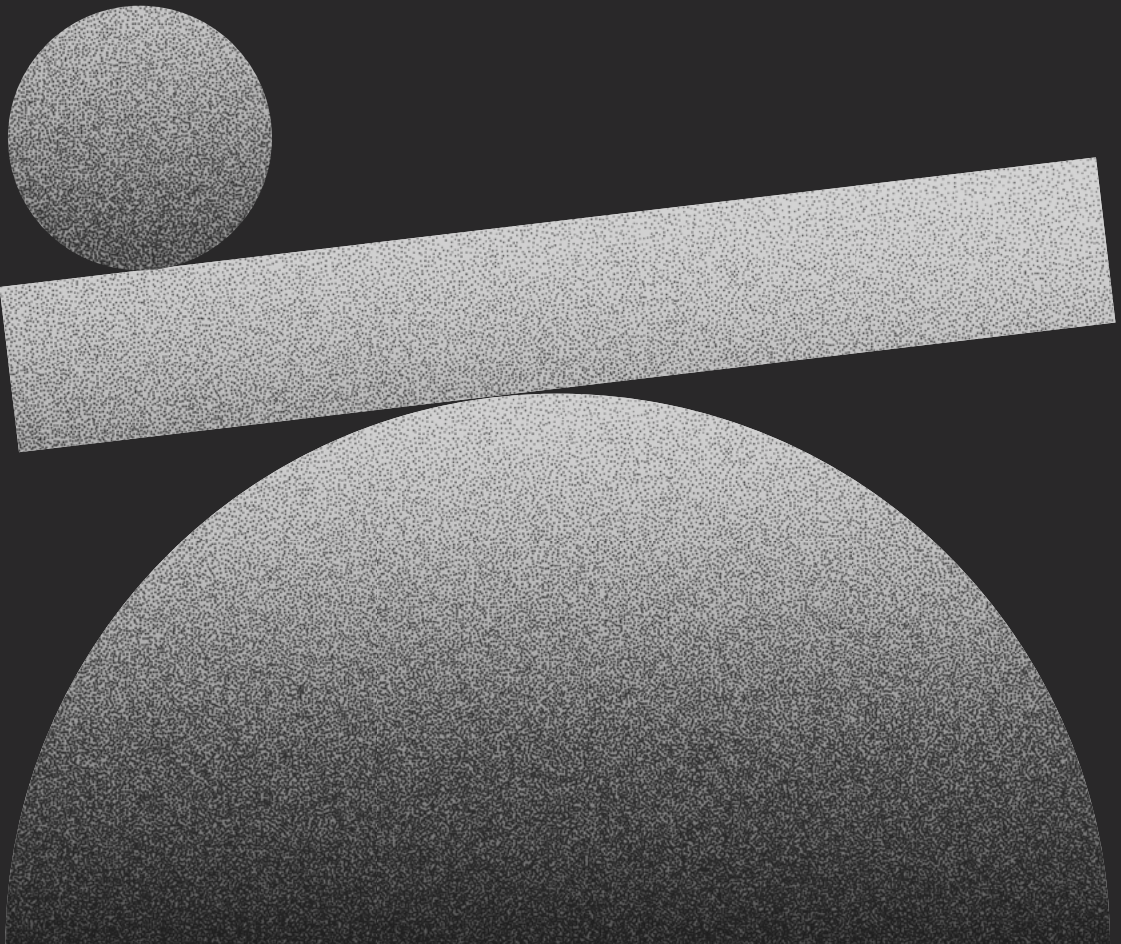
Measures of success

- Improved efficiencies and access to justice in family law through clear and harmonised rules and case management procedures.
- Improved case management through early registrar triage and safely conducted dispute resolution, resulting in increased judicial time to focus on the most complex disputes and judgment writing.
- Reduced delays and backlogs of pending family law cases, assisting litigants to resolve their disputes in a just and timely manner with simplified court procedures.
- Timely delivery of judgments by both judges and registrars.
- Positive outcomes for children and families through increased information sharing and engagement with relevant stakeholders and other jurisdictions.
- Improved protection of at-risk parties and children exposed to family violence and other risks through early risk identification, screening and assessment.
- Improved support and cultural responsiveness in proceedings involving Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander litigants and children, through the ongoing engagement with communities and stakeholders and growth in the Courts' Indigenous Family Liaison Officer cohort.

Program 3.1:

FCFCOA (Division 2)

The FCFCOA (Division 2) was established as the Federal Magistrates Court in 2000, and later became the Federal Circuit Court of Australia. In 2021, pursuant to the *Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia Act 2021* (Cth), the Court was renamed and continued in existence as the FCFCOA (Division 2).



Program 3.1: FCFCOA (Division 2)

The FCFCOA (Division 2) is a federal court of record and a court of law and equity established by Parliament as an independent federal court under Chapter III of the Constitution.

The jurisdiction of the Court is best described by reference to three main areas: family law and child support, migration law, and a broad range of general federal law areas of jurisdiction including administrative law, admiralty law, bankruptcy, consumer law, human rights, industrial law, intellectual property, and privacy. The Court shares these jurisdictions with the FCFCOA (Division 1) (in respect of family law and child support) and the Federal Court of Australia (in respect of migration and general federal law).

Since 1 September 2021, the Court operates as the single point of entry for the filing of all family law applications, and matters may be transferred to the FCFCOA (Division 1) where considered appropriate based on their complexity.

The objective of the Court is to provide timely access to justice and resolve disputes in all areas of law in an efficient and cost-effective manner, using appropriate dispute resolution processes. The provisions of the *Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia Act 2021* (Cth) enable the Court to operate as informally as possible in the exercise of judicial powers, use streamlined procedures and make use of a range of dispute resolution processes to resolve matters without the need for judicial decisions, where appropriate.

The Court sits in all capital cities and some major regional centres in all of the areas in which the Court has jurisdiction. The Court also regularly circuits to a number of regional and rural locations in family law. It deals with a high volume of matters and delivers services to regional Australia, in addition to utilising technology to facilitate remote access to the Court where appropriate.

