



Cover Image

The Commonwealth Law Courts in Melbourne was the first manifestation of a progressive vision for the court buildings of Australia developed by the then Chief Justice of the Federal Court of Australia, The Honourable Michael Black AC, QC.

The building was completed in 1998 after a decade of planning. It was designed by the Melbourne branch of the architectural firm Hassell, with Paul Katsieris as the design architect on the project. It has won a number of awards, including the Marion Mahony Award and a Commendation Award from the Royal Australian Institute of Architects.

The architects were asked to create a dignified but not intimidating building that reflected the importance, transparency and accessibility of the justice system.

The L-shaped building is 17 storeys high and covers more than 35,000 sq m. It was designed to resemble two buildings, with a courts section and a 'tower' section for offices. These are divided by a north-south gallery that serves as a light well, and are linked by footbridges.

The building design, with its focus on geometric forms and the choice of materials used in its construction, was influenced by modernism. The exterior is composed of layers of differently sized windows and projections that produce a stacked effect.

In an attempt to mitigate anxiety or a sense of intimidation in members of the public entering the courts, access to the body of the building is through a series of smaller spaces that open out to 'reveal' the interior.

The building is named after Sir Owen Dixon OM PC GCMG KCMG KC.



Federal Court of Australia Entity Corporate Plan 2023–2024

Covering the reporting period 2023–2024 to 2026–2027

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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.

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Guidance for the use of the Corporate Plan

The Corporate Plan is the Federal Court of Australia Entity's principal planning document. It outlines the strategic direction, goals, challenges and priorities for 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), the National Native Title Tribunal, Commonwealth Courts Corporate Services and Commonwealth Courts Registry Services.

The Entity's planning framework is modelled on the Commonwealth Performance Framework.

The Portfolio Budget Statements (published in May 2023) outline our proposed allocation of funds to achieve our stated outcomes.

The Corporate Plan (published in August) is a non-financial strategic planning document. It sets out our purpose, key activities, and the results we expect to achieve over the next four years. It also includes discussion on our operating environment, our capability, our stakeholders and our management of risk.

The Annual Performance Statement (published in October the following year) is produced at the end of the reporting cycle and provides an assessment of how we performed against our 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 for the Entity is included in the Federal Court's annual report.

The Corporate Plan was developed in conjunction with the following reference material:

- Resource Management Guide 131: Developing performance measures
- Resource Management Guide 132: Corporate plans for Commonwealth entities

The Corporate Plan covers the following topics and themes:

- introduction
- purpose
- operating context
- capability
- risk oversight and management
- cooperation
- performance, and
- resourcing.

This is a living document that is reviewed and updated each year.

Message from the Chief Executive Officer and Principal Registrar



The Corporate Plan is our primary non-financial planning document. It outlines the strategic direction, goals, challenges and priorities for the Federal Court Entity.

The Corporate Plan focuses on the planned future work of the Federal Court of Australia, the National Native Title Tribunal, the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 1), the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 2), Commonwealth Courts Corporate Services and Commonwealth Courts Registry Services. The report outlines how we will achieve our goals against our stated purpose and how we will measure our performance.

The Corporate Plan, Portfolio Budget Statements and Annual Performance Statement (included in the Annual Report) are the core elements of the Commonwealth performance framework.

The last few years have seen the Courts and the National Native Title Tribunal fast track

our digital reform agenda to be able to continue to deliver vital services during the pandemic. This included leveraging the benefits of technology to facilitate access to justice in regional and remote locations. Over the four years of this plan, we will continue to deliver priority programs and services to better support our litigants and stakeholders through a significant program of works.

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

I look forward to the challenging work of the next several years and I am pleased to present the Federal Court of Australia Entity Corporate Plan for 2023–24.

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

Statement of preparation

I, Sia Lagos, as the accountable authority of the Federal Court of Australia, present the *Federal Court of Australia Entity Corporate Plan 2023–24*, which covers the period 2023–24 to 2026–27, as required under section 35(1)(b) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (Cth).

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

7 August 2023

Introduction

The Chief Executive Officer and Principal Registrar of the Federal Court of Australia, together with officers and staff identified under the *Federal Court of Australia Act 1976* (Cth), the *Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia Act 2021* (Cth) and the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth), constitute a single statutory agency for the purposes of the *Public Service Act 1999* (Cth).

Employees are engaged to work in support of the following Courts or Tribunal:

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

The Federal Court of Australia, the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 1) and the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 2) are each separate Chapter III courts and each maintain a distinct statutory identity, with separate Heads of Jurisdiction, independent administrations, separate functions and judicial independence.

Federal Court of Australia Entity and programs

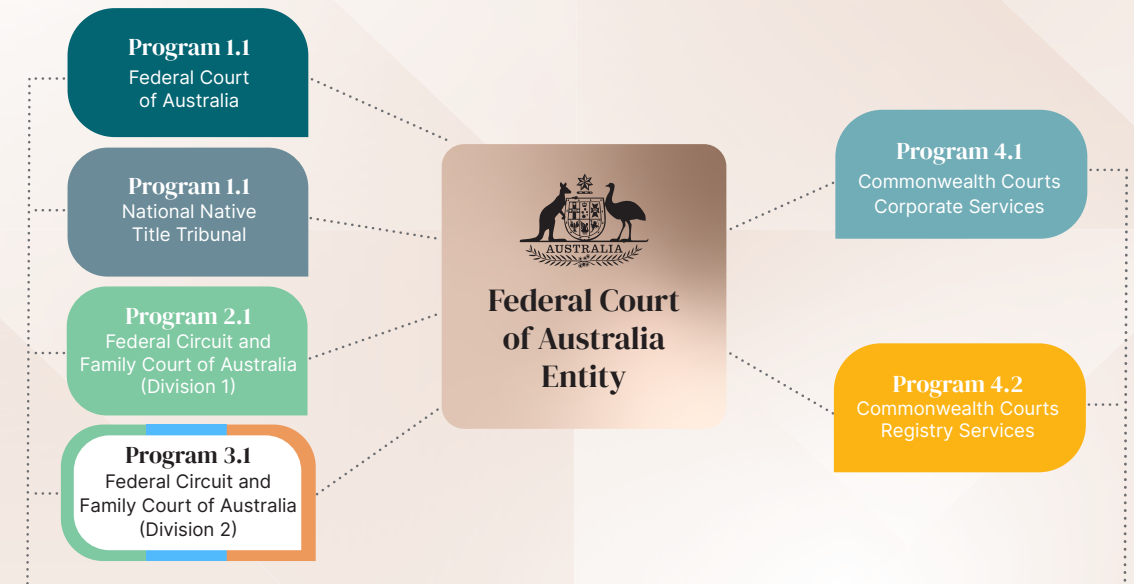


Figure 1: Federal Court of Australia Entity and programs

The Federal Court of Australia Entity has four programs:

- Program 1.1: Federal Court of Australia (including the National Native Title Tribunal)
- Program 2.1: Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 1)
- Program 3.1: Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 2)
- Program 4.1: Commonwealth Courts Corporate Services
- Program 4.2: Commonwealth Courts Registry Services

Program 1.1: Federal Court of Australia

The Federal Court of Australia was created by the *Federal Court of Australia Act 1976* 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.

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 business and administrative affairs of the Court. The Chief Justice is assisted by the Chief Executive Officer 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 Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (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 National Native Title Tribunal, however the Tribunal remains an independent body established by the *Native Title Act 1993*.



