

Program 2**Business Affairs**

Program objective

To achieve a fair balance between creditors, debtors and the community in the administration of bankruptcies.

Sub-program 2.1

Insolvency and Trustee Service, Australia

Sub-program objectives

- To ensure community access to high standard information on bankruptcy and its alternatives and to exercise statutory powers which maintain the credibility of the personal insolvency system.
- To develop proposals for relevant and up-to-date personal insolvency laws.
- To promote high quality national standards of personal insolvency administration.
- To administer personal insolvencies promptly through an accessible, equitable and value-for-money service to maximise economical returns to creditors and protect the public interest.
- To contribute, in cooperation with other agencies, to the enforcement of proceeds of crime remedies and offence provisions under bankruptcy and other legislation.

Role

The principal functions of the Insolvency and Trustee Service, Australia (ITSA) are:

- to provide education and information in the area of personal insolvency;
 - to exercise statutory powers regarding applications by bankruptcy trustees for an indemnity regarding their costs in legal proceedings;
 - to exercise statutory powers regarding information-gathering property realisation and the assessment of income contributions by bankruptcy trustees;
 - to administer those bankrupt estates in which a registered trustee is not appointed;
 - to provide policy advice to the Government on the *Bankruptcy Act 1966*;
 - to regulate personal insolvency administration by all trustees;
 - to control and realise property under the provisions of the *Customs Act 1901* and the *Proceeds of Crime Act 1987*;
 - to provide other trustee services to government agencies.
-

Our vision

What we do: We are a national government agency taking responsibility for performing a vital role in the Australian economy and society. We do this by helping to protect the Australian community from the impact of financial failure and by countering unlawful activities. We provide an expanding range of bankruptcy, trustee and related services, advice and regulation.

What we stand for: We strive to exceed the expectations of clients and to provide value for money. We act with impartiality, equity and integrity. We believe in teamwork, mutual trust and respect. We are committed to the enhancement of professional skills and to the optimal application of creativity and technology.

What we aim to become: Our vision is to see ITSA as a leading example of a productive and purposeful public agency, recognised for the quality of its service to clients and for the high standard of its internal working environment.



More than 250 delegates from Australia, New Zealand and some Asian countries attended the Australian Bankruptcy Congress in Sydney in March 1996. Stephen Skehill, Secretary, and the Hon. Daryl Williams, AM, QC, Attorney-General, are seen here with staff from ITSA's NSW office, from left: Linda Hackney, Tibor Karolyi, Laz Anastis, David Norman, Elizabeth Cameron and Randall Joubert.

Resources summary - 2.1 Insolvency & Trustee Service, Australia

FINANCIAL	1994-95	1995-96	1995-96
	Actual \$('000)	Estimate \$('000)	Actual \$('000)
Appropriation Bill No. 1			
Running Costs			
• Salaries (120-1) (p)	14 477	15 614	15 667
• Administrative Expenses (120-1) (p)	5 986	6 428	5 334
• Legal Services provided by the Attorney-General's Department (120-1) (p)	560	650	313
• Property Operating Expenses (120-1) (p)			
- Current	4 047	4 229	3 934
- Capital	1 244	269	258
RUNNING COSTS APPROPRIATION	26 314	27 190	25 506
Other Program Costs			
• Compensation & Legal Expenses (120-2-04) (p)	956	1 142	1 135
Appropriation Bill No. 2			
• Capital Works & Services (805-1-01) (p)	-	383	383
TOTAL APPROPRIATIONS	27 270	28 715	27 025
Adjustments Affecting Outlays			
• Section 35 (Audit Act) Receipts	79	69	69
• Other offsetting Revenue	7 216	6 156	6 156
TOTAL OUTLAYS	19 975	22 490	20 799
STAFFING			
Staff Years	332.7	326.0	280.0
REVENUE AND/OR ITEMS NOT AFFECTING OUTLAYS			
Other Investments	948	775	775

(p) indicates that the amount shown against an appropriation item is only part of the amount appropriated under that item.

Specific accrual accounting information can be found in the accompanying audited Financial Statement.

Administration of the personal insolvency system

ITSA staff exercise statutory powers which maintain the credibility of the personal insolvency system.

Major statutory powers exercised by ITSA staff relate to the functions which bankruptcy trustees frequently perform as part of the task of administering a bankrupt estate – information gathering, property realisation and the collection of income contributions assessed by the trustee.

The Official Receiver has information-gathering powers which can be exercised on behalf of any trustee. The powers include access to premises (s.77AA of the Bankruptcy Act), access to the books of an associated entity of a bankrupt (s.77A) and the issue of a notice requiring a person to give information, attend and give evidence and produce books (s.77C). In 1995–96 there were 521 uses of the powers conferred by ss.77AA, 77A and 77C, including 174 on behalf of registered trustees. No comparable figures were available for 1994–95.

The Official Receiver's specific statutory power regarding property realisation is the power to issue, on behalf of any trustee, a notice under s.139ZQ which amounts to a requirement that the recipient yield up property forming part of the bankrupt's estate to the trustee. In 1995–96 there were 97 s.139ZQ notices issued, including 32 on behalf of registered trustees. No comparable figures were available for 1994–95.

Where a bankrupt has been assessed by the trustee as liable, under ss.139P or 139Q of the Act, to pay an income contribution to the trustee, s.139ZL empowers the Official Receiver to recover the amount from a person who, broadly, holds money for, or owes money to, the bankrupt. The Official Trustee may, at the request of any trustee, issue a s.139ZL notice requiring the person to pay to the trustee an amount on account of the income contribution assessed. In 1995–96 there were 22 s.139ZL notices issued, including ten on behalf of registered trustees. No comparable figures were available for 1994–95.

ITSA also assesses applications by bankruptcy trustees under s.305 of the Act for an indemnity from the Commonwealth regarding their costs in legal proceedings necessary for the proper administration of a bankrupt estate, and where there are insufficient funds in the bankrupt estate to meet those costs. Typical legal proceedings for which trustees seek funding are: contempt proceedings against a bankrupt who refuses to lodge a Statement of Affairs; public examination of a bankrupt before a Federal Court Registrar; and proceedings to recover assets from creditors paid at the expense of other creditors. The Minister's statutory powers under s.305 have been delegated to, and are exercised by, the Inspector-General in Bankruptcy and the Assistant Secretary, Secretariat Branch, ITSA.

In 1995–96 there were 64 applications for s.305 funding, of which 50 were approved. Last year there were 59 applications and 49 approvals. The net estimated cost of indemnifying trustees under s.305 in 1995–96 was \$253,000, up from \$247,000 the previous year. The operational standard of submitting a recommendation to the delegate within five working days (ten days if a complex matter is involved) was met in 57 cases, or 89 per cent. In seven cases where it was not met, other work had a higher priority but this did not jeopardise the actions contemplated by trustees.

Development of the personal insolvency laws

During 1995–96 the Parliament continued to deal with the Bankruptcy Legislation Amendment Bill 1995 introduced in March 1995. The Bill passed the House of Representatives and was referred to a Senate committee but lapsed when the Parliament was prorogued before the federal election. The new Government directed that work on bankruptcy law reform continue and a new Bill, the Bankruptcy Legislation Amendment Bill 1996, containing much in common with its predecessor but also addressing recommendations made by the Senate committee, was introduced on 26 June 1996.

Bankruptcy estate administration

In 1995–96 ITSA received 16,080 bankruptcies compared with 13,043 in the previous year, a 23.2 per cent increase. The comparable figures for registered private trustees were 1,260 for 1995–96 and 1,089 in 1994–95, a 15.7 per cent increase. ITSA administered 92.7 per cent of new bankruptcies, with registered trustees administering 7.3 per cent.

Each time ITSA receives a bankruptcy it is categorised according to importance and complexity of the matter on a descending scale. These categories provide a guide to the priority and effort that should be given to those matters. Fees for administering bankruptcies are charged as a percentage on a results basis (that is, funds realised to benefit creditors) and not on a time basis.

Category 1. These are cases where it is anticipated that one or more dividends totalling \$5,000 or more will be paid to one or more Commonwealth Departments, and/or that realisations in the estate will amount to \$50,000 or more, thereby producing substantial fee revenue to the Commonwealth.

Category 2. These are cases where a law enforcement authority investigating a fraud on the Commonwealth advises the Official Trustee of assets, previously undisclosed, which may vest in the Official Trustee in his capacity as trustee of an insolvency administration, either past or present.

Category 3. These are cases where there is a high probability that action to protect, preserve or discover assets will realise more than \$20,000 or pay one or more dividends of more than \$5,000 to one or more creditors.

The category also involves cases where the deficiency in an estate exceeds \$100,000 and investigations are required to be undertaken into the deficiency to the extent necessary to be able to make a determination. It includes, as well, cases in which realisations and investigations are not straightforward or routine in nature.

Category 4. These are cases where the only matters requiring attention are straightforward realisations of assets and admissions of proofs of debt, including those estates in which the bankrupt makes payment of contributions (either compulsory or voluntary). Minor inquiries may also be necessary in order to realise other assets.

