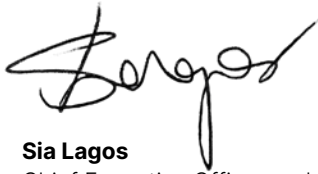


Appendix 10: Annual performance statement

Introductory statement

I, Sia Lagos, as the accountable authority of the Federal Court of Australia, present the 2021–22 annual performance statements for the entity, as required under paragraph 39(1)(a) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act).

In my opinion, these annual performance statements are based on properly maintained records, accurately reflect the performance of the entity, and comply with subsection 39(2) of the PGPA Act (section 16F of the PGPA Rule).



Sia Lagos

Chief Executive Officer and Principal Registrar
Federal Court of Australia

Outcome 1

Program 1.1: Federal Court of Australia

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.

Outcome 2

Program 2.1: Family Court of Australia

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

Outcome 3

Program 3.1: Federal Circuit Court of Australia

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

Outcome 4

Program 4.1: Commonwealth Courts Corporate Services

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

Program 4.2: Commonwealth Courts Registry Services

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

Note: The titles and outcome statements for the Family Court of Australia and the Federal Circuit Court of Australia were officially changed by the Department of Finance effective from 1 July 2022. These tables therefore reflect old titles as at 30 June 2022.

FEDERAL COURT OF AUSTRALIA

The relationship between the Federal Court's Portfolio Budget Statements, corporate plan and annual performance statement

OUTCOME 1	OUTCOME 2	OUTCOME 3	OUTCOME 4	
PORTFOLIO BUDGET STATEMENTS				
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.	Apply and uphold the rule of law for litigants in the Family Court of Australia 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.	Apply and uphold the rule of law for litigants in the Federal Circuit Court of Australia 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.	Improved administration and support of the resolution of matters according to law for litigants in the Federal Court of Australia, the Family Court of Australia, Federal Circuit Court of Australia, and parties in the National Native Title Tribunal through efficient and effective provision of shared corporate and registry services.	
↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
Program 1.1 Federal Court of Australia	Program 2.1 Family Court of Australia	Program 3.1 Federal Circuit Court of Australia	Program 4.1 Commonwealth Courts Corporate Services	Program 4.2 Commonwealth Courts Registry Services
↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
TIMELY COMPLETION OF CASES 85% of cases completed within 18 months of commencement Judgments to be delivered within three months	TIMELY COMPLETION OF CASES Clearance rate for final order applications of 100% 75% of judgments to be delivered within three months	TIMELY COMPLETION OF CASES Clearance rate for final order family law applications of 100% Clearance rate for general federal law applications (excluding migration) of 100% 90% of all other family law applications disposed of within six months 70% of all matters resolved prior to trial	EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE CORPORATE SERVICES Corporate services to be provided within the agreed funding	CORRECT INFORMATION Complaint rate regarding incorrect information from the registry of less than 1% TIMELY PROCESSING OF DOCUMENTS 75% of documents processed within three working days EFFICIENT REGISTRY SERVICES All registry services provided within the agreed funding and staffing level
↓	↓	↓	↓	↓

OUTCOME 1	OUTCOME 2	OUTCOME 3	OUTCOME 4	
CORPORATE PLAN PURPOSE				
To decide disputes according to the law as quickly, inexpensively and efficiently as possible.	Through its specialist judges, registrars and staff, assist Australians to resolve their most complex family disputes by deciding matters according to the law, promptly, courteously and effectively.	To provide timely access to justice and resolve disputes in an efficient and cost-effective manner, using appropriate dispute resolution processes.	To provide efficient and effective corporate services to the Commonwealth Courts and Tribunals.	To provide efficient and effective registry services to the Commonwealth Courts and Tribunals.
↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
ANNUAL PERFORMANCE STATEMENT				
Analysis of performance	Analysis of performance	Analysis of performance	Analysis of performance	Analysis of performance
Federal Court of Australia 2021–22 annual report: Chapter 3, Chapter 4 and Appendix 10.	Federal Court of Australia 2021–22 annual report: Appendix 10. Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia 2021–22 annual report: Part 3.	Federal Court of Australia 2021–22 annual report: Appendix 10. Federal Circuit and Family Court 2021–22 annual report: Part 4.	Federal Court of Australia 2021–22 annual report: Chapter 4 and Appendix 10.	Federal Court of Australia 2021–22 annual report: Chapter 4 and Appendix 10.