**The Honourable
Debra Mortimer**
CHIEF JUSTICE



Sia Lagos
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
AND PRINCIPAL REGISTRAR

Program 1.1 (cont'd): National Native Title Tribunal



Kevin Smith
PRESIDENT



Katie Stride
NATIVE TITLE REGISTRAR

The *Native Title Act 1993* established the National Native Title Tribunal as an independent body with a wide range of functions. The *Native Title Act 1993* 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.

The purpose of the native title scheme, established by the *Native Title Act 1993*, 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 proceed.

The National Native Title Tribunal has numerous functions designed to assist in serving that purpose. In particular, it has responsibilities in connection with the processing of applications for determinations as to the existence or non-existence of native title over identified parcels of land, and with applications for compensation payable pursuant to the *Native Title Act 1993*.

The National Native Title Tribunal has functions in connection with future acts as defined in section 233 of the *Native Title Act 1993*.

The functions also include post-determination assistance to common law holders and their corporations to provide conflict resolution that assists in achieving outcomes from the determined native title.

The President is responsible for managing the administrative affairs of the National Native Title Tribunal with the assistance of the Federal Court CEO and Principal Registrar.

The President may delegate their powers under the *Native Title Act 1993*.

Program 2.1: Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 1)

The Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (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*, the Court was renamed and continued in existence as the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (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 Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 2) at first instance.

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

The Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (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 Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (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 Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (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 the Chief Executive Officer and Principal Registrar, who is appointed by the Governor-General on the nomination of the Chief Justice.



**The Honourable
William Alstergren AO**
CHIEF JUSTICE DIVISION 1



**The Honourable
Robert McClelland AO**
DEPUTY CHIEF JUDGE DIVISION 1



David Pringle
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
AND PRINCIPAL REGISTRAR:
DIVISION 1 & DIVISION 2

Program 3.1: Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 2)



**The Honourable
William Alstergren AO**
CHIEF JUDGE DIVISION 2



**The Honourable
Robert McClelland AO**
DEPUTY CHIEF JUDGE DIVISION 2



**The Honourable
Patrizia Mercuri**
DEPUTY CHIEF JUDGE DIVISION 2
(GENERAL AND FAIR WORK)

The Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 2) was established as the Federal Magistrates Service 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*, the Court was renamed and continued in existence as the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 2).

The Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (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 Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (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 Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (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* 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 certain major regional centres in all of the areas in which the court has jurisdiction. The Court also 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 through its regular circuit court program, in addition to utilising technology to facilitate 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 Chief Executive Officer and Principal Registrar, who is appointed by the Governor-General on the nomination of the Chief Justice.



Program 4.1: Commonwealth Courts Corporate Services

The *Courts Administration Legislation Amendment Act 2016* (Cth) established the Commonwealth Courts Corporate Services program from 1 July 2016.

Corporate Services includes finance, human resources, 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 heads of jurisdiction and the CEO and Principal Registrar of the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 1) and the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 2) 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 generate efficiencies by consolidating certain resources and infrastructure, streamlining processes and reducing duplication.



Program 4.2: Commonwealth Courts Registry Services



Sia Lagos

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
AND PRINCIPAL REGISTRAR:
COMMONWEALTH COURTS
CORPORATE SERVICES &
REGISTRY SERVICES



Marnie Williams

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR STRATEGY
AND CORPORATE SERVICES:
COMMONWEALTH COURTS
CORPORATE SERVICES &
REGISTRY SERVICES

The registry services functions for the Federal Court and the Federal Circuit and Family Court were 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 provides an opportunity to shape the delivery of administrative services and stakeholder support across the Entity 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.

A national approach, where appropriate, helps to ensure the quality and productivity of registry services. It also builds consistency in registry practices across locations, while having regard to any specific needs of individual areas or demographics, in order to support the work of the judges and registrars, and needs of litigants.

In the 2023–24 financial year, the provision of translation and interpreter services will be the subject of a market tender, and planned replacement and upgrades of key business applications will improve service delivery outcomes for court users.

Purpose

Federal Court of Australia Entity

Purpose: The provision of corporate services in support of the operations of the Federal Court, the Federal Circuit and Family Court (Division 1), the Federal Circuit and Family Court (Division 2) and the National Native Title Tribunal.

Program 1.1 Federal Court of Australia

Purpose: To decide disputes according to the law as quickly, inexpensively and efficiently as possible.

Program 1.1 National Native Title Tribunal

Purpose: To perform the functions conferred upon it by the *Native Title Act 1993* in accordance with the directions contained in section 109, ethically, efficiently, economically and courteously, thus advancing the purposes underlying the Native Title Act, particularly reconciliation amongst all Australians.

Program 2.1 Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 1)

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.

Program 3.1 Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 2)

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.

Program 4.1 Commonwealth Courts Corporate Services

Purpose: To provide efficient and effective corporate services to the Commonwealth Courts and Tribunals.

Program 4.2 Commonwealth Courts Registry Services

Purpose: To provide efficient and effective registry services to the Commonwealth Courts and Tribunals.

Operating context

This section describes the operating context of the Federal Court of Australia Entity and discusses its environment, cooperative relationships, key capabilities, and risk oversight and management strategies over the period 2023–24 to 2026–27.

Environment

The Courts and the National Native Title Tribunal undertake regular reviews of their operating environments, challenges and risks to determine performance goals and operational plans each year. 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 each court and the Tribunal, but their workloads and operating environment. As a result, the Courts and the National Native Title Tribunal need agile and flexible resources and systems to ensure we can respond to change in the fastest and most cost-effective way.

The application of current and previous efficiency dividends against the Courts' property operating funding has continued to affect the Entity's budgets. The Courts will continue to discuss the current property funding shortfalls with Government to ensure there are adequate resources for the effective administration of justice.

Existing Government policy and legislative factors that could impact our environment over the period of this plan include:

- The funding received in relation to the expansion of PPP500 follows a highly successful pilot that commenced in March 2020, and a positive independent review of the pilot by the Australian Institute of Family Studies (AIFS). The AIFS evaluation concluded that the PPP500 pilot was an efficient way of assisting parties with modest property pools to resolve post-separation financial matters. It found that the social return on investment was, for every \$1 invested in PPP500, \$3.88 of social value was generated for the PPP500 pilot stakeholders. Most of the social value was generated for parties (95 per cent). The expansion aligns with the Courts' focus on protecting vulnerable parties, particularly in the context of family violence, noting that coercive control is often a defining feature of property disputes within the Courts. The Courts intend to roll out the program nationally in the latter half of 2023, with a number of related operational and infrastructure changes required in support.
- In November 2021, the *National Strategic Framework for Information Sharing between the Family Law and Family Violence and Child Protections Systems* was endorsed by the meeting of Attorneys-General. The Framework aims to promote the safety and wellbeing of adults and children affected by family violence and child abuse, and support informed and appropriate decision making in circumstances where there is, or may be, a risk of family violence or child abuse. The Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 1) and the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 2) continue to collaborate on the implementation and delivery of the Framework to enhance information sharing and collaboration between the federal family law and state and territory child protection and family violence systems.
- Under the Federal Budget approved in October 2022, the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 1) and the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 2) received funding to expand the risk identification process known as Lighthouse to 15 registries nationally. This expansion occurred on 28 November 2022, with Lighthouse now operating in various locations nationally. This followed a successful pilot and positive evaluation of the Lighthouse pilot, which commenced in 2020 in the Adelaide, Brisbane and Parramatta registries. Lighthouse utilises a custom-built web application to screen for levels of risk, to assist the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 1) and the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 2) with early identification of family safety risks and management of those risks accordingly. Lighthouse aligns with the Courts' focus on protecting vulnerable children and parties, particularly in the context of family violence, and delivering positive public safety and health outcomes. The Courts continue to focus on the refinement of Lighthouse to account for the change in eligibility and case volume since expansion, which includes ongoing improvements to IT infrastructure, revision of policies and procedures, ongoing recruitment and continued stakeholder engagement.