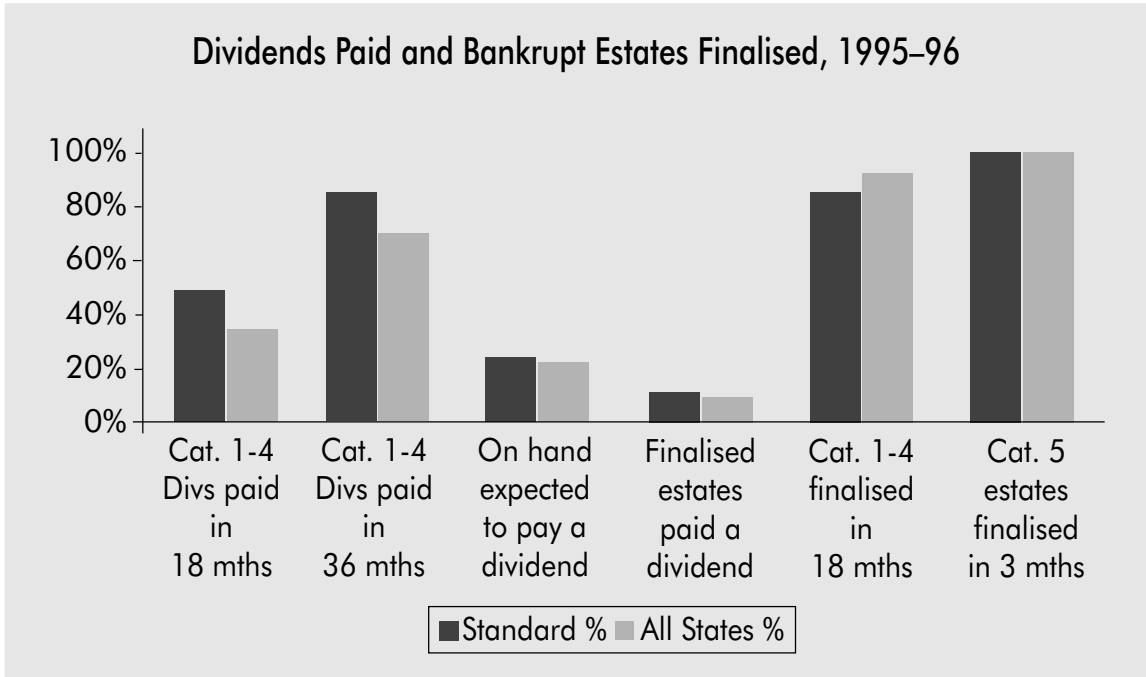
Category 5. These are cases arising from a debtor's petition where there is no likelihood of a dividend; the deficiency can be readily explained with little inquiry and no other investigation is required; there is no conduct on the part of the bankrupt which is so reprehensible in terms of commercial morality or criminality to justify taking action against the bankrupt; and there is no payment of a contribution by the bankrupt either voluntarily or compulsorily.

Performance measure

- **Category 1-4 estates**
 - 50% of dividends paid within 18 months
 - 85% of dividends paid within 36 months
 - 25% of estates on hand expected to pay a dividend
 - 12% of estates finalised to have paid a dividend to creditors
 - 85% of estates finalised within three years.
- **Category 5 estates**
 - 100% of estates finalised within three months.

Performance outcome

ITSA's achievement against these standards is illustrated by the following table:



An analysis of ITSA's bankruptcy estate administration performance trends, as measured against the standards in terms of finalisation of estates, shows that in all categories of estates the standards were achieved or bettered.

This reflects the effort given to an improved and more consistent approach to the management of the administrations compensating for rising numbers of new bankruptcies and a reduction in staff numbers.

In terms of dividends paid within 18 and 36 months, the standards were not achieved. A number of factors contributed to this. Following organisational restructure in several branches, efforts continued to be concentrated on finalising those estates on hand for more than three years. This may have involved either realisation of assets and payment of dividends, or cessation of further action. As well, there was a trend for an increase in the number of assetless bankruptcies, and the impact of the increased level of fees taken by the Official Trustee (introduced in July 1994). Consequently, the number of dividends able to be paid declined.

Ageing of estates under administration

The following figures show the extent to which ITSA achieved its goal of completing the administration of at least 85 per cent of bankrupt estates within three years of receipt, or of ensuring that no more than 15 per cent of estates on hand be more than three years old.

- Percentage of estates more than three years old:
 - Year ended 30 June 1995: 16.3 per cent
 - Year ended 30 June 1996: 13.9 per cent

The decrease in the proportion of estates under administration for more than three years, and the consequent meeting of the standard, resulted from persistent efforts to clear a backlog of older administrations.

Estates under administration

The following table sets out the balance of estates on hand at the beginning and the end of the year, new estates received plus intercategory transfers, and estates finalised during the year.

Estates under administration	1994–95	1995–96
Estates on hand 1 July	7 902	5 525
Plus estates received *	18 627	21 001
	26 529	26 526
Less estates finalised *	21 004	21 054
Estates on hand 30 June	5 525	5 472

The increase in the number of estates on hand at the end of the year reflected the increase in new bankruptcies.

* These figures include intercategory transfers, reactivated estates and those received from registered trustees. A reactivated estate is one which is reopened due, for instance, to the discovery of an asset or the bankrupt becoming liable to pay a compulsory contribution.

Revenue – dividends fees and interest

The following table sets out the amount of dividends paid by ITSA to the Commonwealth (e.g. the Australian Taxation Office) and the community (other creditors), the Official Trustee's fees and the interest earned by the Common Investment Fund (CIF) during 1995–96, with 1994–95 figures for comparison.

Revenue	1994–95	1995–96**
Total dividends paid	12 951 414	12 404 897
Less paid to community	10 433 750	10 302 182
Dividends paid to Commonwealth instrumentalities	2 517 664	2 102 715
Official Trustee's fees taken	6 450 414	5 687 390
Interest on Common Investment Fund*	808 869	775 000
Total payable to the Commonwealth	\$9 776 947	\$8 565 105

* Because of timing differences, not all interest earned is paid to the Commonwealth during the financial years reported.

** Figures include estimates for Queensland for April to June 1996.

Note: The reason for the decrease in the value of the total dividends paid was that in 1995–96 there were proportionately more assetless estates (Category 5s) received than in the previous year. This contributed to the reduced level of Official Trustee's fees taken.

Performance measure

- The extent to which matters attract justifiable complaint about the performance of ITSA and the bankruptcy administration.

Performance outcome

In 1995–96 there were 97 written complaints received by the Attorney-General, the Ombudsman and the Inspector-General in Bankruptcy, compared with 101 in 1994–95. This total excluded instances of multiple but unjustified complaints from several people dissatisfied with their circumstances, as distinct from

complaining about the administration of their bankrupt estates. ITSA devotes considerable effort to responding thoughtfully and helpfully to complaints. Only one complaint was found to be justified in 1995–96 compared with four in 1994–95. It related to an interpretation of s.139L of the Bankruptcy Act under which ITSA had sought to characterise, as income of a bankrupt, the value of superannuation contributions made by his employer. Legal advice was obtained when the bankrupt questioned this approach, and as a result the practical interpretation and relevant staff guidelines were changed.

Performance measure

- The extent to which ITSA implements orders relating to the control of property under the Proceeds of Crime and Customs Acts, and the extent to which those orders are dealt with according to ITSA's operational standards.

Performance outcome

The Customs Act and the Proceeds of Crime Act empower the Official Trustee, when ordered by the Court, to take control of defendants' property pending the making of either pecuniary penalty orders or forfeiture orders.

ITSA works with other law enforcement agencies, including the Australian Federal Police and the Director of Public Prosecutions, in the proceeds-of-crime law enforcement initiative. The objective is to ensure that criminals do not profit from illegally obtained gains. ITSA plays an important role in finding, monitoring and realising assets, pending the outcome of the relevant criminal proceedings.

The following tables set out statistical information in respect of these matters:

<i>Customs Act</i>		
	Number of Orders	Estimated Value of Property
On hand 1 July 1995	4	\$749 489
On hand 30 June 1996	3	\$670 945
<i>Proceeds of Crime Act</i>		
	Number of Orders	Estimated Value of Property
On hand 1 July 1995	80	\$22 255 030
On hand 30 June 1996	88	\$18 599 042

Note: The figures as at 30 June 1996 represent the balance after taking account of new and final orders, and also the depletion of funds under control to pay defendants' legal costs.

During the year 58 pecuniary penalty orders and forfeiture orders totalling \$3,889,969 were made against convicted offenders and \$58,981 in fees was recovered by the Official Trustee. The property and assets realised under those orders is paid into the Confiscated Assets Trust Fund which ITSA manages. In 1995–96 payments to the fund totalled \$4.9 million (\$3.6 million in 1994–95). In 1995–96 \$5.6 million was paid out of the fund to law enforcement agencies. Funds totalling \$5.8 million remained available for distribution at 30 June 1996.