The Chief Judge is responsible for managing the business and administrative affairs of the Court, assisted by the Deputy Chief Judge (Family Law) and the Deputy Chief Judge (General and Fair Work). The Chief Judge is assisted by the CEO and Principal Registrar, who is appointed by the Governor-General on the nomination of the Chief Justice.

Performance and key activities

Purpose

To provide timely access to justice and resolve disputes in all areas of law in an efficient and cost-effective manner, using appropriate dispute resolution processes.

Outcome

Apply and uphold the rule of law for litigants in the FCFCOA (Division 2) through the just, safe, efficient, and timely resolution of family law and general federal law matters according to law, through the encouragement of appropriate dispute resolution processes through the effective management of the administrative affairs of the Court.

Guiding principles

- Deliver just, efficient, and effective dispute resolution in family law, migration and general federal law matters.
- Ensure best practice in judicial and non-judicial processes.
- Protect vulnerable parties and children.
- Build public trust and confidence.
- Improve access to justice.

Key activities

For 2024–25 (and the outlook period through to 2028), the Listed Entity will provide support for the FCFCOA (Division 2) to progress the following key activities:

Key activities	2024–25	2025–26	2026–27	2027–28
Just, safe, efficient, and timely resolution of family law and general federal law matters.	•	•	•	•
Appropriate response to risk and family violence and protecting vulnerable parties, including women and children.	•	•	•	•
Maximise the role of family law registrars to ensure they provide specialist services to families and to support judges to hear matters earlier.	•	•	•	•
Enhance the Court’s ability to conduct more court hearings and provide greater access to justice for rural and regional Australia.	•	•	•	•
Continue to expand the provision of dispute resolution within the Court, utilising registrars and Court Child Experts, to free up the Court’s pathway for more cases to be heard quickly and cost effectively.	•	•	•	•
Continue Lighthouse to support families who may have experienced family violence and other risks (continuation beyond 2025–26 subject to continued funding).	•	•		
Continue to implement the Priority Property Pool (PPP cases) to provide a quicker, cheaper, and simpler way of resolving family law property disputes involving small property pools.	•	•	•	•
Improve access to justice for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander litigants and children through the Indigenous Liaison Officer program (continuation beyond 2025–26 subject to continued funding).	•	•		
Improve access to justice for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander litigants and children through the development of tailored case management responses and processes, including specialist Indigenous Lists, and other measures.	•	•	•	•

Program 3.1: FCFCOA (Division 2)

Key activities	2024–25	2025–26	2026–27	2027–28
Work towards enhanced collaboration with child welfare agencies and service providers to facilitate information sharing when risks are alleged in family law proceedings.	•	•	•	•
Review the general federal law rules, practice directions and case management procedures to improve support for judges and achieve efficiencies.	•	•	•	•
Enhanced general federal law registrar support for judges in time consuming interlocutory disputes and dispute resolution.	•	•	•	•
Draw on data and new techniques to identify appropriate case management for different cohorts of migration cases, and greater use of technology and areas of responsibility for registrars to deal with migration cases as quickly as possible.	•	•		
Improve the digital capabilities of the Court by enhancing the Digital Court File, eFiling and other online services and digital processes.	•	•	•	•
Enhanced migration registrar support for judges in migration cases.	•	•	•	•
Efficient and effective approach to Fair Work (Small Claims) matters, include through an emphasis on dispute resolution processes and the effective use of registrar resources.	•	•	•	•

Table 5. Program 3.1 key activities, 2024–25 to 2027–28.

2024–25 significant initiatives

- Ongoing review of the new case management pathway, with a focus on timeliness, efficiency of the new case management pathway and outcomes for vulnerable litigants and children.
- Ongoing revision and improvement of Lighthouse, with a focus on refining all aspects of risk screening and assessment, safety planning and service referral, and bespoke risk-based case management, including the high-risk Evatt List. Currently funding until 30 June 2026.
- Expansion of PPP to additional registries nationally, with an expanded criterion, to enable a cost-effective means for the resolution of property disputes with smaller asset pools, in a way that addresses all aspects of family violence, including coercive control.
- Continued engagement of Indigenous Family Liaison Officers and development of tailored case management processes for matters involving Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander litigants and children, including specialist Indigenous Lists. Currently majority of funding for Indigenous Family Liaison Officers until 30 June 2026.
- Continued expansion of the information sharing and co-location initiatives in family law.
- Timely delivery of judgments by both judges and registrars.
- Ongoing review and update of the *Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 2) (General Federal Law) Rules 2021* to create a complete set of rules applicable to the general federal law jurisdictions of the Court that are consistent with the *Federal Court Rules 2011* where appropriate.
- Ongoing review and refinement of case management processes and procedures in the migration jurisdiction to address the backlog of pending migration cases.
- Ongoing implementation of changes to small claims matters within the Court's fair work jurisdiction.
- Establish a common platform based on the modernised Digital Court File to incorporate case management, workload management and dashboards within a single application.

Performance measurement

The key outcome measures for the FCFCOA (Division 2) are contained in Outcome Three of the Portfolio Budget Statements.

The FCFCOA (Division 2) Court maintains three goals related to timely completion of cases to measure the performance of its work. All strategies, priorities and key activities are designed to support the achievement of these performance goals. Performance against these goals is reported in the Court's annual report and in the Annual Performance Statement, published in the Listed Entity annual report.

Performance measure

Goal 1 – Timely completion of cases: 80-90% of final order applications resolved within 12 months.

Planned performance result

2024–25 – 80–90% of final order applications resolved within 12 months.

2025–26 – 80–90% of final order applications resolved within 12 months.

2026–27 – 80–90% of final order applications resolved within 12 months.

2027–28 – 80–90% of final order applications resolved within 12 months.

Rationale

This measures the percentage of final order applications that are resolved in less than 12 months from the date they are filed. This will assist the Court to monitor the efficient resolution of disputes, to ensure families are receiving timely access to justice.

Methodology/source

The target will be measured by reference to the percentage of final order applications finalised within the financial year that have been finalised within 12 months of their filing date.