Government Policy and legislative change >

- The Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 1) and the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 2) also received funding for additional Indigenous Family Liaison Officers to provide cultural support and assist with court proceedings including Lighthouse expansion, noting the prevalence of family violence and other risks in Indigenous communities. The presence of additional Indigenous Family Liaison Officers will also assist with providing greater support to regional and rural areas and engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, court users and stakeholders.
- In the October 2022 budget, the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 2) received additional resources over the forward estimates, including the provision of an additional judge, registrars and support staff, to enable access to the informal and cheaper small claims process, following these legislative changes.
- On 30 November 2022, the *National Anti-Corruption Commission Act 2022* (Cth) and *National Anti-Corruption Commission (Consequential and Transitional Provisions) Act 2022* (Cth) were passed and commenced on 1 July 2023. The Acts established the National Anti-Corruption Commission, an independent agency that prevents, detects, investigates and reports on serious or systemic corruption in the Commonwealth public sector. It also educates the public service and the public about corruption risks and prevention. The staff of the Courts and Tribunal are subject to the National Anti-Corruption Commission. Judges and Registrars in the exercise of their delegated judicial functions are not subject to the National Anti-Corruption Commission.
- The *Fair Work Legislation Amendment (Secure Jobs, Better Pay) Act 2022*, which was assented to on 6 December 2022, introduced amendments to the small claims procedure (commenced on 1 July 2023). These amendments impact the small claims jurisdiction of the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 2), in which claims for unpaid entitlements of less than \$20,000, known as 'small claims proceedings' are dealt with by registrars and Judges of the Court in specialist, dedicated lists pursuant to the *Fair Work Act 2009*. Relevantly, these legislative amendments provide for an increase on the cap on the amount that can be awarded through small claims court proceedings from \$20,000 to \$100,000; and confirmation of the Courts' ability to award filing fees as costs to successful small claims applicants.
- The Australian Government announced on 16 December 2022 that it will abolish the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT) and replace it with a new federal administrative review body. The Government announced plans to appoint at least 75 additional members to the AAT to address an existing backlog of cases. These reforms may result in a significant volume of matters flowing through to the Courts, if there is an accelerated disposition of the AAT's caseload, noting that the majority of the Federal Circuit and Family Court (Division 2) migration caseload is comprised of appeals from the AAT. The Courts will liaise with Government with respect to these changes and any additional resources that may be required to manage any influx of cases.
- On 30 January 2023, the Attorney-General released an exposure draft and consultation paper on proposed amendments to the *Family Law Act 1975* (Cth). The exposure draft proposes a first tranche of legislative reform addressing the Australian Law Reform Commission's Final Report No. 135: *Family Law for the Future – An Inquiry into the Family Law System* and seeks to implement elements of the Government Response to the Joint Select Committee on Australia's Family Law System. On 29 March 2023, the Family Law Amendment Bill 2023 was introduced and read for a first time in the House of Representatives. A third and final reading occurred and was agreed to on 11 May 2023, before the Bill was referred to the Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Legislation Committee with a report due 24 August 2023. The implementation of the legislation would require a number of IT, operational and infrastructure changes to be made. The legislation may also require changes to case management processes depending on the extent of the legal reforms enacted.

Government Policy and legislative change >

- On 29 March 2023, the Family Law Amendment (Information Sharing) Bill 2023 was introduced and read for a first time in the House of Representatives. A third and final reading occurred and was agreed to on 11 May 2023, before the Bill was referred to the Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Legislation Committee with a report due 14 June 2023. The proposed legislation would see an enhanced information scheme as envisaged by the National Framework, and will require ongoing engagement with states and territories to facilitate implementation. A number of IT, operational and infrastructure changes would also need to be made in support of the legislation. Information sharing is critical in assisting the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 1) and the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 2) to prioritise safety and this initiative will aid the Courts in ensuring ready access to highly relevant information in family law proceedings.
- In May 2023, the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 1) and the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 2) received funding as part of the 2023–24 Federal Budget in support of two key initiatives:
 - the national expansion of the highly successful pilot dealing with financial disputes between parties with an asset pool of under \$500,000 (known as Priority Property Pools under \$500,000 or PPP500), and
 - 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.
- The staffing of the Courts and Tribunal will be impacted by changes to workplace relations, including those introduced under the *Fair Work Legislation Amendment (Secure Jobs, Better Pay) Act 2022*, the *Public Sector Workplace Relations Policy 2023* which sets out the Government's workplace relations policy as it applies to APS agencies and their employees, and through a whole of government approach to Enterprise Agreements.
- The funding in relation to Hague child abduction matters commences on 1 January 2024 and will allow 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 the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction.

Technological improvement

The Courts and the National Native Title Tribunal continue to improve digital capabilities to increase efficiency and streamline services.

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 National Native Title Tribunal. Modernisation of family law digital court files was completed in 2022–23 and this software forms the basis for ongoing efficiency and reliability improvements to general federal law electronic court files and case management underway in 2023–24.

Hearings, mediation and dispute resolution are now often conducted remotely via Microsoft 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, with the remaining courtrooms scheduled in 2023–24.

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 openly and transparently view proceedings 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, in particular by the media, for high profile matters.

Rapid technological changes implemented during and after the COVID-19 pandemic provide

greater access to justice to litigants in regional and rural Australia, improved safety for vulnerable litigants and more efficiently and effectively utilise judicial and registrar resources on a national basis.

The Courts and the National Native Title Tribunal are well advanced in the digital space, however further work will be conducted over the life of this plan to embrace and expand these new technologies.

This includes:

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

In 2022 and 2023, the Federal Court of Australia, the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 1) and the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 2) have continued to utilise both in-person and electronic hearings depending on what best serves the interests of justice. While the majority of final hearings are being conducted in-person, electronic hearings and electronic dispute resolution events continue to be utilised often for front end case management, dispute resolution and otherwise where it is efficient, where it provides increased access to justice, such as for litigants in regional and remote 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 systems to account for the increased case numbers, an additional 12 registries and case eligibility criteria (parenting only, and parenting and financial). The next phase of this work involves the redevelopment of Family DOORS Triage Application, implementation of a revised parent risk screen and new non-parent risk screen as well as improvements to the Lighthouse Application following the expansion.

Social and economic change

The social and economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic will have a lasting effect on the Courts, the National Native Title Tribunal, the profession, litigants and other stakeholders. 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/electronic court environment. While technology provides a lower cost option to meet expectations, defining stakeholder needs and developing tailored responses creates significant workload.

For the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 2) where circuit work is conducted, and the National Native Title Tribunal, this also includes maintaining a balance between leveraging the benefits of technology to improve access, but also ensuring it meets the needs of clients in remote areas where access to technology can be not only cost prohibitive, but inaccessible in some areas. The backlogs created by the COVID-19 pandemic in the state courts have created some access issues for the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 2) in utilising state court facilities to conduct circuits. However, the technological achievements and the work of the Courts and the National Native Title Tribunal throughout the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated that widely available, user-friendly technology can facilitate access to justice in remote and regional locations.