All property was brought under control within the operational standard time of one week of the order being received, unless the property was overseas. Except in those cases where subdued property markets or the nature of the property delayed realisation, all property the subject of final orders was realised within the operational standard time of six months. Where applicable, all relevant fees and costs were recovered.

Performance measure

- The extent to which the bankruptcy regulation function is carried out in accordance with ITSA's operational standards.

Performance outcome

The process of bankruptcy regulation has three main strategies:

- **Routine inspections.** The target is to inspect a sample of at least ten per cent of each Registered Trustee's administrations every two years and to inspect a sample of at least two per cent of the estates being administered by each Official Receiver on behalf of the Official Trustee.
- **Special investigations.** These are to be done as required when complaints are received by the bankruptcy regulation units from bankrupts, debtors, creditors, Registrars in Bankruptcy or any other party regarding the administration of estates under the Bankruptcy Act.
- **Monitoring.** The role is to examine documents filed by trustees with the Registrar in Bankruptcy for compliance with the Bankruptcy Act. This role also involves bankruptcy regulation officers of ITSA attending meetings of creditors as observers to ensure compliance with the Act.

The current inspection biennial commenced on 1 July 1995. Of the 176 active registered trustees, 63 were subject to inspection during 1995–96. The target of examining at least ten per cent of the administrations of those trustees was met in all cases. Some administrations under the control of five trustees were considered to be inadequate, and four of those trustees were counselled by bankruptcy regulation staff. After the Inspector-General in Bankruptcy applied to the Federal Court to deregister him, the fifth trustee resigned.

The target of examining two per cent of estates administered on behalf of the Official Trustee in each Bankruptcy District was met. The inspections revealed inadequacies in the administration of some estates, mainly in the area of investigation and realisation of assets. The relevant Official Receivers were addressing the problem areas to minimise such inadequacies.

ITSA's Bankruptcy Regulation Unit (BRU) received 100 complaints regarding administrations under the control of registered trustees, and 21 complaints concerning administrations under the control of the Official Trustee. Of the 119 special investigations finalised during the year, 111 (93 per cent) were finalised within the three-month target period. The main causes of not meeting the target were that some administrations were subject to litigation and others involved long, complex negotiations, often between many parties. Of the matters finalised, 15 complaints were found to be justified with 14 of those requiring further action. In ten cases the trustees were counselled by BRU officers, while four matters were referred to the Inspector-General in Bankruptcy. He took action in three matters.

The BRU examined documents filed in the Court in 680 administrations and attended 108 creditors' meetings conducted by trustees or solicitors. Ten of the meetings prompted further action. The BRU referred five of those matters to the Australian Federal Police because there appeared to be attempts to manipulate the voting rights at meetings, contrary to the Bankruptcy Act. In one matter, the Inspector-General in Bankruptcy authorised the BRU to apply to the Court to have a composition declared void on public interest grounds.

Access to information

ITSA aims to ensure that the community has access to high-standard information on bankruptcy and its alternatives. The aim is to improve the community's ability to minimise the incidence and effect of personal insolvency. ITSA responds to an increasing level of demand from the public generally, and people affected by an insolvency in particular. It delivers a range of services including:

- providing information over the counter by telephone and by letter to 28,365 inquirers in 1995–96, an

increase of 16.5 per cent over 1994–95;

- voicemail in the Melbourne office, with pre-recorded messages on various topics such as early discharge;
- 008 numbers in Queensland to improve rural community access;
- a range of pamphlets including *Your Rights and Responsibilities as a Bankrupt*, *Overseas Travel*, *The Most Commonly Asked Questions about Bankruptcy*, *Early Discharge* and *So What Happens when you Can't Pay your Debts?*;
- an information sheet explaining rights and obligations for creditors and an information video entitled *Life After Debt*, both available at ITSA offices, Federal Court Registries, financial counsellors and welfare organisations;
- private interview rooms to assist in the conduct of investigations;
- translation and interpreter services;
- public education and information presentations by trained ITSA staff at seminars, conferences, workshops and other venues for the benefit of community groups, professions, business and financial institutions, insolvency practitioners and financial counsellors in major cities and regional areas when requested. Major presentations were delivered on 104 occasions in 1995–96, compared with 92 in 1994–95.

Groups and organisations to which ITSA officers gave presentations included the Australian Institute of Credit Management, the Institute of Mercantile Agents, the Insolvency Practitioners' Association of Australia, professional firms, accounting and legal professional bodies, the Australian Taxation Office, the Australian Federal Police, State police forces, the Australian Financial Counsellors' and Credit Reform Association, State Financial Counsellors' Associations, Community Legal Centres, business associations, financial institutions, universities and schools.

The Australian Bankruptcy Congress, a two-day congress in Sydney in March 1996, was organised by the NSW branch of ITSA and attended by around 300 insolvency practitioners including registered trustees and solicitors and their staff, academics, financial counsellors and other credit professionals. It was opened by the Attorney-General and addressed by the Secretary, the Acting Inspector-General in Bankruptcy and a range of other professionals, including delegates from all States, from New Zealand and from several Asian countries. Experts in the field of personal insolvency discussed a wide range of topics including high-profile bankruptcies, alternatives to bankruptcy, the future of bankruptcy and how legislative amendments are designed to operate in practice.

All State branches of ITSA conduct regular liaison meetings with stakeholders such as major creditors, registered trustees, financial counsellors and law enforcement agencies.

ITSA publishes a free, widely-circulating newsletter called *New Directions in Bankruptcy* to provide information to all clients and stakeholders about changes to legislation, new procedures and cases of interest. Three editions were published in 1995–96.

Brief reports of significant judicial decisions are incorporated in the annual report on the operation of the Bankruptcy Act which is available from ITSA.

Reviews and evaluation

The Department and the Department of Finance completed a joint review of ITSA early in the year, and a number of its recommendations were implemented. They included the development of a greater degree of independence of ITSA's bankruptcy regulation role from its bankruptcy administration role; the introduction of accrual reporting and accounting; introduction of a more consistent approach to the management of bankrupt estate administrations; and the development of national performance standards in conjunction with the Insolvency Practitioners' Association of Australia for the administration of insolvencies by all trustees. In addition, ITSA undertook internal benchmarking of both its estate administration and work practices.

Other recommendations, relating to the proportion of commercially viable bankruptcy administration services undertaken by the private sector and the viability of outsourcing some of ITSA's other bankruptcy administration work, remained under consideration.

International bankruptcy cooperation

ITSA is one of the founding members of the International Association of Insolvency Regulators. The association was formed in November 1995 and held its first annual meeting in June 1996. Its purpose is to provide a forum for promoting a common understanding of insolvency regulation practices around the world and to facilitate closer cooperation on insolvency issues among members.

Program 3**Community Affairs**

Program objective

To enhance and promote the rights of individuals and their reasonable access to justice.

Sub-program 3.3

Office of Film and Literature Classification

Sub-program objectives

To assist adults to make informed decisions about films and publications which they, and those in their care, may view or read by providing classification advice which is consistent with community standards.

To enable the film and publishing industry to produce and market their products in accordance with public classification standards and pre-set conditions of sale and exhibition.

As a result of the commencement of the *Classification (Publications, Films and Computer Games) Act 1995* on 1 January 1996, the Office of Film and Literature Classification (OFLC) reported separately as a Department in compliance with s.50 of the *Audit Act 1901* for the first time in 1995–96.

Section 54.(2) of the Classification (Publications Films and Computer Games) Act gives the Director 'all of the powers of a Secretary under the *Public Service Act 1922*, as they relate to the branch of the Australian Public Service comprising the Office of Film and Literature Classification.'

The Public Service Act defines a Department as 'a branch or part of the Service in relation to which a person has, under this Act or another Act, the powers of, or exercisable by, a Secretary as if that branch or part of the Service were a separate Department.'

However, as funding for the sub-program continues to be appropriated through the Attorney-General's Department, the accompanying financial statements incorporate the OFLC.

Resources Summary - 3.3 Office of Film & Literature Classification

FINANCIAL	1994-95	1995-96	1995-96
	Actual \$('000)	Estimate \$('000)	Actual \$('000)
Appropriation Bill No. 1			
Running Costs			
• Salaries (120-1) (p) & (143-1) (p)	1 754	2 053	2 030
• Administrative Expenses (120-1) (p) & (143-1)	1 132	1 276	1 043
• Legal Services provided by the Attorney-General's Department (120-1) (p) & (143-1) (p)	31	30	25
• Property Operating Expenses (120-1) (p) & (143-1) (p)			
- Current	774	728	724
RUNNING COSTS APPROPRIATION	3 691	4 087	3 822
Other Program Costs			
• Compensation & Legal Expenses (120-2-04)	-	5	-
TOTAL APPROPRIATIONS	3 691	4 092	3 822
Adjustments Affecting Outlays			
• Section 35 (Audit Act) Receipts	155	82	82
• Other Offsetting Revenue	471	336	336
TOTAL OUTLAYS	3 065	3 674	3 404
STAFFING			
Staff Years	43.0	42.5	37.9

(p) indicates that the amount shown against the appropriation item is only part of the amount appropriated under that item.