Performance measure

Goal 2 – Timely completion of cases: 90% of general federal law applications (excluding migration) resolved within 12 months.

Planned performance result

2024–25 – 90% of general federal law applications (excluding migration) resolved within 12 months.

2025–26 – 90% of general federal law applications (excluding migration) resolved within 12 months.

2026–27 – 90% of general federal law applications (excluding migration) resolved within 12 months.

2027–28 – 90% of general federal law applications (excluding migration) resolved within 12 months.

Rationale

This measures the percentage of general federal law applications (excluding migration) that are resolved in less than 12 months from the date they are filed. This will assist the Court to monitor the efficient resolution of disputes, to ensure litigants are receiving timely access to justice.

Methodology/source

The target will be measured by reference to the percentage of general federal law applications finalised within the financial year that have been finalised within 12 months of their filing date.

Performance measure

Goal 3 – Timely completion of cases: 75% of all judgments delivered within three months.

Planned performance result

2024–25 – 75% of all judgments delivered within three months.

2025–26 – 75% of all judgments delivered within three months.

2026–27 – 75% of all judgments delivered within three months.

2027–28 – 75% of all judgments delivered within three months.

Rationale

This measures the percentage of judgments that are delivered within three months of the date of the hearing to which they relate, to ensure the Court is resolving matters in a timely way where that resolution requires the delivery of orders and reasons for judgment.

Methodology/source

This target will be measured by reference to the time taken between the conclusion of the hearing/submissions and the date the reasons for judgment are delivered, and the percentage of those judgments that are delivered within three months, out of all judgments delivered during the financial year.

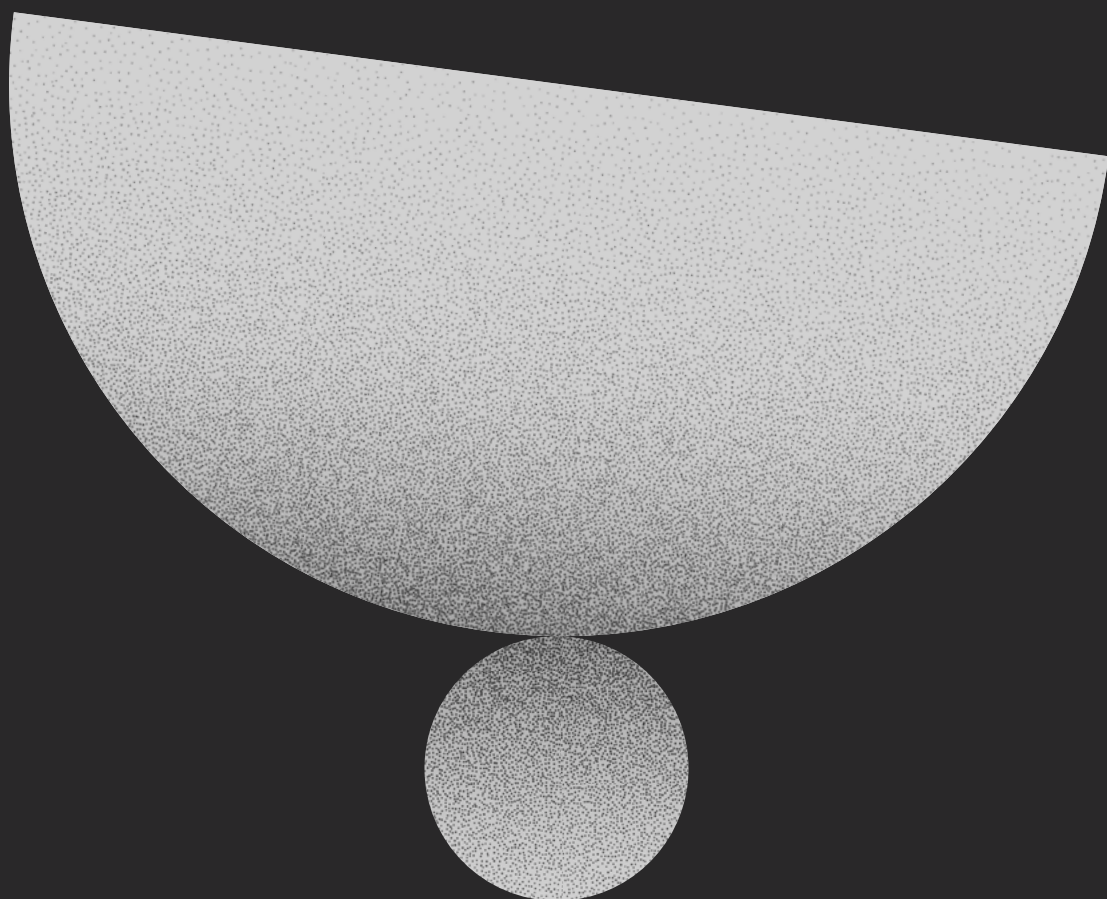
The Listed Entity’s Annual Performance Statement, published in the annual report, will report on the success of the plan to achieve timely completion of cases.

Measures of success

- Improved efficiencies and access to justice in family law through clear and harmonised rules and case management procedures.
- Improved case management through early registrar triage and safely conducted dispute resolution, resulting in increased judicial time to focus on the most complex disputes and judgment writing.
- Reduced delays and backlogs of pending family law cases, assisting litigants to resolve their disputes in a just and timely manner with simplified court procedures.
- Positive outcomes for children and families through increased information sharing and engagement with relevant stakeholders and other jurisdictions.
- Improved protection of at-risk parties and children exposed to family violence and other risks through early risk identification, screening, and assessment.
- Improved support and cultural responsiveness in proceedings involving Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander litigants and children, through ongoing engagement with relevant communities and stakeholders as well as growth within the Courts' Indigenous Family Liaison Officer cohort.
- Improved efficiencies and access to justice in general federal law and migration cases through clear, comprehensive, and updated rules, case management procedures and increased registrar support.