While the Courts have returned to more face-to-face operations, electronic hearings and court

events remain central in the front-end case management of family law matters, with registrars conducting a majority of case management hearings and dispute resolution events electronically. The result of these changes is a hybrid in-person/electronic court environment, which has required flexibility and adjustment both from the Courts and from court users and stakeholders. These changes are the subject of ongoing refinement and will remain a focus for the Courts across the four years of this plan.

The work of the Courts has also been impacted generally by economic and social change. For example, judicial workloads in the Federal Court have increased as a result of rises in the number of unrepresented litigants and the rise in number of class actions. In addition, the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 2) has continued to receive a significant volume of migration filings that is placing a strain on that court. This trend is expected to continue over the four years of this plan. The Courts are also monitoring the impacts of the changes to the system of judicial review and the appointment of additional AAT members on the migration caseload.

Community awareness and a focus on matters involving family violence and allegations of child abuse remains high, with resulting impacts on the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 1) and the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 2). The Courts are focused on safely and appropriately identifying and managing matters

involving allegations of child abuse and family violence through a number of key initiatives, including Lighthouse and the continued use of the *Notice of Child Abuse, Family Violence or Risk*. Where parties identify risk in filed material, the harmonised *Notice of Child Abuse, Family Violence or Risk* has given the Courts greater insight into the prevalence of a wide range of risk factors in family law proceedings, including family violence, child abuse, alcohol or substance abuse, mental ill-health, abduction and threats of harm.

The Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 1) and the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 2) will continue to focus on supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families, and the Indigenous Family Liaison Officers will play a pivotal role in this by ensuring the Courts' responsiveness to the risk profile of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander court users.

The three Courts and the National Native Title Tribunal are in the process of developing updated Reconciliation Action Plans, a key focus of which is the recruitment and retention of First Nations staff. This work will be done in conjunction with Reconciliation Australia.

The native title system continues to mature, with the National Native Title Tribunal impacted by the ongoing increase in the determination of native title claims. This has placed greater emphasis on the challenges facing Prescribed Bodies Corporate and how native title

holders can leverage economic development from the recognition of their native title rights and interests. Since the introduction of the new post-determination assistance function under section 60AAA of the *Native Title Act 1993* following legislative amendments in 2021, the National Native Title Tribunal has received numerous requests for assistance from common law holders and Prescribed Bodies Corporate in relation to native title and related disputes. This work requires a high degree of cultural competence and appropriate resourcing to meet the needs and expectations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.

Since the High Court's decision in *Northern Territory v Mr A. Griffiths (deceased) and Lorraine Jones on behalf of the Ngaliwurru and Nungali Peoples* [2019] HCA 7 (Timber Creek Compensation Claim), there has been an increase in the filing of compensation applications, with 19 applications being filed since the High Court's decision was handed down. Of the 19 compensation applications filed, one application has been determined, five have been discontinued, two have been struck out, and another two have been dismissed. The remaining compensation applications are progressing in the Federal Court. The filing of the compensation applications has translated into increased workloads for the National Native Title Tribunal in terms of geospatial mapping and notification of these applications.

Capability

To ensure each court and the National Native Title Tribunal can achieve their stated purpose, the corporate Entity will build and maintain capability over the four years of this plan by focussing on four key themes: Legislative, Administrative, Information and Communications Technology and People.

Legislative

- Continue to maintain and build capabilities and efficiencies to ensure the Courts and the Tribunal meet the demands for a range of increased jurisdictional requirements.
- Continue to implement the National Native Title Tribunal's function in respect of post-determination assistance to common law holders and their corporations.
- Support the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 1) and Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 2) to continue to implement and improve the family law case management pathway.
- Support the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 1) and Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 2) to continue to build a national structure for family law Registrars and Court Child Experts, including support structures.

Administrative

- Restructure service delivery to streamline and maximise services provided to our clients.
- Maximise efficiency in managing national enquiries.
- Deliver services via a range of locations throughout Australia, including regional and remote.
- Aspire to be innovative and commit to a culture of continuous improvement and organisational reform.
- Implement and maintain strong governance arrangements to ensure we are accountable, open, collaborative and responsive.
- Achieve financial sustainability by realising further savings in an effort to achieve a balanced budget.
- Invest in leadership and management to ensure our leaders are responsible, visible, respected and trusted.

Information and Communications Technology

- Improve service delivery through digital platforms and increased efficiency.
- Increase our Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) capability and align our ICT strategies to whole-of-government initiatives.
- 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 client needs.

People

- Invest in our people to deliver the best outcomes and support a strong and respectful organisational culture.
- Develop and maintain a robust and dynamic workforce-planning model.
- Maintain support for ongoing learning and performance development.
- Build a diverse and inclusive workplace.
- Form positive and influential relationships with our stakeholders to support better outcomes for the Australian people.
- Negotiate and implement a new Enterprise Bargaining agreement.

Risk oversight and management

Risk management in the Federal Court Entity identifies and addresses the uncertainty in achieving our purposes. The outcome of good 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 provide 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.

Our risk framework is designed to:

- ensure risk management supports our purposes
- **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** both Entity-wide strategic risks and program or project-specific risks
- **promote** sharing of risk information and experiences within the Entity and across the Australian Government Community of Practices to develop more consistent approaches to managing risk, and
- **align** with the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* 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)*, has been recently reviewed by Internal Audit which confirmed the framework and plan are fit for purpose.

Risk management priorities:

- > **Strategic risks**
risks that affect performance against identified strategic objectives.
- > **Financial risks**
risks that affect the financial outcomes of the Entity or have detrimental financial impact.
- > **Risks to reputation**
risks that affect the reputation of the Entity and its ability to perform, or which may impair the community's trust with the Courts and the judicial system.
- > **Operational risks**
risks that affect the management of and accountability for performance, including the Entity's service delivery obligations, regulatory framework and business relationships.
- > **Legal and compliance risks**
risks arising from statutory and other compliance and reporting obligations as well as current or pending litigation to which the Entity is a party.
- > **People risks**
risks that affect staff ethical behaviour, the integrity of decisions, processes and information, or affect the work, health and safety of personnel.
- > **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 Entity's ability to deliver services.

Oversight

The functions of the Audit and Risk Committee are to:

- provide independent assurance of the effectiveness of the Entity's Risk Management Framework
- review compliance with the Entity's Risk Management Policy and monitor and understand the potential impact of emerging risks on the Entity's ability to achieve its objectives
- monitor the implementation of the 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 Entity has well-designed business continuity and disaster recovery arrangements in place and are tested periodically.

The Enterprise Risk Management Committee is accountable to and supports the Accountable Authority by making recommendations concerning the development, implementation and operation of:

- the 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 Enterprise Risk Management Committee also has responsibility for monitoring the effectiveness of controls where the Entity's risk appetite has been exceeded. This will generally be where residual risk is assessed as High or Extreme, and determine which risks which are highlighted in the Enterprise Wide Risk Register.

The Audit and Risk Committee is established in accordance with section 45 of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (Cth) and provides specific functions to assist the Accountable Authority in meeting their obligations.