Specific accrual accounting information can be found in the accompanying audited Financial Statement.

Sub-program 3.4**Legal Aid and Family Services**

Sub-program objective

- To develop and support the legal aid framework for the Australian community to have fair access to processes for resolving legal and associated problems.
- To assist families to achieve and maintain appropriate functional relationships through providing reasonable access to quality marriage celebrant and family relationship services, including, where appropriate, alternative means of family dispute resolution.

Role

The sub-program is administered by Legal Aid and Family Services (LAFS), which is located in the Department's Central Office.

While LAFS administers some funding directly, most of the funds appropriated are allocated to various community-based service providers and Legal Aid Commissions (LACs) in all States and Territories.

Legal Aid

The Legal Aid program aims to provide reasonable access to legal assistance, particularly for those who have needs arising under Commonwealth law. This goal is pursued in cooperation with States and Territories to ensure that all Australians have reasonable access to legal assistance to meet needs arising under any law.

Commonwealth funding is provided for legal aid through:

- LACs in all States and Territories in accordance with Commonwealth-State agreements for provision of legal assistance throughout Australia;
- community legal centres in all States and Territories for provision of community-based legal assistance throughout Australia;
- LACs and community legal centres in relation to the Child Support Scheme to assist with the efficient operation of the scheme's legal assistance aspects;
- direct grants of financial assistance in matters arising under a number of Commonwealth schemes, including matters under the Native Title Act, the Industrial Relations Act, the Racial Discrimination Act, the Sex Discrimination Act, the Public Interest and Test Cases Scheme and the Overseas Custody (Child Removal) Scheme.

An integral part of the legal aid program is the Australian Legal Assistance Board (ALAB), which was established on 23 October 1995 in response to concerns that the Commonwealth needed to adopt a greater leadership role in developing a more cohesive and coordinated system for legal aid.

The Board has a charter to pursue a greater Commonwealth role in the development of legal aid policy and in promoting access and equity in the provision of legal assistance. It has developed a program for change to identify systemic weaknesses in the administration of legal aid in Australia and will recommend structural change to achieve best practice in the delivery of legal assistance.

Family Services

The Family Services program aims to assist families to achieve and maintain appropriate functional relationships by providing reasonable access to quality marriage celebrant and family relationship services, including alternative means of family dispute resolution where appropriate. The program includes:

- marriage/relationship counselling services to support families;
- marriage/relationship education for pre-marriage and at significant points in the life of relationships;
- family mediation to assist separating couples reach agreement on matters including parenting and child care, finances and property;
- adolescent mediation and family therapy which aims to prevent youth homelessness by addressing serious conflict between adolescents and their families;
- changeover and visiting services which provide safe contact and transfer arrangements for children between separated parents in situations where there is conflict;
- family skills training which targets vulnerable families and aims to provide families with appropriate and more satisfying parenting skills.

Family Services also administers the appointment under the *Marriage Act 1961* of civil and religious marriage celebrants (other than nominees of major recognised denominations).

The Family Services Council, established in December 1994, is an advisory council to the Attorney-General. It provides advice on the development of policy directions, priorities and principles in Family Services, including quality assurance and a research and evaluation agenda. The Council consists of ten people, including a departmental representative, service provider representatives and experts in social and family policy.

In 1995–96 the Council established seven working groups to address the specific relevant issues of quality, children and youth, family violence, family law, social justice, marriage/relationship education and competencies.



LAFS staff members Barbara Sullivan and Michele Whitters (standing, third and fifth from left) at a workshop in Brisbane for agencies providing drought crisis counselling to Queensland and NSW families.

Resources summary – 3.4 Legal Aid and Family Services

FINANCIAL	1994–95	1995–96	1995–96
	Actual	Estimate	Actual
	\$(‘000)	\$(‘000)	\$(‘000)
Appropriation Bill No. 1			
Running Costs			
• Salaries (120-1) (p)	2 639	4 364	4 112
• Administrative Expenses (120-1) (p)	2 303	3 104	3 028
• Legal Services provided by the Attorney-General’s Department (120-1) (p)	59	105	101
• Property Operating Expenses (120-1) (p)			
- Current	439	529	529
- Capital	4	179	178
RUNNING COSTS APPROPRIATION	5 443	8 281	7 948
Other Program Costs			
• Grants to Australian Organisations (120-2-01)	1 059	1 485	1 128
• Financial Assistance (120-2-03)	3 405	5 878	5 807
• Marriage Counselling Grants (120-2-09)	21 994	28 933	26 845
• Act of Grace Payments (120-2-13)	-	3	3
Appropriation Bill No. 2			
• Provision of Legal Aid (806-02)	121 155	132 945	125 952
• Legal Aid Grants (806-03)	8 425	14 918	13 843
• Assistance to people who are unable to pay disbursement costs for civil law claims	-	2 593	-
• Working Capital Advance (for payment to the Attorney-General’s Department - Disbursements Assistance Fund Trust Account)	-	2 593	-
TOTAL APPROPRIATIONS	161 481	197 629	181 526
Adjustments Affecting Outlays			
• Section 35 (Audit Act) Receipts	1	76	76
• Other Offsetting Revenue	83	58	58
TOTAL OUTLAYS	161 397	197 495	181 392
STAFFING			
Staff Years	53.0	65.5	64.0

(p) indicates that the amount shown against an appropriation item is only part of the amount appropriated under that item.

Specific accrual accounting information can be found in the accompanying audited Financial Statements.

Performance measure

- Efficient and effective implementation and administration of government policies and initiatives.

Performance outcome

The administration of government policies and initiatives has been improved by a program for change developed by the ALAB. In particular work commenced in 1995–96 on a study to identify factors affecting demand for legal assistance and a further study on management and information needs of LACs.

A tender was issued for a consultancy to determine the information needs of managers and policy-makers at the operating and general management levels within the LACs, of the management boards themselves and of governments, and to develop a reporting system conforming with best practice.

Implementation of a comprehensive and nationally consistent data collection system for LACs has long been an objective of the Commonwealth. To achieve this objective the Commonwealth decided to purchase LA Office, an integrated office support and practice management system developed by the Queensland LAC. The Commonwealth proposed to provide the system free of charge for use by other LACs, subject to a number of conditions designed to ensure that the system remained a truly national one. Ingres software is an integral part of the operation of LA Office. To assist the implementation of the system the Commonwealth paid for the initial and first-year periodic licence fees for the number of Ingres user licences required by participating LACs. Ongoing operational and maintenance costs were to be met by LAFS.

Development and implementation of the National Information System (NIS) for the community legal services program proceeded during the year in conjunction with relevant agencies and LACs. The scheme would enable collection of comparable data on the operation of centres and provide greater accountability, effective monitoring of the impact of services and planning of programs on a national basis.

Work continued in 1995–96 on a uniform national means test to provide a greater degree of equity in the delivery of legal aid services throughout Australia. In 1989 LAFS established the first national model means test which was adopted by the majority of LACs. With support from LAFS, the directors of LACs established a working party in 1994 to prepare a revised national means test. The revised test was implemented by the majority of LACs from 1 July 1995 and was in place in all LACs by December 1995.

LAFS maintained efficient and effective administration of funding programs under its control. It continued to develop and refine funding and accountability arrangements such as guidelines, agreements and standards in consultation with relevant service providers.

These improved arrangements were designed to enable a better understanding of the focus and scope of programs and accountability arrangements and provide a more effective capacity to monitor program outcomes, ensuring optimum results in terms of efficient and effective use of resources and appropriate and timely services for clients.

LAFS continued to develop methodologies to enable the implementation of a needs-based approach to planning for all legal aid and family services programs to ensure that resources were directed to areas of greatest need and that there was equitable access.

A tender was issued for a consultancy to undertake a two-phase legal-assistance needs study. The first phase aimed to develop a methodology to establish an equitable basis for the distribution of funds for legal assistance, while the second phase was designed to identify needs in addition to expressed demand for services in order to assist in determining Commonwealth priorities for service delivery.

Needs-based planning models were also used to assist in determining the proposed location of family and community legal services in 1995–96 and ensure that resources were directed to areas of highest need. Relevant statistical data, used in conjunction with information about locations of existing services and funding levels on a per capita basis, determined the target locations for new and additional services. Applications for

funding from suitably qualified organisations were sought through national advertising. A rigorous selection process was developed in consultation with the Department of Finance, and applications were assessed against the following criteria:

- quality of proposed service delivery;
- demonstrated relevance to the community;
- integration and cooperation with other services and referral links;
- budget, facilities and support systems;
- particular strengths, weaknesses or innovation included in the application.

Several key evaluations were initiated in 1995–96 to provide data for future family services policy development and to continue to improve the effectiveness and accountability of services. These evaluations included:

- family mediation and violence;
- marriage/relationship counselling;
- a rural counselling project with early indications that it has been highly successful in meeting the needs of rural families for counselling;
- marriage/relationship education.