Program 4.1: Commonwealth Courts Corporate Services

The Commonwealth Courts Corporate Services program was established following the enactment of the *Courts Administration Legislation Amendment Act 2016* (Cth).



Program 4.1: Commonwealth Courts Corporate Services

Corporate Services includes finance, people and culture, security, risk oversight and management, communications, information technology, business intelligence, property and procurement, library, information management and judgment publishing.

The shared corporate services body is managed by the Accountable Authority, which is the Federal Court's CEO and Principal Registrar.

The Accountable Authority consults with:

- the head of jurisdiction of the Federal Court of Australia
- the head of jurisdiction of the FCFCOA (Division 1) and the FCFCOA (Division 2)
- the CEO and Principal Registrar of the FCFCOA (Division 1) and the FCFCOA (Division 2), and
- the President and Native Title Registrar of the Native Title Tribunal.

in relation to the performance of this function.

Details relating to corporate services and consultation requirements are set out in a memorandum of understanding.

Corporate Services aims to optimise the delivery of shared functions and reducing duplication to generate efficiencies.

Corporate Services organisation stucture

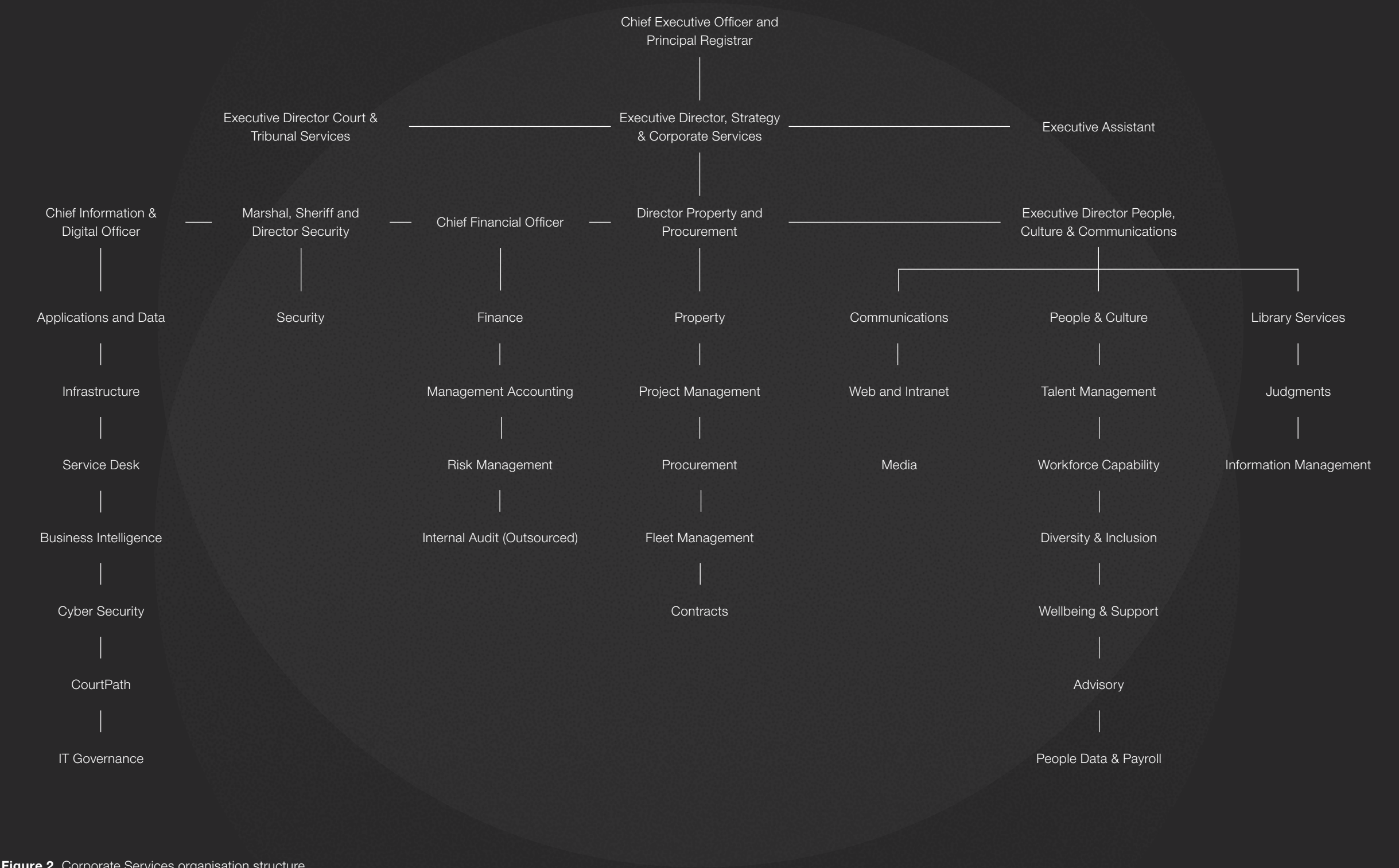


Figure 2. Corporate Services organisation structure.

Performance and key activities

Purpose

To provide efficient and effective corporate services to the Commonwealth Courts and Tribunals to support them in achieving their purposes and achieving their key activities.

Outcome

Improved administration and support of the resolution of matters according to law for litigants in the Federal Court of Australia, the FCFCOA (Division 1), the FCFCOA (Division 2) and parties in the Native Title Tribunal through efficient and effective provision of shared corporate and registry services.

Guiding principles

- Deliver efficient corporate services to each Commonwealth Court and Tribunal.
- Build an agile, skilled, and engaged workforce.
- Optimise technology to support judicial, registry and corporate services functions.
- Improve access to justice.

Key activities

For 2024–25 (and the outlook period through to 2028), Corporate Services will progress the following key activities:

Key activities	2024–25	2025–26	2026–27	2027–28
Ensure our digital services are optimised, stable and secure, and available to Court and Tribunal users when they need them.	•	•	•	•
Ensure our buildings are safe and secure for all occupants.	•	•	•	•
Increase workforce planning and capability, and reform enabled by modern technology.	•	•	•	•

Table 6. Program 4.1 key activities, 2024–25 to 2027–28.