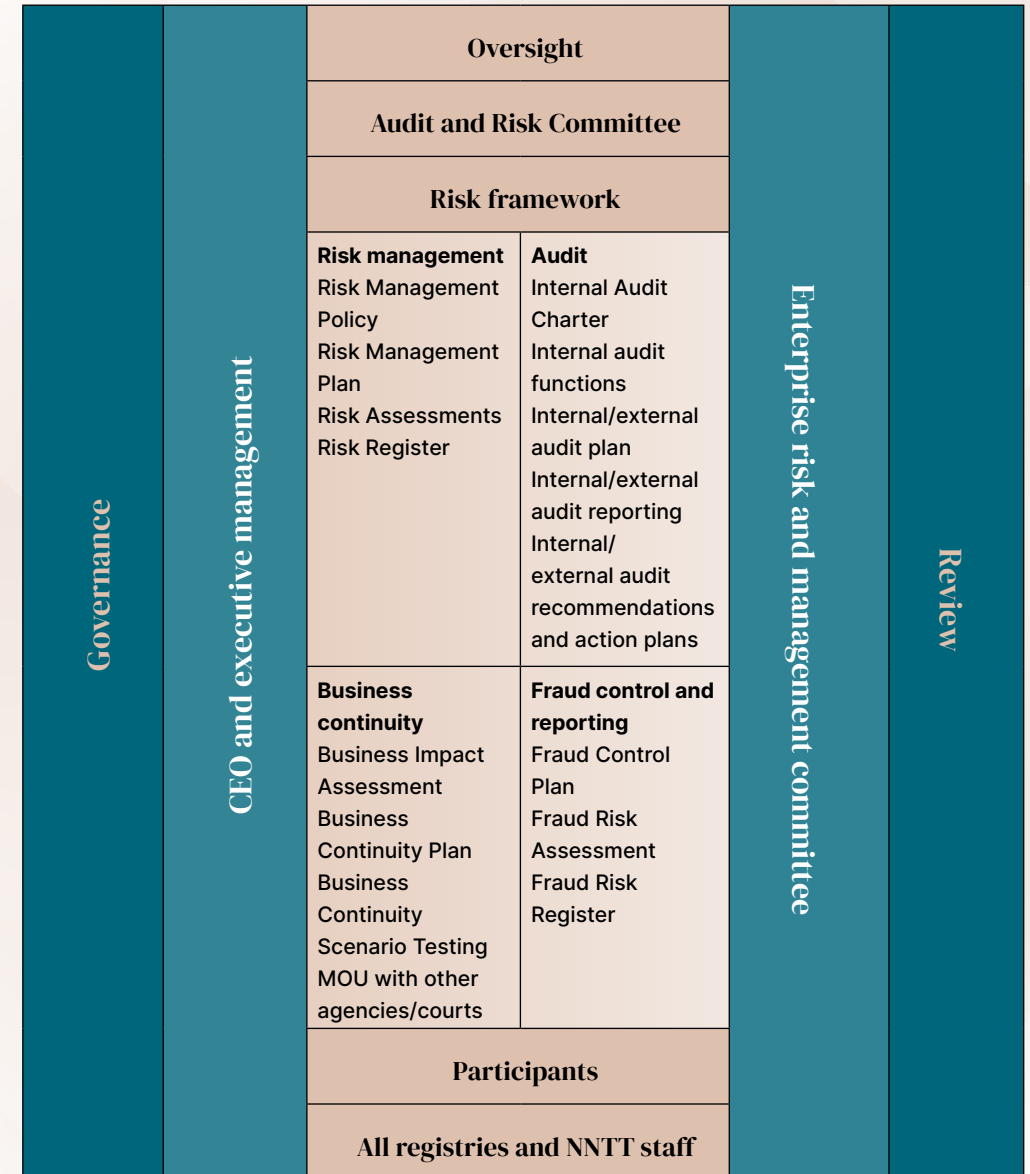


Figure 2: Federal Court Entity risk management structure

Table 1 provides some examples of the risks faced by the Courts and the National Native Title Tribunal.

RISKS	AREA OF RISK	RISK DESCRIPTION	MITIGATION STRATEGY
Strategic (Technology)	Information protection	Failure to identify, categorise, classify and protect data assets across the entity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consult with key stakeholders, internally and externally, to better understand the available data assets and current control measures, and how the stakeholder needs are best met. Develop a plan to improve data controls resulting in improved security of data and minimise cyber risks related to data exposure. Build capacity and capability to deploy data loss prevention tools. Modernising electronic court files and the Courts' Casetrack case management system on a single core platform across the Courts and Tribunals.
Financial	Funding/ financial resources	Insufficient financial resources to support the essential requirements of the Courts and the National Native Title Tribunal to deliver services to the customers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Robust budgeting and disciplined financial management practices. Communication/consultation with key stakeholders, particularly the Minister, Attorney-General's Department, Department of Finance and key government agencies. Continued refinement of e-services to drive work practice efficiencies and better, quicker and less expensive services to customers.
Operational	Case management	Increased workload, in addition to the backlog of cases, increases case load management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A strategic review of the increased workload in new case management, and managing the backlog, has allowed the Federal Court to identify and develop national practice areas and refined case management strategies. More effective, efficient and consistent management of different caseloads within the current and changing legislative environment.
Operational (Security)	Travel security	Failure to have in place robust travel related security practices and processes to minimise any loss of information or assets.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased staff awareness and training of safety and security protocols during travel interstate or international.
People	Workplace Health and Safety	Failure to implement effective controls, Work Health and Safety incidents and near misses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The continuous successful use of risk assessments and incident reporting (including near misses). Timely and appropriate incident investigation and intervention to reduce frequency of incidents and positively manage WorkCover insurance premiums.

Table 1: Risks faced by the Courts and the National Native Title Tribunal

Cooperation

Our relationships are essential to help us achieve our purpose and deliver on key activities and performance measures. Successful engagement and collaboration helps to contribute to more effective connection of services, better cooperation and sharing of information and improved service delivery.

Each Court and the National Native Title Tribunal works with a broad range of stakeholders, including the legal profession, government agencies, other courts, non-Government organisations, 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 Tribunal users.

As independent courts and a tribunal, we each have different stakeholders and partnerships that underpin the broader Entity structure. 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 National Native Title Tribunal, relationships are managed by the President and Native Title Registrar.

Over the four years of this plan, the Courts and the National Native Title Tribunal will focus on sustaining engagement and cooperation by continuing to build on existing highly successful partnerships and working collaboratively to build new ones.

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. Seminars and workshops on issues of practice and procedure are also regularly held. Registries also host advocacy sessions, bar moot courts and moot competitions and assist with 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 Courts are also active supporters of legal education programs, both in Australia and overseas. The Courts also regularly engage with the Law Council of Australia, the Australian Bar Association, and the various state and territory bar associations and law societies.

The Courts continue to coordinate a number of projects and activities to support governance, access to justice and the rule of law within neighbouring judiciaries. By collaborating with other courts, predominantly across the Australasian and Asia Pacific region, the Courts are able to contribute to a number of our partners' important reform and

development priorities. Detailed information on this is published in the Courts' annual reports.

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 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 Tribunal's security. The Sheriff and Marshal also maintain close and cooperative relationships with the Sheriffs of the states and territories, in particular to facilitate service and execute civil property, search and seize orders.

The National Native Title Tribunal continues to work with stakeholders, particularly representative bodies, governments at all levels, peak bodies and Prescribed Bodies Corporate. The President, Members and Native Title Registrar have established a fresh engagement agenda to implement its new function (post-determination assistance),

as well as continued targeted engagement to ensure the most effective use of resources. The National Native Title Tribunal conducts information sessions around the country to assist stakeholders in understanding their legal obligations and the need for compliance with the future act provisions of the Native Title Act. The National Native Title Tribunal also actively fosters its invigorated working relationship with the Federal Court. A protocol facilitates the performance of Court and Tribunal native title roles and builds upon this close existing relationship.