An analysis of the Child Support Scheme legal services program was undertaken to identify models of best practice and to assess areas within the program which could be modified to increase both efficiency and effectiveness. In 1996–97 the program was to be revised to reflect the findings of the report.

Performance measure

- Making justice more accessible by promoting best management practice by LACs and family service providers.

Performance outcome

ALAB is required by its charter to develop best practice methods and reduce duplication among LACs. One way of achieving this is by the appointment of the Chair of ALAB as Commonwealth nominee to several LACs, and appointing senior departmental officers to other LACs. This assists the development and implementation of coherent national policy and best practice across the country. In addition, LAFS has also worked with LACs on the benchmarking of assignments to identify and achieve best practice in this area. It has also worked with LACs and community legal centres on best practice in the management and delivery of community and child support legal services.

The Victorian Government amended the establishing legislation of the Victorian LAC in full consultation with the Commonwealth. The result was a restructure of the management board of the Victorian LAC into a smaller, more management-focused body with fewer board members, all of whom had significant management skills. The management board of Victoria Legal Aid may provide a useful model for the structure of other LAC management boards to promote efficiency and best practice in LACs.

A joint Commonwealth-State review of the WA LAC was announced on 25 August 1995. The terms of reference required that the review examine the organisational structure of the commission, funding issues and alternative methods of service delivery to ensure effective and efficient operation. The review was continuing.

The South Australian Parliamentary Statutory Authorities Review Committee conducted an inquiry into the South Australian Legal Services Commission. The Commonwealth provided a submission which was supplemented by evidence given to the Commonwealth by Mr Norman Reaburn, Deputy Secretary.

New pilot projects were introduced into existing Commonwealth-funded marriage/relationship counselling organisations in selected areas of Australia during 1995–96 to increase access to services by disadvantaged families and establish best practice:

- Six community development officers were appointed to increase cross-cultural awareness and ensure easier access to all family services by people from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds.
- Two family violence research and intervention projects were set up to develop and test integrated models of service delivery for all members of a family where violence is an issue, research and evaluate the models of service delivery for wider use within family services nationally, and provide training for service providers in dealing appropriately with families where violence occurs. This was to include development of materials for use in rural and remote areas.

LAFS, in collaboration with Department of Primary Industries and Energy and the Department of Health and Family Services, received a 12-month rural health support education and training grant of \$74,000 to undertake research and recommend strategies for the delivery of more coordinated counselling programs in rural and regional areas.

In 1995 a working group of the Family Services Council developed draft family mediation standards drawing on the views of recognised experts in the field. These standards were intended to inform the practice of community-based family and child mediation services. The standards were circulated in late 1995 to services for consultation and were reconciled with regulations made after the Family Law Act.

Performance measure

- Extending access to social justice in the community by implementing appropriate and coherent policy in relation to family services and legal aid, and promoting more effective Commonwealth-funded family services and legal aid programs.

Performance outcome

Total additional funding of \$4.8 million was provided under the 1995 Justice Statement to LACs – \$1.2 million for advice services for people who have difficulty in accessing legal advice and \$3.6 million for grants of aid in family and civil law matters.

Access to legal aid for those in need was also increased by additional funding provided by the Commonwealth during 1995–96 to LACs on the basis of a matching input by State and Territory governments.

In 1995–96 the Community Legal Centre program funded 115 organisations on a recurrent basis to provide a range of specialist and general community-based legal services across Australia. New or additional funding was granted to 43 organisations to implement initiatives under the Justice Statement. This included the establishment of a national network of legal services for women encompassing the special needs of women in rural and remote regions, women living in low-income outer metropolitan areas and indigenous women. Networks of specialist environmental lawyers and lawyers specialising in children and youth were established. Services for rural people were significantly improved through the establishment of community legal centres in previously underserved rural regions.

In addition 38 family services received new or additional funding to implement Justice Statement initiatives. Recipients ranged from small, single-service venues through to larger organisations offering services across multiple sub-programs.

Service	1994–95 \$	1995–96 \$	Increase %
Marriage/Relationship Counselling	15 463 121	15 346 941	
Family Violence Research/Intervention Project	0	375 308	
Community Development Officer Project	0	465 580	
Total Marriage/Relationship Counselling	15 463 121	16 187 829	5
Marriage Education	1 195 764	1 593 114	33
Adolescent Mediation and Family Therapy	1 615 437	1 732 243	7
Family Mediation	1 821 532	4 417 059	142
Family Skills Training	1 611 421	1 793 426	11
Changeover and Visiting Centres	0	830 098	
Total	\$21 707 275	\$26 553 769	22

Social justice outcomes for programs funded through LAFS in 1995–96 included:

- assistance through LACs was provided to 2.1 per cent of the Australian population, or 384,648 clients, by way of advice services, duty lawyer services and/or representation in substantive matters.
- applications to LACs for legal assistance from Aboriginal people, women, migrants, recipients of Commonwealth benefits and children totalled 82.6 per cent of total applications received and their approval rate was 78.7 per cent. This compared with 1994–95 figures of 81.5 per cent and 78.5 per cent respectively.
- grants of legal assistance to Aboriginal people, women, migrants, recipients of Commonwealth benefits and children as a percentage of all grants of legal assistance was 83.1 per cent, compared with 81.9 per cent in 1994–95.
- applications for legal assistance and use of advice and duty lawyer services provided by LACs were 36.4 per thousand of the Australian population, compared with 35.1 per thousand in 1994–95.

Note: Data for the last three months of the year was not available from the Legal Services Commission of South Australia and is thus not included in the national figures.

LAFS worked to improve access to non-litigation legal aid services by continuing to promote a national approach to community legal education through the development and maintenance of a national register of community legal-education materials, enabling better access to information which assists in solving legal problems.

LAFS administers grants of financial assistance to litigants for the conduct of cases in courts and tribunals in special cases where ordinary legal aid is not available or where special statutory provisions apply. During the year financial assistance was provided in a number of important matters covering public interest or test cases, native title matters, Aboriginal heritage matters and for the representation of people appearing before commissions and inquiries.

LAFS continued to monitor the distribution of aid between the three major law types – criminal, civil and family. Initiatives developed in the context of the Justice Statement were designed to ensure that an appropriate level of resources was directed towards family and civil law matters.

LAFS continued to administer funds provided by the Department of Primary Industries and Energy to six family counselling services in drought-stricken areas of NSW and Queensland. In-house evaluation of this two-year project revealed that counsellors had successfully overcome community and client barriers to accessing services and that the services were fully utilised by clients.

Performance measure

- Reasonable access available to the optimal number of high-quality marriage celebrants.

Performance outcome

Each year more than 110,000 marriages are celebrated in Australia. The number of weddings conducted by civil marriage celebrants has increased over the years. In 1995–96, 724 civil and 144 religious celebrants were appointed under s.39(2) of the Marriage Act.

LAFS developed a new process for appointing civil marriage celebrants. This process substantially improved the operation of the celebrants program in meeting the needs of the community and was expected to result in a more equitable distribution of celebrants across Australia. While many communities are well-served by civil celebrants others – because of geographical considerations or special needs – are under-served. In the future the appointment of celebrants will be targeted to meet defined and objective levels of need.

When a community requiring additional appointments is identified applicants will be invited to apply for appointment through targeted advertising. Applicants will continue to be assessed against selection criteria, including a requirement for favourable referee reports.

Program 4**Administration of Justice**

Program objective

To promote the effective and timely adjudication of disputes and resolution of questions of law in courts and tribunals with appropriate jurisdictions.

Sub-program 4.8**Ancillary Program Services**

Sub-program objective

To assist other elements of the program in achieving their objectives through:

- provision of services to former Commonwealth judges and spouses of former Commonwealth judges;
 - provision of funding to the Family Court of Western Australia for its operations and to the States for services provided under the Family Law Act and Child Support Scheme legislation;
 - provision of appropriate and suitable physical accommodation for the operations of Courts and Tribunals.
-

Resources Summary - 4.8 Ancillary Program Services

FINANCIAL	1994-95	1995-96	1995-96
	Actual \$('000)	Estimate \$('000)	Actual \$('000)
Special Appropriations			
• Judges' Pensions Act 1968	6 046	6 895	6 879
Appropriation Bill No. 1			
Running Costs			
• Salaries (120-1) (p)	32	97	97
• Administrative Expenses (120-1) (p)	128	118	85
• Property Operating Expenses (120-1) (p)			
- Current	594	682	652
- Capital	21	10	10
RUNNING COSTS APPROPRIATION	775	907	844
Other Program Costs			
• Law Courts Limited Operating Expenses (120-2-07)	3 342	2 412	1 991
• Payments to the States under the Family Law Act 1975 and Child Support Scheme Legislation (12-2-10)	5 342	8 120	4 802
• Family Court of Western Australia - Operating Expenses (120-2-13)	7 287	8 200	8 167
Appropriation Bill No. 2			
• Capital Equipment (805-1-01) (p)	476	0	0
• Construction of Departmental Facilities (805-1-02) (p)	1 010	3 746	2 593
TOTAL APPROPRIATIONS	24 278	30 280	25 274
Adjustments Affecting Outlays			
• Other Offsetting Revenue	-	15	15
TOTAL OUTLAYS	24 278	30 265	25 260

Note: With the exception of courts construction services, funds provided under Sub-program 4.8 – Ancillary Program Services, are not directly administered by the Attorney-General's Department.