Note: The titles and outcome statements for the Family Court of Australia and the Federal Circuit Court of Australia were officially changed by the Department of Finance effective from 1 July 2022. These tables therefore reflect old titles as at 30 June 2022.

OUTCOME 1 Program 1.1: Federal Court of Australia

Purpose

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

Delivery

- Exercising the jurisdiction of the Federal Court of Australia.
- Supporting the operations of the National Native Title Tribunal.

Performance measures

Timely completion of cases

- 85 per cent of cases completed within 18 months of commencement.
- Judgments to be delivered within three months.

Source

- Table 2.1.3: Performance measure for Outcome 1, *Federal Court of Australia Portfolio Budget Statements 2021–22*.
- *Federal Court of Australia Corporate Plan 2021–2022*.

Results

TIMELY COMPLETION OF CASES

PERFORMANCE MEASURE	RESULT 2021–22	STATUS
85% of cases completed within 18 months of commencement.	79.1% per cent of cases were completed within 18 months of commencement.	Performance measure not achieved
Judgments to be delivered within three months.	80.3% per cent of judgments were delivered in three months.	Performance measure achieved

Analysis

In 2021–22, the total number of overall filings in the Court, comprising first instance, appellate and registrar matters decreased by 3 per cent to 3,143. However, the volume of first instance filings which forms a significant component of judicial workload, increased by 3 per cent.

There was an increase in filings in the Commercial and Corporations National Practice Area. Filings remained consistent (when compared to last financial year) in the Native Title, Taxation, Intellectual Property and Federal Crime National Practice Areas. There was a reduction in filings in the Administrative and Constitutional Law and Human Rights, Admiralty and Maritime, Employment and Industrial Relations, Other Federal Jurisdiction and Migration National Practice Areas.

Appeal filings have also decreased, driven largely by a reduction in Federal Court appellate migration filings.

It is noted that save for Migration and Other Federal Jurisdiction, those National Practice Areas that experienced a reduction in filings in 2021–22, maintained a volume of filings generally comparable with 2019–20 figures.

The Court has two targets for timely completion of cases:

- *Eighty-five per cent of cases completed within 18 months of commencement*

During the reporting year, the Court completed 79.1 per cent of cases in less than 18 months.

A key factor contributing to the Court not achieving the benchmark this year was that a number of complex matters required face-to-face hearings that could not be conducted as a result of significant periods of restrictions imposed by Government in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

- *Judgments to be delivered within three months*

The Court has a goal of delivering reserved judgments within a period of three months. Success in meeting this goal depends upon the complexity of the case and other issues affecting the Court.

During 2021–22, the Court handed down 1,906 judgments for 1,656 court matters (some matters involve more than one judgment being delivered – e.g. interlocutory decisions – and sometimes one judgment will cover multiple matters). Overall, 76 per cent of appeals (both Full Court and single judge) were delivered within three months; 81.9 per cent of judgments at first instance were delivered within three months of the matter being reserved; and 80.3 per cent of total judgments were delivered within three months.

A detailed analysis on the performance of the Federal Court can be found in Part 3 (*Report on Court performance*) and Appendix 5 (*Workload statistics*) of this report.

OUTCOME 2 Program 2.1: Family Court of Australia

Note: The titles and outcome statements for the Family Court of Australia and the Federal Circuit Court of Australia were officially changed by the Department of Finance effective from 1 July 2022. These tables therefore reflect old titles as at 30 June 2022.

Purpose

To help Australians resolve their most complex family disputes by deciding matters according to the law, promptly, courteously and effectively.

Delivery

The exercise of the jurisdiction of the Family Court of Australia.

The Family Court of Australia is a separate Chapter III court under the Australian Constitution and the performance criteria applicable to the Court is identified in the *2021–22 Federal Court of Australia Portfolio Budget Statements* and in the *Federal Court of Australia Corporate Plan 2021–2022*.

Performance measures

Timely completion of cases

- Clearance rate for final order applications of 100 per cent.
- 75 per cent of judgments to be delivered within three months.

Source

- Table 2.2.2: Performance measure for Outcome 2, *Federal Court of Australia Portfolio Budget Statements 2021–22*.
- *Federal Court of Australia Corporate Plan 2021–2022*.