The Federal Court of Australia, the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 1) and the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 2) have numerous external stakeholders, including state and territory Bar Associations and Law Societies, the Australian Bar Association, the Law Council of Australia and the Family Law Section of the Law Council of Australia. Close engagement and ongoing collaboration also occurs with Legal Aid organisations, women's legal groups, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services, migrant and refugee services, community legal services, child welfare agencies, the Australian Federal Police, state and territory police, overseas jurisdictions, Relationships Australia, Family Relationship Centres, alternative dispute resolution providers and judicial education and research organisations.

There are several established channels through which external stakeholders may inform the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 1) and the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 2) of issues and provide feedback, including the following:

- The Australian Institute of Family Studies was established under section 114B of the *Family Law Act 1975* (Cth) and is a forum for the exchange of information and research.
- The Chief Justice and Senior Officials meet regularly with key representatives of national and state bar associations and law societies and women's legal groups. In addition, the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 2) has established relationships with bar associations, law societies and key stakeholders in regards to migration and other general federal law matters.

The Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 1) and the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 2) have a number of strategies for strengthening partnerships with stakeholders, including legal practitioners, non-government organisations, and government agencies and departments.

Judges and Registrars regularly present to law societies and bar



➤ associations in their respective jurisdictions, as well as holding informal meetings with members of the legal profession and participating in stakeholder meetings.

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.

Subsequent to the Courts' engagement of Indigenous Family Liaison Officers, the Courts 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 Courts will 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.

The following diagram is a high-level depiction of the interconnection of relationships and stakeholders of the Courts and National Native Title Tribunal across the Entity.

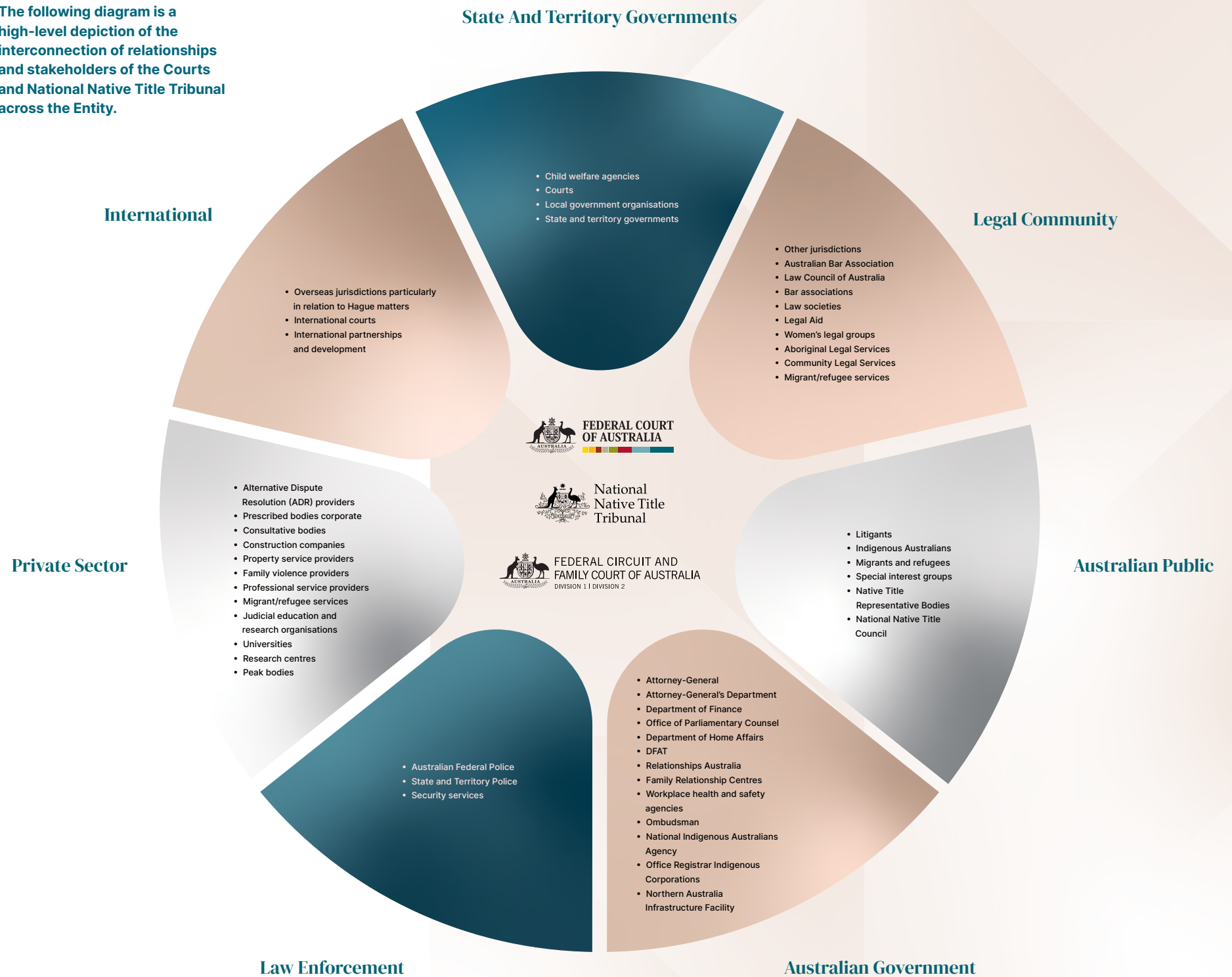


Figure 3: Federal Court of Australia Entity stakeholders

Performance

This section sets out the intended actions and high-level key activities of each court and the National Native Title Tribunal, consistent with each of their purposes, over the four years of this plan.

Federal Court of Australia



Our purpose

To decide disputes according to law as quickly, inexpensively and efficiently as possible.

Our 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.

Our guiding principles

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

Our key activities

For 2023–24 (and the outlook period through to 2027), the Federal Court of Australia will progress the following key activities:

Key activities	TARGET COMPLETION			
	2023–24	2024–25	2025–26	2026–27
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 areas (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: Federal Court of Australia key activities, 2023–24 to 2026–27



Federal Court of Australia

2023–24 significant initiatives

- Modernise the Electronic Court File, incorporating case management, workload management and dashboards within a single platform.
- Develop tailored resources and educational materials via different channels to assist court users.
- Develop and deliver seminars, lectures and training to improve access to justice, education on new services and other topics of relevance.
- Develop new functional accommodation design principles to facilitate the use of new digital hearing technologies.
- Establish a media committee to improve communication and consultation with the media on matters that affect their ability to provide fair and accurate reporting of proceedings in the Federal Court.

How we will measure our performance

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 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 the National 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. The Annual Performance Statement, published in the Court's annual report, will report on the success of the plan to achieve timely completion of cases.

Performance measure		PLANNED PERFORMANCE RESULT			
		2023–24	2024–25	2025–26	2026–27
Timely completion of cases	Goal 1	85% of cases to be completed within 18 months of commencement.	85% of cases to be completed within 18 months of commencement.	85% of cases to be completed within 18 months of commencement.	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 the Electronic Court File and/or Casetrack.				
	Goal 2	Judgments to be delivered within three months.	Judgments to be delivered within three months.	Judgments to be delivered within three months.	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 the Electronic Court File and/or Casetrack.					