(p) indicates that the amount shown against an appropriation item is only part of the amount appropriated under that item.

Specific accrual accounting information can be found in the accompanying audited Financial Statements.

4.8.1 *Payments to former holders of judicial office*

This item provides for the payment of pensions to former federal judges and to spouses and dependents of deceased judges. It also allows for certain costs of former judges to be met according to conditions determined by the Government. Former Chief Justices of the High Court are provided with an office and certain support services in accordance with approved entitlements.

Performance measure

- Payments to former judges, or spouses and dependents of former judges, to be made in accordance with approved entitlements.

Performance outcome

All payments were made in accordance with existing entitlements.

4.8.2 *Expenses associated with family law and judicial administration*

This item covers advances for, or reimbursement of, agreed costs of the States providing services through their lower courts in relation to certain family law and child support services, including maintenance collection and disbursement and the enforcement of maintenance and child support orders. Specific provision is also made for the net cost of operating the Family Court of WA, the only State court established under s.41 of the Family Law Act.

Performance measure

- Payments to the States in respect of family law and related services to be made in accordance with agreements between the Commonwealth and the States.

Performance outcome

Payments were made in accordance with current agreements.

4.8.3 Courts building services

This component embraces the activities of the Department in the provision of major court facilities for federal jurisdictions.

It involves acquisition of sites and construction of new facilities under the Court Construction Program which was adopted in 1987. New premises have been completed at Parramatta, Perth, Sydney and Brisbane. Preliminary planning and design work continued for the construction of new facilities in Melbourne.

The sub-program also includes maintenance costs associated with the operation of the Commonwealth-State law courts building in Sydney.

Performance measures

- Acceptance by client agencies, service departments and industry of user requirement briefs.
- Meeting architectural, engineering and other professional standards.
- Achievement of projected target dates while meeting quality control standards within funding limits.
- Integration of feedback from post-occupancy evaluation into the planning of future projects.

Performance outcome

Performance under all items was satisfactory and effective throughout the year.

Funding was provided in the May 1994 Budget for the construction of a Commonwealth Law Courts Building on the corner of William and La Trobe Streets in Melbourne to house the High Court, the Federal Court, the Family Court and the Industrial Relations Court.

During 1995–96 the design and initial documentation of the building continued. The project was considered by the Joint Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works in September 1995 and approval to proceed successfully passed through Parliament in November 1995.

Expressions of interest to document and construct the building were sought nationally through newspaper advertisements in December 1995, and a shortlist of contractors to be invited to tender was established.

Further development of the initial documentation and the preparation of tender documents was undertaken in the first half of 1996.

Program 6**Maintenance of Law, Order and Security**

Program objective

To contribute to the maintenance of law and order, to combat crime and to respond effectively to acts of politically motivated violence. To maintain effective measures against espionage and subversive activities and against attacks directed at individuals, information and assets.

Sub-program 6.4

Common Police Services

Sub-program objective

To manage and further develop for the Australian police forces common police services such as criminal intelligence, police research, exchange of police information and management training for very senior police officers.

Component 6.4.4

Office of the Narcotics Control Board, Thailand

Component objective

To enhance regional participation in the international effort to combat crime.

Role

Since 1982 the Government has provided assistance to computerise the intelligence-gathering and related functions of the Office of the Narcotics Control Board in Thailand.



Thai officials and representatives of the Department involved in the joint Thai-Australian anti-narcotics computer project met in Rayong, Thailand, in June 1996. The Secretary-General of Thailand's Office of the Narcotics Control Board, Mr Prija Champaratana, is seated in the front row, fourth from left. On his left is the Secretary, Stephen Skehill.

Resources Summary - 6.4.4 Office of the Narcotics Control Board, Thailand

FINANCIAL	1994-95	1995-96	1995-96
	Actual	Estimate	Actual
	\$(‘000)	\$(‘000)	\$(‘000)
Appropriation Bill No. 1			
Running Costs			
• Salaries (120-1) (p)	195	215	219
• Administrative Expenses (120-1) (p)	144	155	129
RUNNING COSTS APPROPRIATION	339	370	348
Other Program Costs			
• Compensation & Legal Expenses (120-2-04) (p)	82	0	0
TOTAL APPROPRIATIONS	421	370	348
Adjustments Affecting Outlays			
• Section 35 (Audit Act) Receipts	15	15	15
• Trust Account Transactions - Office of Narcotics Control Board Law Enforcement Projects Trust Account			
- Receipts	530	0	0
- Expenditure	308	163	163
TOTAL OUTLAYS	185	518	496
STAFFING			
Staff Years	2.0	2.0	2.0

(p) indicates that the amount shown against an appropriation item is only part of the amount appropriated under that item.

Specific accrual accounting information can be found in the accompanying audited Financial Statements.

Performance measure

- Participation as a member of the Joint Management Committee of the Thai Office of the Narcotics Control Board.

Performance outcome

The Department's Information Technology Group continued to provide technical and operational support to the Thai-Australian computer project in the Office of the Narcotics Control Board in Thailand, including attendance at the annual joint project management committee meeting which is co-chaired by the Secretary.

Performance measure

- Contributing to the creation of an environment conducive to the effective enforcement of criminal laws.

Performance outcome

During the year additional online immigration barrier systems were installed in the major new extension to the Don Muang International Airport and the mainframe computer system installed in Bangkok was upgraded. The mainframe computer is used to automate drug intelligence and related information-gathering functions for the Office of the Narcotics Control Board.

Component 6.5.3

Australian Protective Service

Component objective

The Australian Protective Service (APS) provides its customers with highly effective and efficient protective services in areas of special importance or sensitivity.

Role

The APS operates under the *Australian Protective Service Act 1987* and provides a range of services on a cost recovery basis. These include guarding buildings and establishments occupied by many Commonwealth agencies throughout Australia; sensitive defence establishments such as those at North-West Cape, Pine Gap and Nurrungar; the residences of the Prime Minister and Governor-General; the external precincts and ministerial wing of Parliament House; and the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation's research facility at Lucas Heights, Sydney. It also provides diplomatic and consular security at more than 400 locations throughout Australia.

However, the responsibilities of the APS go beyond the provision of guarding services. The APS also carries out custodial and escort duties for the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs at its reception, processing and detention centres in locations as varied as Villawood in Sydney and Port Hedland in Western Australia. Another major responsibility which occupies a quarter of APS staff is providing a counter-terrorist first-response facility at Australia's major airports.

The APS is represented in all States and Territories and its national headquarters is located in Canberra.

Resource Summary - 6.5.3 Australian Protective Service

FINANCIAL	1994-95	1995-96	1995-96
	Actual \$('000)	Estimate \$('000)	Actual \$('000)
Other Program Costs			
• Rental Subsidy (120-2-14)	68	0	0
TOTAL APPROPRIATIONS	68	0	0
Adjustments Affecting Outlays			
• Other Offsetting Receipts			
- Dividends	4 000	846	846
- Loan Repayment	1 100	0	0
• Trust Account Transactions - Australian Protective Service Trust Account			
- Receipts	55 807	78 494	78 494
- Expenditure	75 484	82 099	82 099
TOTAL OUTLAYS	14 645	2 759	2 759
STAFFING			
Staff Years	1025.7	980.0	1040.0

(p) indicates that the amount shown against an appropriation item is only part of the amount appropriated under that item.

Specific accrual accounting information can be found in the accompanying audited Financial Statements.

Performance measure

- To maintain our core business in government, and to diversify into strategic protective security law enforcement areas that are consistent with our market strategy .

Performance outcome

As detailed in the financial statements included in this report, the APS reported an operational loss before abnormal items of \$303,000 for the 1995-96 financial year, compared to a profit before abnormal items of nearly \$3 million for 1994-95. Detailed analysis of the financial performance of the APS during the year indicated a number of causes for this turnaround, along with a need for more sophistication in financial reporting and a continued and heightened focus on cost containment.

During 1995-96 the APS tendered for and succeeded in securing a five-year contract to provide protective security services to the High Court of Australia. It was noted that, while the APS was not the cheapest tenderer, its proposal was of a higher standard overall. The major advantages were the organisation's training, legal powers and experience.

In April 1996 the Attorney-General approved the establishment of the Australian Security Vetting Service (ASVS), a joint venture between the APS and the Security Division. The ASVS will operate on a cost recovery basis and will provide a dedicated national vetting service to Commonwealth departments that wish to outsource their vetting functions. The ASVS will also provide security education and awareness sessions and consultancy services. It was expected that the establishment of the ASVS would result in improvements in the quality and consistency of security vetting nationally and provide cost efficiencies for the Commonwealth.