Results

TIMELY COMPLETION OF CASES

PERFORMANCE MEASURE	RESULT 2021–22	STATUS
Clearance rate for final order applications of 100%.	The clearance rate for final order applications was 307%.	Performance measure achieved
75% of judgments to be delivered within three months.	91% of judgments were delivered within three months.	Performance measure achieved

Analysis

The 2021–22 financial year was the second full year that the Court was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Whilst the Court was quick to adapt to flexible alternatives to in-person hearings in 2020, including electronically by telephone, audioconference or video conference, the pandemic has continued to impact the volume of cases the Court can finalise. The Court has done its best to minimise these impacts where they are within its control, however some inefficiencies have been unavoidable where legal practitioners or litigants have contracted COVID-19 immediately prior to or during a hearing, and it has not been able to proceed electronically. This impact has also been particularly felt by the Court Children's Service when conducting interviews of parents, carers and children for the preparation of Child Impact Reports or Family Reports. Despite this, the Court has performed admirably during the financial year to the credit of Judges and staff.

For new proceedings filed from 1 September 2021, the original jurisdiction of the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 1) changed as a result of the commencement of the *Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia Act 2021*. From 1 September 2021, the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 2) became the single point of entry for family law proceedings initiated from that date. Consequently, this annual report encompasses a period of transition: from 1 July 2021 to 31 August 2021, the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 1) continued to receive new filings at first instance, and for proceedings commenced from 1 September 2021 the Court's original jurisdiction to hear new family law and child support proceedings is enlivened by way of transfer from the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 2).

The Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 1) continues to deal with the most complex family law matters, including matters involving complexity associated with family violence or other risks, allegations of child abuse or serious physical harm included in the Magellan List, and cases involving international child abduction instituted under the *Family Law (Child Abduction Convention) Regulations 1986*, commonly referred to as Hague Convention proceedings.

In 2021–22, 5,912 applications were filed in the Court's original jurisdiction. The majority of applications filed were applications for consent orders filed pre 1 September 2021, followed by interim applications, now called applications in a proceeding.

In 2021–22, the Court received 628 applications for final orders and finalised 1,928 applications. As a result, the number of pending applications for final orders decreased by 29 per cent compared to the number of applications pending at 30 June 2021. The clearance rate as at the end of the year was 307 per cent.

It should be noted that the decrease in the number of applications finalised is partially attributable to the fact that in previous years, applications that were filed in the then Family Court of Australia but were transferred to the Federal Circuit Court of Australia soon after filing because they were more appropriate to be heard by that court, were recorded as a finalisation. Further, as the Court is not receiving new filings (aside from by way of transfer), the Court is only finalising matters that were pending pre-1 September 2021, which are largely more complex or have been pending for some time and require determination, hence a lower number of matters have been finalised. Whilst less matters were finalised than the previous year, there was an increase in the number of matters finalised at trial (a final hearing) and a greater percentage of those were judicially determined.

The percentage of applications finalised within 12 months has decreased, and is likely to continue to do so whilst the Court focuses on finalising the oldest pending cases. These cases require significant judicial time and court resources, however the resolution of these matters is of great benefit to the parties and to the ability of the Court, in the future, to resolve matters within a 12 month timeframe as far as is possible.

A detailed analysis on the performance of the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 1) can be found in Part 3 of the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia's 2021–22 Annual Report.

OUTCOME 3 Program 3.1: Federal Circuit Court of Australia

Note: The titles and outcome statements for the Family Court of Australia and the Federal Circuit Court of Australia were officially changed by the Department of Finance effective from 1 July 2022. These tables therefore reflect old titles as at 30 June 2022.

Purpose

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

Delivery

Exercising the jurisdiction of the Federal Circuit Court of Australia.

The Federal Circuit Court of Australia remains a separate Chapter III court under the Australian Constitution and the performance criteria applicable to the Court is identified in the *2021–22 Federal Court of Australia Portfolio Budget Statements* and in the *Federal Court Corporate Plan 2021–2022*.

Performance measures

Timely completion of cases

- Clearance rate for final order family law applications of 100 per cent.
- Clearance rate for general federal law applications (excluding migration) of 100 per cent.
- 90 per cent of all other family law applications disposed of within six months.
- 70 per cent of all matters resolved prior to trial.

Source

- Table 2.3.2: Performance criteria for Outcome 3, *Federal Court of Australia Portfolio Budget Statements 2021–22*.
- *Federal Court of Australia Corporate Plan 2021–2022*.