2024–25 significant initiatives

- Modernise court platforms including case management and electronic court files in a single intuitive system.
- Establish new facilities to support the implementation of the Future Security Service Project, including enhanced security services (including the guarding service).
- Modernise Courts and Tribunal networks to better support hybrid working needs.
- Ongoing enhancements to cybersecurity protections, including data protection and security awareness.
- Continued modernisation of underlying technology platforms for optimised efficiency, security, and value.
- Update all systems, policies, and procedures to align to the new Enterprise Agreement 2024–2027.
- Resource and establish a dedicated governance, risk and compliance (GRC) team.
- Improve leadership and performance development capabilities.
- Explore an alternative solution to the current information management system used in the Courts and Native Title Tribunal.

Performance measurement

The key outcome measure is contained in Outcome Four (Programs 4.1 and 4.2) of the Portfolio Budget Statements. That is, improved administration and support of the resolution of matters according to law for litigants in the Federal Court of Australia, the FCFCOA (Division 1), the FCFCOA (Division 2) and parties in the Native Title Tribunal through efficient and effective provision of shared corporate and registry services. All strategies, priorities and key activities are designed to support the achievement of these performance goals. Performance against these goals is reported in the Listed Entity annual report.

Performance measure

Goal 1 – Optimise technology to support judicial, registry and corporate services functions.

Planned performance result

2024–25 – Proposed future state capability and technology supports the demands of each Court and its users. Successful delivery of the Digital Court Program.

2025–26 – Proposed future state capability and technology supports the demands of each Court and its users. Successful delivery of the Digital Court Program.

2026–27 – Proposed future state capability and technology supports the demands of each Court and its users. Successful delivery of the Digital Court Program.

2027–28 – Proposed future state capability and technology supports the demands of each Court and its users. Successful delivery of the Digital Court Program.

Rationale

Implementing an updated common platform for Family Law, Federal Law, and case and workload management will increase efficiency across the Courts and Tribunals. Updated network technology will better support ongoing hybrid working models.

Methodology/source

This target will be measured by reference to the following:

- Capabilities migrated from legacy systems to updated platform as per digital and IT program roadmap.
- Legacy systems no longer in use.
- Network implementation completed, and reductions in outage and performance issues, particularly for remote working.
- Implement contracts and procure-to-pay modules into our Financial Management Information System to provide improved contract management functionality and to streamline procurement processes.

Performance measure

Goal 2 – Implementation of a Cyber Security Program.

Planned performance result

2024–25 – The Listed Entity continues to deliver services in a productive and secure manner in the event of a cyber incident.

2025–26 – The Listed Entity continues to deliver services in a productive and secure manner in the event of a cyber incident.

2026–27 – The Listed Entity continues to deliver services in a productive and secure manner in the event of a cyber incident.

2027–28 – The Listed Entity continues to deliver services in a productive and secure manner in the event of a cyber incident.

Rationale

Increasing protection against current and emerging threats will ensure resilient Court and Tribunal services.

Methodology/source

This target will be measured by reference to the following:

- Reduced measured vulnerabilities, particularly aged, to within recommendations from the Australian Cyber Security Centre, or compensating controls implemented.
- Implement modernised data protection following a risk-based approach.
- Protective Security Policy Framework and Information Security Manual compliance.
- Cyber security awareness training.

Performance measure

Goal 3 – Efficient and effective corporate services.

Planned performance result

2024–25 – Corporate Services to be provided within the agreed funding.

2025–26 – Corporate Services to be provided within the agreed funding.

2026–27 – Corporate Services to be provided within the agreed funding.

2027–28 – Corporate Services to be provided within the agreed funding.

Rationale

The delivery of efficient and effective shared corporate services will generate efficiencies, reduce duplication, improve financial sustainability, and increase the effectiveness of the public administration of the Courts and Tribunal.

Methodology/source

This target will be measured by reference to:

- Ensuring synergies between Corporate Services and Court and Tribunal Services (where possible) to ensure there are no gaps in service provision.
- Including non-Corporate Services staff in planning and implementation of services.
- Providing clear career pathways for staff into and from Corporate Services to other parts of the agency.
- Continuing to move resources to where they are most needed.

Performance measure

Goal 4 – Gender equality – female representation in the senior executive service (SES) and executive level (EL) classifications.

Planned performance result

2024–25 – Approximately 50% of SES and approximately 50% of EL staff.

2025–26 – Approximately 50% of SES and approximately 50% of EL staff.

2026–27 – Approximately 50% of SES and approximately 50% of EL staff.

2027–28 – Approximately 50% of SES and approximately 50% of EL staff.

Rationale

In line with the Australian Public Service Gender Equality Strategy 2021–26, ensuring the Listed Entity provides a diverse and inclusive workplace is key to maintaining employee engagement, as well as ensuring the Courts and the Native Title Tribunal benefits from employees' varied perspectives. The Listed Entity is committed to ensuring its female employees have the same opportunity as all other employees to progress into senior leadership positions.

Methodology/source

This will be measured by reference to calculating the proportion of senior leadership positions occupied by female employees at the SES classification and the EL classification.

Performance measure

Goal 5 – Indigenous representation – proportion of staff who identify as Indigenous.

Planned performance result

2024–25 – Indigenous representation of 3% of total staff.

2025–26 – Indigenous representation of 3% of total staff.

2026–27 – Indigenous representation of 3% of total staff.

2027–28 – Indigenous representation of 3% of total staff.

Rationale

The Listed Entity is committed to furthering and advancing reconciliation, both within the organisation and more broadly across the community. Key to reconciliation is ensuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders have access to the same employment opportunities as all other people.