During the year the APS became a certified supplier of fire alarm monitoring services and negotiated to provide such services to a number of Commonwealth departments and instrumentalities. This service was seen as a logical extension to the activities performed by the APS's Grade One Control Room located in Kingston, ACT.

The APS has been highly active in developing its external training sales capability. It provides various training services, including technical training, defensive tactics and conflict resolution, to Commonwealth agencies, resulting in increased revenue for the organisation.

In order to identify cost savings and efficiencies in the performance of the APS's operations with the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs and the Department of Defence, the APS undertook a re-engineering approach to the provision of its services. This approach required the APS to examine agreed outcomes with its clients in detail and to re-examine internal processes.

During the year national and regional marketing plans were developed and implemented, ensuring that APS marketing strategies were consistent throughout the organisation. A national media response plan was developed outlining the immediate communications and public affairs actions that should be followed in the event of a crisis. The plan identifies the objectives, organisation systems and tactics that need to be deployed on a communications level.

The APS formulated and implemented measures to identify the changing needs of its customers and was consequently able to develop value added services consistent with changing client requirements. As an example, value added training services in conflict resolution were provided to the High Court and the Department of Social Security.

The APS continued to develop a positive image and heighten its profile through the implementation of communication strategies and active participation in Commonwealth law enforcement forums. In addition, to improve the APS's corporate identity plans were developed to issue one uniform – in blue – to officers throughout the organisation rather than having two uniforms in blue and khaki. As a result the quality of the uniform was also to be improved.

Performance measure

- To be a customer- driven protective security law enforcement organisation, and to be judged by our customers on the superior and professional service we provide.

Performance outcome

In aiming to be recognised as a responsible, integral arm of the Commonwealth law enforcement community, the APS continued its cooperation with other agencies by actively participating in federal law enforcement forums, identifying security deficiencies and formulating appropriate security measures. The APS was finalising working guidelines with police services throughout Australia with a view to improving cooperation and operational capabilities.

The APS also became an increasingly active member of SAC-PAV which provided extensive assistance in reviewing APS training, particularly counter-terrorist first-response training.

Through government forums the APS continued to work towards developing a portfolio of services that interact cooperatively with other agencies. This was designed to lead to the development of MOUs and procedures to gain accountability and acceptance at the operational and executive level.

Throughout the year, in consultation with other agencies, the APS contributed to the security arrangements of visits to Australia by a number of foreign dignitaries, including the presidents of Croatia and the Republic of Korea. It also provided protection of valuable artworks such as the Turner exhibition and the Vision of Kings collection of ancient Indian artefacts. In October 1995 a contract was signed with Art Exhibitions Australia to specify arrangements under which the APS provides security escort and advisory services for Commonwealth indemnified art exhibitions. The contract is valid for five years.

The APS, either alone or in conjunction with other agencies, resolved more than 2,500 incidents at client establishments throughout Australia in 1995–96, and continued to maintain close working relationships with its customers to ensure that it was responsive to customer needs and met and exceeded their requirements and expectations.

The APS continued its successful operation of immigration detention, reception and processing centres in NSW, WA and Victoria on behalf of the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs. It also provided services at a temporary centre located at the RAAF's Curtin Base (near Derby in WA) until the closure of that centre late last year. Officers were provided on a regular basis to boost security at some centres, to escort groups of detainees between centres and to return others to China.

The APS had a successful year providing a counter-terrorist first response role at security-designated airports throughout Australia. The organisation continued to maintain a good relationship with airport operators and other key stakeholders.

The APS continued to work closely with the Department of Defence in providing services to establishments such as the Russell Offices in Canberra, the Joint Defence Facilities in Exmouth and Pine Gap, the Australian Defence Satellite Communications Station in Geraldton and the Defence Science and Technology Organisation in Salisbury.

The APS's Diplomatic and Consular Protection Group had a successful year with additional services being required as a result of French nuclear testing in the South Pacific, the Balkans crisis and heightened levels of threat and demonstrations at various missions. Good relationships were maintained with the Protective Security Coordination Centre (PSCC) and other stakeholders, such as police forces.

Despite the APS's efforts to maintain good relationships, many of its Commonwealth customers investigated ways to economise on security services due to reductions in security budgets. This led to the reduction or replacement of APS services at certain establishments. Although only a relatively small number of positions were affected, the continuing loss of such work was of concern. This was particularly so given the long lead times in obtaining new contracts and the need to be able to provide a surge capacity enabling officers to respond, in the national interest, to heightened levels of threat or to incidents at the various establishments which the APS protects.

During 1995–96 the APS undertook an internal review and implemented measures to ensure that its cost structure was focused on cost recovery in accordance with government guidelines. The APS balance sheet was subsequently restructured and an MOU signed with the Department of Finance.

An agreement regarding base-grade recruitment was reached with the Community and Public Sector Union during the year and certified by the Industrial Relations Commission. Consequently the two base-grade entry points into the organisation (Protective Security Attendant and Trainee Protective Service Officer) were amalgamated into the single base-grade entry point of Assistant Protective Service Officer. This resulted in better morale, an improved capacity to respond more effectively to the changing needs of customers and a more structured approach to entry and advancement.

A major recruitment campaign was undertaken in the latter part of 1995, culminating in four recruit courses. One of these courses was conducted in Darwin for casual staff who were recruited to meet the flexible rostering requirements of the client at Darwin Airport.

APS training, both at recruit and managerial level, continued to reflect the need to provide ethical practices in all dealings. In addition, the APS developed an APS leadership commitment model as part of the Department's leadership model. This was distributed to all APS staff and the principles incorporated into training for both middle managers and supervisors.

Performance measure

- To be a decentralised organisation, where staff at the workplace will be empowered to make decisions for the benefit of our customers.

Performance outcome

During 1995–96 the APS national headquarters and regional offices were restructured to flatten the national structure, streamline decision-making and meet the needs of customers and staff more effectively.

The Operations and Corporate Management Branches within national headquarters were reorganised into five business groups – Human Resources, Business and Client Services, Technology/Administration, Finance and Executive Support. Under the new structure the Deputy Director, Operations and the Deputy Director, Strategic, were no longer so heavily involved in the day-to-day running of the organisation and were more focused on the important strategic issues affecting the APS's future.

The six APS Regional Offices were restructured into four: ACT, Eastern (NSW and Queensland), Southern (Victoria, Tasmania and South Australia) and Western (WA and Northern Territory). As a result of this restructure two positions of Regional Commander (SES1) were created, one in each of the Eastern and Southern regions. The occupants of these positions assume an executive role in overseeing all functions of the region and developing the strategic plan of the organisation in the region through high-level liaison and contact.

Performance measure

- To empower our officers through becoming a 'learning organisation' where they will have the training and skills necessary to allow them to provide superior service.

Performance outcome

A Human Resources Section was established during the year with a view to better meeting the needs of APS staff. A Human Resources Manager within each regional office was also created to assist with the development of a consistent and comprehensive human resource strategy throughout the organisation.

Two major surveys were undertaken into workplace attitudes in order to identify the priorities for improving staff morale, occupational health and safety, equity and the career structure and opportunities in the organisation.

The quality focus of the APS was strategically linked to the overall training approach, culminating in a review of operational training and the establishment of human resource training as a separate entity. The review of training resulted in the establishment of an APS national training plan to address training issues in a coordinated and planned way. The aim was to ensure appropriate and consistent standards across the organisation and to ensure that staff had equal access to training. In addition a Human Resources Training Manager was appointed with the task of identifying appropriate tertiary and external courses (including those dealing with career development) that were consistent with the aims and requirements of the APS, and developing and delivering APS courses which related to human resources and contributed to organisational development.

The APS National Training Centre continued its significant investment in upgrading the skills of its officers at all levels by spending approximately \$2.8 million on a wide range of courses and training forums.

In October 1995 the Human Resources Section instituted a free-call 1800 number to enable staff to seek clarification or advice about staff policy and administrative practices. This proved a popular facility.

In December 1995 the APS Policy and Procedures Manual was launched. The manual provides a systematic approach to human resource management, financial management and administration. It aims to ensure that all staff are fully informed of their rights and obligations as members of the APS and to provide a consistent guide to management and work practices.

One of the most notable changes that occurred in the APS during 1995–96 was the increase in female recruitment, with a 50 per cent female intake on most recruit courses. The percentage of females in the organisation reached 18 per cent, one of the highest in organisations associated with protective security and law enforcement in Australia. This was achieved through the normal selection process without resort to positive discrimination. It was anticipated that the increasing numbers of female staff would assist with the resolution of past gender imbalance problems and would bring improved decision-making to the workplace.



An APS bomb appraisal officer, Robbie Landon, conducts an X-ray inspection of a suspect device at the APS Open Day in Canberra in September 1995. The Open Day was held to give clients a demonstration of APS services and capabilities.

Performance measure

- To operate a management structure that communicates effectively upwards, downwards and across all levels of the organisation, and which recognises superior service from staff .