Results

TIMELY COMPLETION OF CASES

PERFORMANCE MEASURE	RESULT 2021–22	STATUS
Clearance rate for final order family law applications of 100%.	The clearance rate was 122%.	Performance measure achieved
Clearance rate for general federal law applications (excluding migration) of 100%.	The clearance rate was 113%	Performance measure achieved
90% of all other family law applications disposed of within six months.	90% of all other family law applications disposed of within six months.	Performance measure achieved
70% of all matters resolved prior to trial.	84% of matters were resolved prior to trial.	Performance measure achieved

Analysis

The 2021–22 financial year was the second full year that the Court was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Whilst the Court was quick to adapt to flexible alternatives to in-person hearings in 2020, including electronically by telephone, audioconference or video conference, the pandemic has continued to impact the volume of cases the Court can finalise. The Court has done its best to minimise these impacts where they are within its control, however some inefficiencies have been unavoidable

where legal practitioners or litigants have contracted COVID-19 immediately prior to or during a hearing, and it has not been able to proceed electronically. This impact has also been particularly felt by the Court Children's Service when conducting interviews of parents, carers and children for the preparation of Child Impact Reports or Family Reports. Despite this, the Court has performed admirably during the financial year to the credit of Judges and staff.

In 2021–22, 91,545 family law applications were filed in the Court. The majority of applications filed were applications for divorce, followed by interim applications, now called applications in a proceeding, then applications for consent orders, and then applications for final orders. Prior to 1 September 2021, all applications for consent orders were filed in the then Family Court of Australia.

In 2021–22, the Court received 12,551 applications for final orders and finalised 15,351 applications. As a result, the number of pending applications for final orders decreased by 17 per cent compared to the number of applications pending at 30 June 2021. The clearance rate as at the end of the year was 122 per cent.

The Court finalised 15,351 applications this year compared to 15,613 last year, and received fewer filings than in the 2020–21 financial year. Whilst the Court does not have data indicating the reason for the decrease in filings, one significant factor is likely to be the increased focus on, and compliance with, pre-action procedures since 1 September 2021, which require parties to make genuine efforts to resolve disputes and to attempt dispute resolution before filing an application (where it is safe to do so and subject to other exceptions).

The Court finalised slightly more matters at trial than the previous financial year. The Court's ability to conduct final hearings, and particular final hearings in-person, continued to be impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic during the financial year. The Court expects to be able to conduct a greater number of final hearings moving forward, particularly given the implementation of case management reforms.

In 2021–22, the Court received 17,911 applications for interim orders (also referred to as Applications in a Proceeding) and finalised 18,717 applications. As a result, the number of pending applications for interim orders decreased by 11 per cent compared to the number of applications pending at 30 June 2021. The clearance rate as at the end of the financial year was 105 per cent.

The highest number of filings the Court receives in the family law jurisdiction are applications for divorce. In 2021–22, the Court received 46,064 applications for divorce and finalised 50,575 applications. The Court's clearance rate for divorce applications was 110 per cent, the highest in more than five years. Consequently, the number of applications for divorce pending in the Court decreased by 33 per cent as compared to the number of applications pending at 30 June 2021.

From 1 September 2021, applications for consent orders are filed in the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 2), reflecting the establishment of a single point of entry for the filing of all new family law applications from that date. Applications for consent orders were previously filed in the then Family Court of Australia. Applications for consent orders continue to be dealt with by registrars, and are considered on a national basis to ensure consistent timeframes for the making of consent orders. From 1 September 2021 to 30 June 2022, 13,049 applications for consent orders were filed in the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 2), and 11,603 applications were finalised.

In 2021–22, the Court received 898 contravention applications and finalised 1,107 contravention applications, with a clearance rate of 123 per cent. The number of contravention applications pending decreased by 30 per cent compared to the number pending at 30 June 2021, and at 30 June 2022, was the lowest in more than five years.

The average time from filing to finalisation has increased by one month this financial year compared to financial year 2020–21. This is to be expected given that the Court is particularly focused on finalising the oldest pending cases. Furthermore, the ability to conduct an increasing number of hearings face to face enabled the Court to finalise older matters that had not otherwise been able to be heard electronically. During the more restrictive measures in place during the COVID-19 pandemic, there

were matters that had to be adjourned pending the ability of the Court to conduct a greater number of in-person hearings.

In 2021–22, 4,503 migration applications were filed in the Court and 2,802 applications were finalised. Migration matters represented 65 per cent of the Court's filings in the general federal law jurisdiction.

There was a slight decrease (8.6%) in the number of migration applications filed during the reporting period. This is likely attributable to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, 4,503 migration filings is still a significant incoming caseload, and places pressure on judicial resources, particularly given a number of judges who predominantly heard matters in the migration jurisdiction retired during the financial year.