Methodology/source

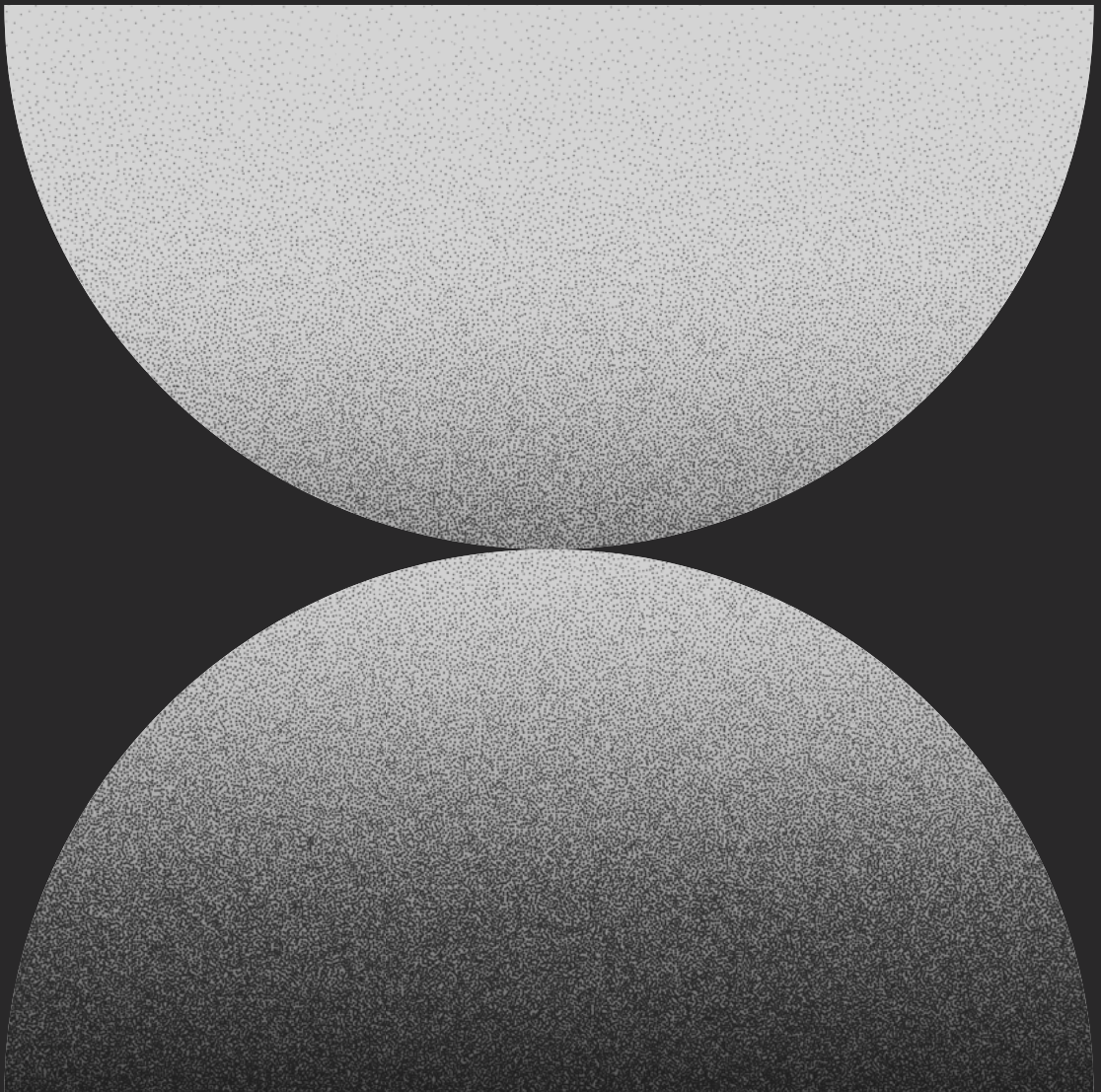
This will be measured by reference to calculating the proportion of overall positions within the Listed Entity occupied by employees who identify as Aboriginal or as Torres Strait Islanders.

Measures of success

- Increased digital capability to support the growth in remote hearings and other digital initiatives.
- Improved security arrangements in all court and tribunal premises.
- Increased visibility into our environment, improved vulnerability scanning and detection capability, and better cyber security awareness through products and training.
- All systems, policies and procedures aligned to new enterprise agreement.
- Improved GRC capability.
- Increased employee diversity to ensure our workforce is reflective of the community which we serve.
- A new performance development framework to support capability, career planning, continuous learning, feedback and evaluation.

Program 4.2: Commonwealth Courts Registry Services

The registry services functions for the Courts and Native Title Tribunal are amalgamated into a single program under Outcome 4 (Program 4.2) known as the Commonwealth Courts Registry Services (also known as Court and Tribunal Services).



Program 4.2: Commonwealth Courts Registry Services

The registry services functions for the Courts and Native Title Tribunal are amalgamated into a single program under Outcome 4 (Program 4.2) known as the Commonwealth Courts Registry Services (also known as Court and Tribunal Services).

This provided an opportunity to shape the delivery of administrative services and stakeholder support across Courts in a more innovative and efficient manner. A continued focus on maximising registry operational effectiveness through streamlined structures, such as the implementation of a national virtual registry and digital innovations will significantly contribute to the future financial sustainability of the Courts.

This national approach ensures that the quality and productivity of registry services is the very best it can be, by building consistency in registry practice across all court locations and expert knowledge to support the important work of the judges and registrars.