Table 3: Federal Court of Australia performance measures, 2023–24 to 2026–27

Measures of success

- Increased mediation and case management support work for judges.
- Registrar resources utilised more effectively on a national basis to address workload demands.
- Additional equipment and optimised hybrid model of remote and in-person hearings.
- Expanded use of video conferencing and internet streaming to reduce barriers to access hearings for parties, witnesses, journalists and members of the public.
- Improved multi-function 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.
- Developed practices and procedures for NPAs.
- Continued ongoing support for judges through judicial education.

National Native Title Tribunal

Our purpose

The National Native Title Tribunal is an independent body established by the *Native Title Act 1993*. The purpose of the National Native Title Tribunal is to perform the functions conferred upon it by the Act in accordance with the directions contained in section 109, ethically, efficiently, economically and courteously, thus advancing the purposes underlying the Act, particularly reconciliation amongst all Australians.

Our guiding principles

- Facilitate recognition of native title rights and interests pursuant to the *Native Title Act 1993* and reconciliation.
- Improve the accessibility and quality of our information to increase understanding of native title and the native title system.
- Enhance the delivery of our services, particularly by Indigenous workforce recruitment.
- Continue to provide services that reflect an understanding of the current and evolving needs of our stakeholders.

Our key activities

For 2023–24 (and the outlook period through to 2027), the National Native Title Tribunal will progress the following key activities:

Key activities	TARGET COMPLETION			
	2023–24	2024–25	2025–26	2026–27
Deliver the 2020–21 Reconciliation Action Plan in partnership with the Federal Court Entity. This is an inaugural Plan (Reflect RAP) and marks the beginning of future work over 2022–25 to progress the RAP into further stages of maturity. The Plan for the next stage, the Innovate RAP, is currently being developed.	•	•	•	
Complete the Indigenous employment strategy in conjunction with the Federal Court and apply strategy to all recruitment activities.	•	•	•	•
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.	•	•	•	•
Expand Tribunal online resources by continuing to assess our 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 partnerships with key stakeholders to deliver education and specialised training.	•	•	•	•

Table 4: National Native Title Tribunal key activities, 2023–24 to 2026–27

2023–24 significant initiatives

- Modernise the National Native Title Tribunal systems by upgrading to a new, stable and secure Microsoft Dynamics customer relationships management platform.
- Continue to expand upon the work of the post-determination assistance team, following internal review of the implementation and performance of the section 60AAA function.
- Assist with the review of the *Native Title (Federal Court) Regulations 1998*, *Native Title (Tribunal) Regulations 1993*, *Native Title (Indigenous Land Use Agreements) Regulations 1999* and *Native Title (Notices) Determination 2011 (No.1)*. Each native title instrument will sunset on 1 October 2023.

How we will measure our performance

The National Native Title Tribunal strives to be an externally focussed organisation, responsive to stakeholder needs, and conscious of the role conferred upon it by Parliament. The National Native Title Tribunal will look to stakeholders for their assessments of its performance. It will also publish relevant statistics in the Report of the National Native Title Tribunal, which is included in the Federal Court of Australia's Annual Report.

Measures of success

- Enhanced accessibility to National Native Title Tribunal information and resources with increasing online delivery.
- Maintenance of a user-friendly tool that supports the visualisation of native title by the general public.
- High quality geospatial services compliant with industry standards.
- Effective working relationships with stakeholders.
- Increased knowledge in stakeholders and the wider community about the role and functions of the National Native Title Tribunal.
- Indigenous workforce development opportunities identified and championed.
- National Native Title Tribunal staff equipped and motivated to achieve high-quality results.
- A flexible workforce aligned to work needs and demands.

Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 1)

Our 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.

Our 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.

Our outcome

Apply and uphold the rule of law for litigants in the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (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.

Our key activities

For 2023–24 (and the outlook period through to 2027), the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 1) will progress the following key activities:

Key activities	TARGET COMPLETION			
	2023–24	2024–25	2025–26	2026–27
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.	•	•	•	#
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 role of Indigenous Liaison Officers and the development of tailored case management processes, including certain specialist Indigenous Lists.	•	•	•	•

Table 5: Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 1) key activities, 2023–24 to 2026–27

Funding is only currently confirmed until 30 June 2026, and the Courts will liaise with Government about the future funding for this measure.

2023–24 significant initiatives

- 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.
- 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 certain specialist Indigenous Lists.
- 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.

Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 1)



How we will measure our performance

The key outcome measures for the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 1) are contained in Outcome Two of the Portfolio Budget Statements.

The Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (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 measure		PLANNED PERFORMANCE RESULT			
		2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
Timely completion of cases	Goal 1	80-90% of final order applications resolved within 12 months.	80-90% of final order applications resolved within 12 months.	80-90% of final order applications resolved within 12 months.	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.			
	Goal 2	75% of all judgments delivered within three months.	75% of all judgments delivered within three months.	75% of all judgments delivered within three months.	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.
- Positive outcomes for children and families through increased information sharing and engagement with relevant stakeholders and other jurisdictions.
- Improved protection of vulnerable 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.

Table 6: Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 1) performance measures, 2023-24 to 2026-27

Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 2)

Our 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.

Our outcome

Apply and uphold the rule of law for litigants in the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (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.

Our 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.

Our key activities

For 2023–24 (and the outlook period through to 2027), the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 2) will progress the following key activities:

Key activities	TARGET COMPLETION			
	2023–24	2024–25	2025–26	2026–27
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.	•	•	•	#
Continue to implement the Priority Property Pool (PPP500) 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 role of Indigenous Liaison Officers and the development of tailored case management processes, including specialist Indigenous Lists.	•	•	•	•
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 so as 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.	•	•	•	•

Table 7: Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 2) key activities, 2023–24 to 2026–27

Funding is only currently confirmed until 30 June 2026, and the Courts will liaise with Government about the future funding for this measure.

2023–24 significant initiatives

- 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.
- Expansion of the PPP500 to additional registries nationally, with an expanded criteria, 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.
- 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.
- Continued expansion of the information sharing and co-location initiatives in family law.
- 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.

Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 2)



How we will measure our performance

The key outcome measures for the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 2) are contained in Outcome Three of the Portfolio Budget Statements.

The Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (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 measure		PLANNED PERFORMANCE RESULT			
		2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
Timely completion of cases	Goal 1	80-90% of final order family law applications resolved within 12 months.	80-90% of final order family law applications resolved within 12 months.	80-90% of final order family law applications resolved within 12 months.	80-90% of final order family law 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.			
	Goal 2	90% of general federal law applications (excluding migration) resolved within 12 months.	90% of general federal law applications (excluding migration) resolved within 12 months.	90% of general federal law applications (excluding migration) resolved within 12 months.	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.			
	Goal 3	75% of all judgments delivered within three months.	75% of all judgments delivered within three months.	75% of all judgments delivered within three months.	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 3 months, out of all judgments delivered during the financial year.			

The Court's Annual Performance Statement, published in the Federal Court Annual report, will report on the success of the plan to achieve timely completion of cases.

Table 8: Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 2) performance measures, 2023-24 to 2026-27

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 vulnerable 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.



Commonwealth Courts Corporate Services

Our 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.

Our 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.

Our outcome

Improved administration and support of the resolution of matters according to law for litigants in 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 parties in the National Native Title Tribunal through efficient and effective provision of shared corporate and registry services.