The Court monitors its ability to dispose of the migration caseload by reference to the clearance rate – the relationship between the number of matters finalised and the number of matters filed during the financial year. Despite the retirement of several experienced migration judges, the clearance rate remained relatively steady at 62 per cent in 2021–22, compared to 58 per cent in 2020–21. However, given the clearance rate is less than 100 per cent, the Court's pending migration caseload has continued to increase at a sustained rate.

For the first time, as at 30 June 2022, the Court's pending migration caseload of 16,198 is larger than the Court's pending family law caseload of 15,607. Additional resourcing is required to assist the Court to dispose of the pending caseload in a timely way.

The nature of migration work leads to a larger number of written judgments than any other area of the Court's work. Migration judgments represent approximately 25 per cent of the Court's written judgments and approximately 44 per cent of the Court's judgments published on AustLII in 2021–22.

The Court's general federal law jurisdiction includes administrative law, admiralty law, bankruptcy, consumer law, human rights, fair work (industrial law), and intellectual property. The Court shares this jurisdiction with the Federal Court of Australia and, in some cases, state courts. Where the Court has jurisdiction in a matter, it also has jurisdiction to determine associated or inseverable claims that would otherwise not be within jurisdiction.

The Court aims to have a clearance rate of 100 per cent for applications in general federal law (excluding migration). In 2021–22, the Court exceeded this target, achieving a clearance rate of 113 per cent.

In 2021–22, 2,465 applications were filed in the Court's general federal law jurisdiction. This is a slight decrease from the 2,545 filed in 2020–21. The ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on filings has continued in this financial year.

The Court received 1,247 bankruptcy applications in 2021–22, and finalised 1,287. This represents a significant increase in bankruptcy filings of 38 per cent, compared with 902 filings in 2020–21. However, it is noted that, filings have not returned to the pre-COVID 19 levels. Due to COVID-19, on 25 March 2020, the Commonwealth Government introduced significant temporary debt relief measures which increased the debt threshold required for creditors to apply for a bankruptcy notice and increased the timeframe for a debtor to respond to a bankruptcy notice from 21 days to six months. These temporary debt relief measures ended on 1 January 2021.

The Court has established a benchmark for the handing down of reserved judgments within three months of the hearing or receipt of written submissions. Consistently with the previous financial years, the Court has delivered 95 per cent of judgments within this timeframe. It is a focus of the Court to ensure that judgments are delivered in a timely way to ensure, where appropriate, the efficient resolution of disputes and certainty of outcome for parties.

A detailed analysis on the performance of the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia (Division 2) can be found in Part 4 of the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia's 2021–22 Annual Report.

OUTCOME 4 Program 4.1: Commonwealth Courts Corporate Services

Purpose

To provide efficient and effective corporate services to the Commonwealth courts and the National Native Title Tribunal.

Delivery

Providing efficient and effective corporate services for the Commonwealth courts and the National Native Title Tribunal.

Performance measures

Efficient and effective corporate services

- Corporate services to be provided within the agreed funding.

Source

- Table 2.4.2: Performance criteria for Outcome 4, *Federal Court of Australia Portfolio Budget Statements 2021–22*.
- *Federal Court of Australia Corporate Plan 2021–2022*.

Results

TIMELY COMPLETION OF CASES

PERFORMANCE MEASURE	RESULT 2021–22	STATUS
Corporate services to be provided within the agreed funding	Corporate services were provided within the agreed funding	Performance measure achieved

Analysis

During 2021–22, the work of corporate services focused on supporting the evolving needs of judges and staff across all the Courts and Tribunal, while delivering on required efficiencies to meet reduced appropriations.

As expected, a key focus in 2021–22 was to continue the delivery of solutions to support the work of the Courts and the Tribunal in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Work continued on consolidating and modernising IT systems to simplify the combined court environment and deliver efficiency improvements and more contemporary practices to reduce the cost of delivery.

Further upgrades to video conferencing equipment supported the increased use of hybrid hearings undertaken throughout the year where a combination of in-court and remote technology was used to support court operations. Infrastructure and security upgrades were deployed to enhance the stability and security of the remote technology solutions to support judges' and staffs' capacity to work from home when required.

Investment in cyber security continues to be critical, as technology is essential to court operations and the threat landscape continues to evolve. Protection of endpoints (servers, laptops and similar) has been significantly improved over 2021–22 and enhanced security will continue to be deployed through 2022–23.