In the 2024–25 financial year, planned replacement and upgrades of key business applications will improve service delivery outcomes for court users

Court and Tribunal Services organisational structure

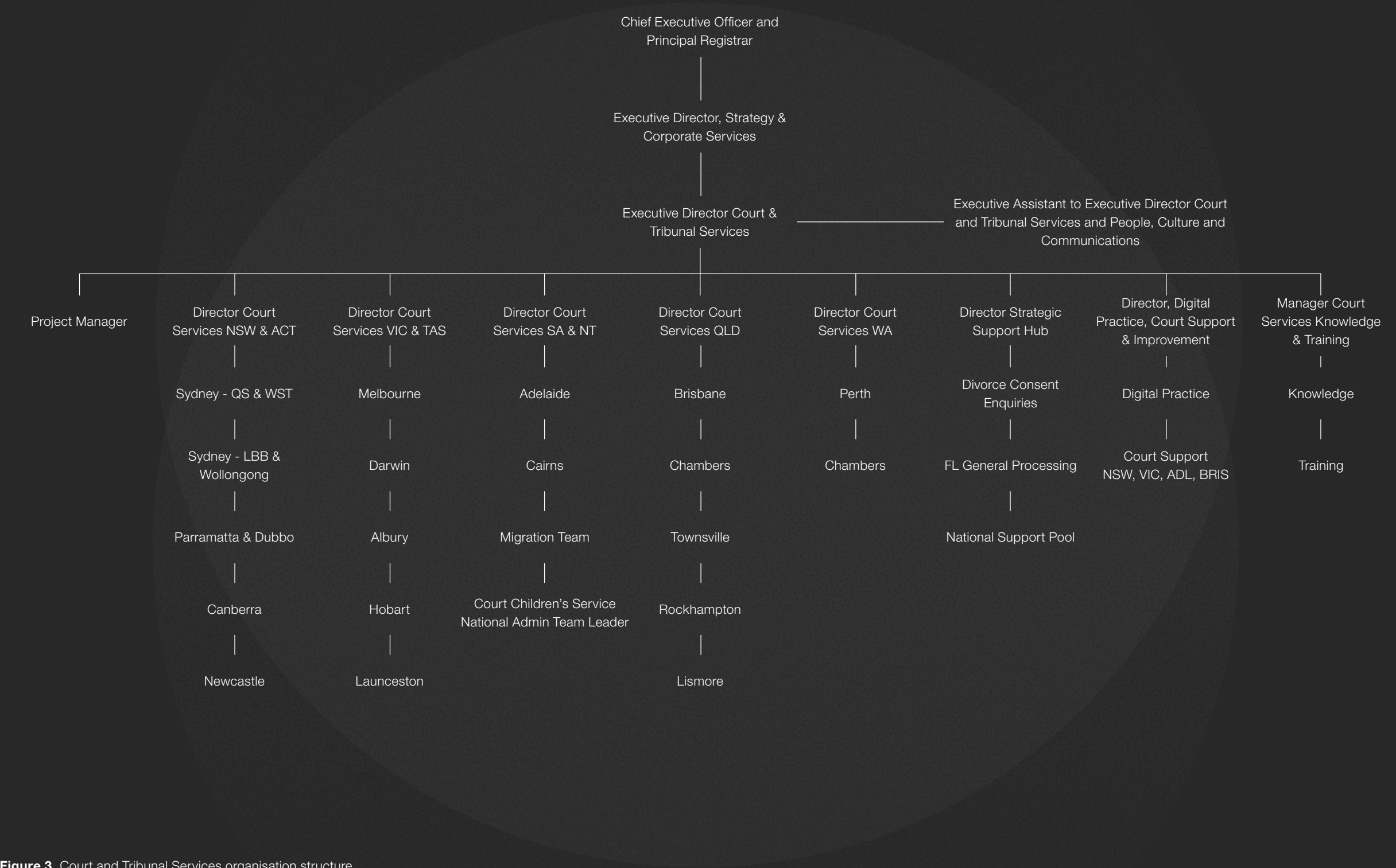


Figure 3. Court and Tribunal Services organisation structure.

Performance and key activities

Purpose

To provide efficient and effective registry services to the Commonwealth Courts and Tribunals to support them in achieving their purposes and achieving their key activities.

Outcome

Improved administration and support of the resolution of matters according to law for litigants in the Federal Court of Australia, the FCFCOA (Division 1) and FCFCOA (Division 2), and parties in the Native Title Tribunal through efficient and effective provision of shared corporate and registry services.

Guiding principles

- Deliver efficient registry services to each Commonwealth Court and Tribunal.
- Build a service-oriented and digitally knowledgeable workforce.
- Deliver a consistent registry service experience to all users.
- Improve access to justice.

Key activities

For 2024–25 (and the outlook period through to 2028), Registry Services will progress the following key activities:

Key activities	2024–25	2025–26	2026–27	2027–28
Design a new service model for integrated registry services in support of jurisdictional strategic priorities.	•	•	•	
Implement business process changes to complement and leverage the Digital Strategy.	•	•	•	•
Uplift client service capability through knowledge management and training.	•	•		
Support specialisation where that creates efficiency and improved service outcomes.	•	•		
Enhance Contact Centre systems and capability.	•	•	•	
Increase data maturity and data-driven decision making.	•	•	•	

Table 7. Program 4.2 key activities, 2024–25 to 2027–28.

2024–25 significant initiatives

- Upgrade the telephony system to improve caller experience and resource management.
- Upgrade the wiki system used for enquiries and build a national registry knowledge base.
- Implement a standardised national approach to training delivery.
- Develop a strategic recruitment strategy to support optimal service delivery.
- Develop greater capability for data informed decision making and quality assurance practices.
- Develop a business case for a workforce management solution.
- Work with the courts to develop enhanced practices and processes that ensure the safety of litigants, particularly in the family law jurisdiction.

Performance measurement

The key outcome measure is contained in Outcome Four (Programs 4.1 and 4.2) of the Portfolio Budget Statements. That is, improved administration and support of the resolution of matters according to law for litigants in the Federal Court of Australia, the FCFCOA (Division 1), the FCFCOA (Division 2) and parties in the Native Title Tribunal through efficient and effective provision of shared corporate and registry services. Performance against these goals is reported in the Listed Entity annual report.

Performance measure

Goal 1 – All information and service provided by registry services is high quality, timely and meets the needs of clients.

Planned performance result

2024–25 – At least a 90% customer enquiry satisfaction rate.

2025–26 – At least a 90% customer enquiry satisfaction rate.

2026–27 – At least a 90% customer enquiry satisfaction rate.

2027–28 – At least a 90% customer enquiry satisfaction rate.

Rationale

Consistent, timely and accurate advice to clients is essential for high quality service delivery and supports the ability of the judiciary and support staff to operate efficiently and effectively.

