

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK 2004 – 2005

MISSION

To promote and protect the rights of legal consumers in their dealings with legal practitioners and law practice employees in Queensland.

STRATEGIES

We will pursue our mission by:

- establishing and delivering effective and efficient processes for resolving consumer complaints about the conduct of legal practitioners and law practice employees;
- investigating legal practitioners and law practice employees in the absence of complaint when there is reason to suspect misconduct;
- prosecuting legal practitioners and law practice employees when it is in the public interest and there is a reasonable likelihood a disciplinary body will find them guilty of professional misconduct or unsatisfactory professional conduct;
- collaborating with the professional bodies, law schools and other legal services stakeholders to reduce cause for consumer complaints about the conduct of legal practitioners and law practice employees; and
- creating and maintaining a productive and motivating work environment.

VALUES

We will be:

- well informed and thorough;
- accessible and responsive to legal consumers and practitioners; and
- independent, fair and accountable.

OPERATIONAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK 2004 – 2005

Strategy 1:

Establishing and delivering effective and efficient processes for resolving consumer complaints about the conduct of legal practitioners and law practice employees.

Activities		Performance indicators, targets or standards
1.1	Promote the services of the Legal Services Commission	<p>A system to record complaints has been set up and allows statistics relating to complaints to be reported.</p> <p>The Act requires the Legal Services Commissioner to develop performance criteria relating to the handling of complaints.</p> <p>The Commissioner intends to work with colleagues in other States to see if a set of national performance criteria can be developed.</p>
1.2	Respond to enquiries about the complaint process	
1.3	Receive, assess and decide to retain complaints or refer them to the professional bodies	
1.4	Mediate or investigate complaints	
1.5	Monitor the progress of complaints referred to the professional bodies	
1.6	Review and finalize complaints	

Strategy 2:

Investigating legal practitioners and law practice employees in the absence of complaint when there is reason to suspect misconduct.

Activities		Performance indicators, targets or standards
2.1	Identify matters where there is a suspicion of misconduct	<p>This strategy can be monitored by recording some quantitative data (number of investigations of this type) and some qualitative (intended effects and outcomes of actions). Reporting would be textual.</p> <p>Each investigation could be monitored as a project – progress against project plan, outcomes compared to intended outcomes.</p>
2.2	Investigate the matters	
2.3	Review and finalize matters	

Strategy 3:

Prosecuting legal practitioners and law practice employees when it is in the public interest and there is a reasonable likelihood a disciplinary body will find them guilty of professional misconduct or unsatisfactory professional conduct.

Activities		Performance indicators, targets or standards
3.1	Draft and file disciplinary application	
3.2	Decide to retain in-house or brief out	number retained or briefed out
3.3	If retain, prepare for hearing	
3.4	Appear or instruct at hearing	number of applications / outcomes / cost
3.5	Appear or instruct on appeal	number of appeals / outcomes / cost

Strategy 4:

Collaborating with the professional bodies, law schools and other legal services stakeholders to reduce cause for consumer complaints about the conduct of legal practitioners and law practice employees.

Activities		Performance indicators, targets or standards
4.1	Analyse complaints and other indicators to identify complaint types that are recurring	This strategy can be monitored by recording some quantitative data (number of initiatives instigated) and some qualitative (intended effects and outcomes of initiatives). Reporting would be textual. Each initiative could be monitored as a project – progress against project plan, outcomes compared to intended outcomes.
4.2	Develop plans to fix the causes of recurring complaints	
4.3	Implement plans	
4.4	Monitor and adjust plans as required	
4.5	Review outcomes	

Strategy 5:

Creating and maintaining a productive and motivating work environment.

Activities		Performance indicators, targets or standards
5.1	Monitor team climate and identify aspects of work environment for improvement	This strategy can be monitored by recording some quantitative data (number of investigations of this type) and some qualitative (intended effects and outcomes of actions). Reporting would be textual. Each investigation could be monitored as a project – progress against project plan, outcomes compared to intended outcomes.
5.2	Develop plans to improve the aspects identified	
5.3	Implement plans	
5.4	Monitor and adjust plans as required	
5.5	Review outcomes	

SHORT TERM IMPERATIVES/IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

Settle staffing numbers and staffing arrangements

The Commissioner intends to have these matters largely settled by 30 April 2005.