During this period, COVIDSafe plans were updated to ensure consistency with changing requirements across the country. Measures were undertaken to ensure compliance with required hygiene protocols across all locations to mitigate the risk of infection to staff and the public.

The People and Culture team developed additional support programs to assist staff over the year, particularly staff impacted by ongoing lockdowns. Resilience, mindfulness and wellbeing sessions have been offered to all staff and delivered regularly. This training has been extremely important in underpinning our response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The provision of Microsoft Teams-based sessions, utilising the services of an external facilitator, provided the platform to staff support and reinforced engagement.

Several significant property projects were completed in 2021–22, including the fitout of new Sydney Corporate Services accommodation, the expansion of registrar accommodation in Brisbane, a new Indigenous liaison office in Alice Springs, and a new mediation suite in Perth. Several more large scale property projects were commenced with completion expected in 2022–23.

A detailed analysis on the performance of Corporate Services can be found in Part 4 (*Management and accountability*).

Program 4.2: Commonwealth Courts Registry Services

Purpose

To provide efficient and effective registry services to the Commonwealth Courts and tribunals.

Delivery

Providing efficient and effective registry services for the Commonwealth Courts and tribunals.

Performance measures

Correct information

- Less than 1 per cent of enquiries result in a complaint about registry services.

Timely processing of documents

- 75 per cent of documents processed within three working days.

Efficient registry services

- All registry services provided within the agreed funding and staffing level.

Source

- Table 2.4.2: Performance criteria for Outcome 4, *Federal Court of Australia Portfolio Budget Statements 2021–22*.
- *Federal Court of Australia Corporate Plan 2021–2022*.

Results

CORRECT INFORMATION

PERFORMANCE MEASURE	RESULT 2021–22	STATUS
Complaint rate regarding incorrect information from the registry of less than 1%.	0.019 % of enquiries resulted in a complaint about registry services	Performance measure achieved

TIMELY PROCESSING OF DOCUMENTS

PERFORMANCE MEASURE	RESULT 2021–22	STATUS
75% of documents processed within three working	89% of documents were processed within three working days	Performance measure achieved

EFFICIENT REGISTRY SERVICES

PERFORMANCE MEASURE	RESULT 2021–22	STATUS
All registry services provided within the agreed funding and staffing level	All registry services were provided within the agreed funding and staffing levels	Performance measure achieved

Analysis

Since 2019–20, the registry services functions for the Federal Court, the Family Court of Australia and the Federal Circuit Court of Australia have been amalgamated into a separate program under Outcome 4: Program 4.2 Commonwealth Courts Registry Services. This initiative has provided the Court with the opportunity to shape the delivery of administrative services across all federal courts in a more innovative and efficient manner.

A focus on maximising registry operational effectiveness through streamlined structures and digital innovations will significantly contribute to the future financial sustainability of the Courts.

In 2021–22, Registry Services performed within its overall budgeted allocation of \$31,908,000 by 6.8 per cent, primarily due to savings from ongoing judicial and staff vacancies and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Registry Services staff manage enquiries, document lodgments, subpoenas and safety plans. The number of safety plans activated in 2021–22 was 1,071 across all registry locations. Safety plans decreased by approximately 22 per cent in 2021–22 due to the suspension of face-to-face services in some registries affected by COVID-19 lockdowns and the subsequent move to a heavy reliance on electronic hearings for that period. Supporting the electronic hearings and additional registrar resources however, became a significant additional workload for registry services.

Throughout the year, although there were interruptions to in-person services due to state-based COVID-19 restrictions, Registry Services staff continued to process urgent enquiries and applications and provided support for difficult issues for a diverse range of clients with different needs both professionally and courteously. This included supporting vulnerable clients and ensuring people from non-English speaking backgrounds are suitably supported.

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to cause significant shifts in workload. Whilst the Courts were quick to adapt to flexible alternatives to in-person hearings in 2020, including electronically by telephone, audioconference or video conference, the pandemic has continued to impact the volume of cases the Courts can finalise.

During 2021–22, there were 43 complaints against Registry Services. This represents 0.019 per cent of the total number of enquiries, which meets the performance measure of 'Less than 1 per cent of enquiries resulting in a complaint about registry services'. Enquiries include phone, email and live chat actioned enquiries to the NEC.

During the year, Registry Services processed 89 per cent of all documents received within three working days, exceeding the target of 75 per cent. Performance in this area has increased after the successful implementation of a Document Processing Dashboard, created by the Business Intelligence team. The dashboard enables workload to be allocated nationally, creating better monitoring and visibility and more efficient processing.