Methodology/source

This will be measured by a post-call survey: achievement of 90% satisfaction rating of 4/5 or 5/5 of surveyed clients.

Performance measure

Goal 2 – Timely processing of documents.

Planned performance result

2024–25 – 75% of documents processed within two working days.

2025–26 – 75% of documents processed within two working days.

2026–27 – 75% of documents processed within two working days.

2027–28 – 75% of documents processed within two working days.

Rationale

Efficient processing of documents is essential for the efficiency and quality of the conduct of hearings and provision of quality service to clients.

Methodology/source

This will be measured by a report from the Case Management Database of the percentage of documents processed within two working days.

Performance measure

Goal 3 – Efficient registry services.

Planned performance result

2024–25 – All registry services provided within the agreed funding levels.

2025–26 – All registry services provided within the agreed funding levels.

2026–27 – All registry services provided within the agreed funding levels.

2027–28 – All registry services provided within the agreed funding levels.

Rationale

Ensure a sufficient level of staffing resources to provide a range of high-quality registry services at each registry location (e.g. to process documents, answer client enquiries and provide courtroom support).

Methodology/source

This will be measured by regular provision and analysis of financial and budgetary reports to ensure all registry services are provided within agreed funding levels. Staff performance will be monitored through the management structure and the performance review process.

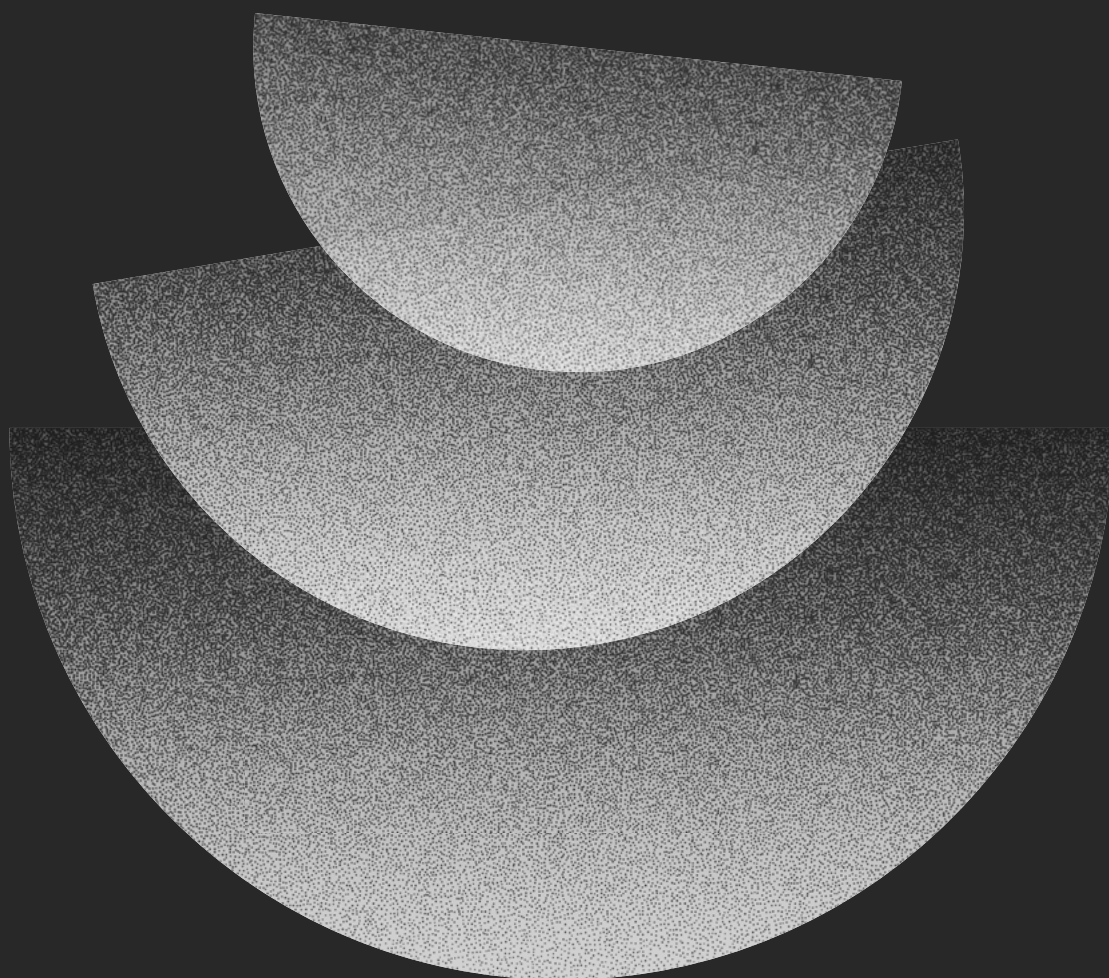
Measures of success

- Effective and efficient use of available resources.
- Improved registry leadership and service delivery capability.
- Quality, timely and consistent information for all court users across all Courts and the Native Title Tribunal.
- Maximised benefits of nationalised service delivery.
- An environment that focusses on safety for court users experiencing family violence.
- Maximised efficiency in managing national enquiries.
- Enhanced access to justice services through digital technologies.
- Realise the benefits of CourtPath and the Digital Court Program.
- Effective digital litigation support provided to the judiciary, profession and litigants.

List of requirements

The corporate plan has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of:

- subsection 35(1) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (Cth), and
- the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014* (Cth).



List of requirements

The table details the requirements met by the Federal Court of Australia Listed Entity’s corporate plan and the page reference(s) for each requirement.

Requirement	Pages
Introduction	1–3
Purpose	24, 31, 35, 42, 54, 67
Key activities	25, 32, 36, 43, 55, 68
Operating context	4–9
Capability	19–22
Risk oversight and management, including key risks and its management	10–14
Cooperation	15–18
Subsidiaries (where applicable)	N/A
Performance	26-28; 33; 37-39; 45-48; 56-61; 69-72

Table 8. Listed Entity 2024–25 Corporate Plan, List of Requirements.