Our key activities

For 2023–24 (and the outlook period through to 2027), Corporate Services will progress the following key activities:

Key activities	TARGET COMPLETION			
	2023–24	2024–25	2025–26	2026–27
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.	•	•	•	•

Table 9: Commonwealth Courts Corporate Services key activities, 2023–24 to 2026–27

2023–24 significant initiatives

- Implement the Future Security Service Project, including going to market for a range of security services including the guarding service.
- Redesign of Court and Tribunal networks to better support hybrid working needs.
- Enhance cybersecurity protection including Essential 8, data protection and identity and access management.
- Modernise underlying technology platforms to optimise security, cost and sustainable maintenance.
- Negotiate and implement a new enterprise bargaining agreement.

How we will measure our performance

The key outcome measure is contained in Outcome Four (program 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 Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 1) and Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 2), and parties in the National 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. The Court's Annual Performance Statement will report on the success of the plan to achieve efficient and effective corporate services.





Commonwealth Courts Corporate Services

Performance measure	PLANNED PERFORMANCE RESULT				
	2023–24	2024–25	2025–26	2026–27	
Optimise technology to support judicial, registry and corporate services functions	Goal 1	Proposed future state capability and technology supports the demands of both the Court and its users. Successful delivery of the Digital Court Program.	Proposed future state capability and technology supports the demands of both the Court and its users. Successful delivery of the Digital Court Program.	Proposed future state capability and technology supports the demands of both the Court and its users. Successful delivery of the Digital Court Program.	Proposed future state capability and technology supports the demands of both the 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capabilities migrated from legacy systems to updated platform as per program roadmap. Legacy systems no longer in use. Network implementation completed, and reductions in outage and performance issues, particularly for remote working. 			
Implementation of a Cyber Security Program	Goal 2	The Court continues to deliver services in a productive and secure manner in the event of a cyber incident.	The Court continues to deliver services in a productive and secure manner in the event of a cyber incident.	The Court continues to deliver services in a productive and secure manner in the event of a cyber incident.	The Court 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 a resilient Court and Tribunal service.			
		Methodology/source: This target will be measured by reference to the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction in measured vulnerabilities, particularly aged, to within recommendations from ACSC, or compensating controls implemented. Implementation of modernised data protection following a risk-based approach. Judiciary and internal staff using single Identity and Access Management solution for all applications. 			
Efficient and effective corporate services	Goal 3	Corporate Services to be provided within the agreed funding.	Corporate Services to be provided within the agreed funding.	Corporate Services to be provided within the agreed funding.	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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. 			
Gender equality – female representation in the senior executive service (SES) and executive level (EL) classifications	Goal 4	Approximately 50% of SES and approximately 50% of EL staff.	Approximately 50% of SES and approximately 50% of EL staff.	Approximately 50% of SES and approximately 50% of EL staff.	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 Courts and Tribunal provide a diverse and inclusive workplace is key to maintaining employee engagement, as well as ensuring the Courts and Tribunal benefit from employees' varied perspectives. The Courts and Tribunal are 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.			
Indigenous representation – proportion of staff who identify as Indigenous	Goal 5	Indigenous representation of 3% of total staff.	Indigenous representation of 3% of total staff.	Indigenous representation of 3% of total staff.	Indigenous representation of 3% of total staff.
		Rationale: The Courts and Tribunal are 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 Courts and Tribunal occupied by employees who identify as Aboriginal or as Torres Strait Islanders.			

Table 10: Commonwealth Courts Corporate Services performance measures, 2023–24 to 2026–27

Measures of success

- Improved security arrangements in all court premises.
- Improved website information to better support self-represented litigants and other litigants.
- Increased digital capability to support the growth in online hearings and other digital initiatives.
- Revised work practices that align to our workplace continuity plans.



Commonwealth Courts Registry Services

Our 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.

Our guiding principles

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

Our outcome

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

Our key activities

For 2023–24 (and the outlook period through to 2027), Registry Services will progress the following key activities:

Key activities	TARGET COMPLETION			
	2023–24	2024–25	2025–26	2026–27
Establish leadership forums for registry managers and registry team leaders for information sharing and problem solving.	•	•	•	•
Provide enhanced support and training for in-court technology, digital hearings and on line hearings through the Digital Practice team.	•	•	•	•
Implement business process changes to complement the rollout of the Digital Court File.	•	•		
Review the model for the management of general federal law enquiries.	•	•		
Enhance enquiry systems and capability.	•	•	•	•
Design and implement a new service model for integrated registry services.	•			

Table 11: Commonwealth Courts Registry Services key activities, 2023–24 to 2026–27

2023–24

significant initiatives

- Update digital litigation processes for judiciary and staff.
- Rollout standardised remote/hybrid hearing and mediation process to all locations.
- Develop and document a national registry knowledge base.
- Implement a standardised national approach to training delivery.
- Finalise a new national structure for the provision of Court and Tribunal registry services.
- Commence a market tender for the provision of translation and interpreter services.

How we will measure our performance

The key outcome measure is contained in Outcome Four (program 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 Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 1) and Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 2) and parties in the National Native Title Tribunal through efficient and effective provision of shared corporate and registry services. The Court's Annual Performance Statement will report on the success of the plan to achieve correct information, timely processing of documents and efficient registry services.





Commonwealth Courts Registry Services

Performance measure		PLANNED PERFORMANCE RESULT			
		2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
All information and service provided by registry services is high quality, timely and meets the needs of clients	Goal 1	At least a 90% customer enquiry satisfaction rate.	At least a 90% customer enquiry satisfaction rate.	At least a 90% customer enquiry satisfaction rate.	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.			
Timely processing of documents	Goal 2	75% of documents processed within two working days.	75% of documents processed within two working days.	75% of documents processed within two working days.	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.			
Efficient registry services	Goal 3	All registry services provided within the agreed funding levels.	All registry services provided within the agreed funding levels.	All registry services provided within the agreed funding levels.	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 appraisal process.			

Table 12: Commonwealth Courts Registry Services performance measures, 2023-24 to 2026-27

Measures of success

- Effective and efficient use of available resources.
- Quality, timely and consistent information for all court users across all Courts and the National Native Title Tribunal.
- Enhanced access to justice services through digital technologies.
- An environment that focusses on safety for court users experiencing family violence.
- Improved registry leadership and service delivery capability.
- Realise the benefits of the Digital Court File.
- Maximised benefits of a new national service model for Commonwealth registry services implemented.
- Maximised efficiency in managing national enquiries.
- Improved in-court technical support.
- Implementation and delivery of digital litigation support 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.

The table details the requirements met by the Federal Court of Australia Entity Corporate Plan and the page reference(s) for each requirement.

Requirement	Page(s)
INTRODUCTION	4
STATEMENT OF PREPARATION The reporting period for which the plan is prepared. The reporting periods covered by the plan.	3
PURPOSE	12
KEY ACTIVITIES	36-55
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Risk oversight and management, including key risks and its management	26-31
Cooperation	32-35
Subsidiaries (where applicable)	N/A
PERFORMANCE	36
Performance measures	38-57
Targets for each performance measures (if reasonably practicable to set a target)	37-57

Table 13: Federal Court of Australia 2023–24 Corporate Plan, List of Requirements

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CORPORATE PLAN

FEDERAL COURT OF AUSTRALIA ENTITY



**FEDERAL COURT
OF AUSTRALIA**



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



**National
Native Title
Tribunal**