Performance outcome

The APS continued to be committed to recognising staff achievement and initiative through awards and letters of commendation for outstanding achievement and superior service. Management and advanced management training was implemented both internally and at a tertiary level for middle and senior managers with a view to providing them with training appropriate to their needs and responsibilities.

Information was communicated to APS staff through the organisation's fortnightly newsletter *Update* and the quarterly APS Journal *Sentinel*. *Update* was forwarded to all APS stations via a bulletin board facility to ensure that timely information was made available.

Customer focus sessions were included in many APS training forums, both on-the-job and at the APS National Training Centre. The APS has also introduced into recruit training the AussieHost program which was designed to create a culture of high quality customer service standards.

To enhance client service the APS implemented a strategy aimed at resolving client complaints within ten working days. The APS also liaised with customers on a regular basis regarding service delivery issues as part of a continuous quality improvement process, and invited customers to take part in selection processes for various APS positions.

APS staff were provided with the opportunity to air their opinions and suggestions through several staff surveys. A staff opinion survey involving all APS officers resulted in an 86 per cent response rate. It provided valuable scientific data about the organisation to use as a base to develop action plans and performance indicators to help tackle identified issues of concern.

Performance measure

- To develop high-level business and operational systems that will serve to complement the business we are in.

Performance outcome

During 1995–96 efforts were made to improve the APS's business and technological capabilities.

Further investment in technology included the completion of an electronic mail service to all APS stations; completion of a bulletin board service in each APS regional headquarters to allow national and local information to be rapidly disseminated; definition of standards for base desktop workstations and software; the gradual installation of the software; and the installation of a new network throughout Canberra to monitor fire alarms from the APS Grade One Control Room.

The APS continued to work towards achieving a balanced structure where staff, systems and technology are linked to support the national objective of maintaining a credible and professional protective security agency that specialises in the provision of such services on a cost recovery basis.

To ensure that customers received a cost-effective, consistent and quality service, the APS began undergoing the required processes to attain Quality Assurance certification under ISO 9002. The ACT Region gained such accreditation. In conjunction with Quality Assurance the APS developed an operational evaluation and audit system to improve operational standards and capabilities.

Component 6.5.4**Standing Advisory Committee on Commonwealth-State Cooperation for Protection Against Violence****Role**

The Standing Advisory Committee on Commonwealth-State Cooperation for Protection Against Violence (SAC-PAV) is one of the principal instruments for coordinating the national capability for protecting Australia from politically motivated violence. The Protective Security Coordination Centre (PSCC), a branch of the Department's Security Division, provides the executive and secretariat support to this committee and its project groups.

Resource Summary - 6.5.4, Standing Advisory Committee on Commonwealth-State Protection Against Violence

FINANCIAL	1994-95	1995-96	1995-96
	Actual \$('000)	Estimate \$('000)	Actual \$('000)
Appropriation Bill No. 1			
Other Program Costs			
• Standing Advisory Committee on Commonwealth-State Protection Against Violence (120-2-06)	3 252	3 411	3 410
TOTAL APPROPRIATIONS	3 252	3 411	3 410
TOTAL OUTLAYS	3 252	3 411	3 410

Performance measure

- An effective national capability for protecting Australia from politically motivated violence.

Performance outcome

SAC-PAV continued to develop an effective national capability guided by a strategic planning process adopted following the 1993-94 review of the program. A revised edition of the National Anti-Terrorist Plan endorsed by SAC-PAV in November 1995 included a comprehensive prevention regime, external support arrangements to promote the sharing of resources across jurisdictions, and detailed processes for conducting post-incident investigations.

Through continued training and exercise programs coordinated by SAC-PAV, the processes established under the National Anti-Terrorist Plan have been adapted by police services in dealing with a range of serious incidents. For example, the effectiveness of the National Anti-Terrorist Plan and particularly its external support provisions was demonstrated during the Port Arthur incident in April 1996.

The NSW and Victoria police services and Commonwealth agencies provided assistance on request to the Tasmania police, and the response arrangements of the National Anti-Terrorist Plan were largely followed by the Tasmanian authorities in successfully managing the incident. The Tasmanian Government's SAC-PAV representative, Mr Bob Grierson, in a recent letter to the Department, wrote: 'SAC-PAV proved its worth at Port Arthur. If there were any doubt before about the value of the organisation to the national security of Australia, then that doubt should disappear now.'



The gas platform *Southern Cross* was the scene for the anti-terrorist exercise *Top Shelf*, conducted under the auspices of SAC-PAV. The exercise, which took place off the north-west coast of WA, involved the kidnapping of VIPs visiting the area and the threatened destruction by terrorists of the gas platform. It ended with the successful retaking of the *Southern Cross* by security forces.

Social Justice

The Attorney-General's Department works to an extensive social justice agenda founded on principles of equality, universal access, civil liberty and the right of all citizens to protection from crime. Virtually all areas of the Department are involved in implementing this social justice agenda.

The **Civil Law Division** is concerned with policy initiatives that are fair and responsive to changing circumstances in the areas of family law and marriage law, administrative law, information access, privacy, human rights and humanitarian law, legal procedures and judicial administration.

The activities of the Division are almost wholly directed toward the development of policies which have social justice implications. Among a range of initiatives in 1995–96 for which the Division was responsible were:

- Family Law Act amendments which made significant focal change to the relationship between children and their parents and other persons to ensure that the interests of the children were put as the paramount concern when partners separated;
- consultancy services to the UN Development Program and UNAIDS in relation to HIV–AIDS law reform, ethics and human rights;
- the development of Disability Discrimination Act standards;
- negotiations with a number of countries to establish reciprocal arrangements on recognition and enforcement of overseas maintenance orders;
- commencement of negotiations with New Zealand and the US on new reciprocal arrangements in relation to the registration and enforcement of child support assessments;
- improved court interpreter services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and people from non-English speaking backgrounds;
- management of a research project established to examine Australian South Sea Islanders' access to Commonwealth services and programs;
- introduction and passage of the Sex Discrimination Amendment Act which came into affect on 16 December 1995;
- the establishment of the National Alternative Dispute Resolution Council to provide the Commonwealth Government with coordinated and consistent policy advice on the development of high-quality, economic and efficient ways of resolving disputes before they come before the courts;
- the passage of the Racial Hatred Act which came into force on 13 October 1995;
- the conclusion of a tripartite review of HREOC with resulting recommendation for legislative change to meet the High Court's decision in the *Brandy* case;
- submission to the United Nations of a report on Australia's implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Much of the work of the **Criminal Law Division** is directed towards creating a safe and secure environment for all Australians.

The development of more harmonious criminal offences through the Model Criminal Code will have a significant social justice impact by simplifying the law, making it relevant to contemporary society and reducing costs in cases involving the laws of more than one jurisdiction. It will reduce opportunities for criminals to exploit differences between jurisdictions and will ensure that laws are fair and responsive to the social justice concerns of the community.

The Division has been active in ensuring the Model Criminal Code Officers' Committee gives appropriate consideration to Aboriginal customary legal issues and matters specifically affecting human rights, women and ethnic minorities as it develops the Model Criminal Code and other model criminal legislation.

The *Crimes (Child Sex Tourism) Amendment Act 1994* was intended to have a significant social impact by deterring those who, prior to its enactment, could engage in the sexual exploitation of children overseas, or promote tourism for that purpose, without risking prosecution and punishment in Australia for that conduct.

The first offender under the Act was sentenced on 26 April 1996. The offender was sentenced to a term of two years for offences involving children in the Philippines. Unrelated State charges which were dealt with at the same time resulted in a total sentence of nine years.

The Division began preparing a discussion paper outlining a possible strategy to address the problem of the traffic of women and girls into Australia for the purposes of prostitution, following a recommendation contained in a report on *Human Rights and Progress Towards Democracy in Burma*, prepared by the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade and released in October 1995. It also implements the recommendations in relation to slavery of the ALRC report on *Criminal Admiralty Jurisdiction and the Law of Prize*. It was anticipated that ultimately the paper would form the basis of a legislative proposal to deal with those involved in the trafficking of persons to and from Australia for the purposes of sexual exploitation.

The proposed establishment of an international prisoner transfer regime has the capacity to deliver valuable social justice outcomes because of the humanitarian, rehabilitative and social benefits which the transfer of prisoners offers.

Australia's participation in the work of the UN Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice offered an opportunity to pursue a number of issues with social justice implications, such as measures to combat violence against women.

The **Security Division** is concerned with policy initiatives to help preserve and protect community interests and law enforcement in a democratic society. In addition, the Division is involved in ensuring that acceptable standards of justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are maintained.

The Division implements a range of policies and procedures to prevent politically motivated violence. Its activities seek to balance national security concerns with the need to safeguard privacy and civil liberties. It seeks to ensure that Australian dignitaries, foreign dignitaries visiting Australia and foreign missions are accorded appropriate protection consistent with individual rights to freedom of speech and assembly.

The Division also monitors Aboriginal justice issues within the Department and develops strategies to aid in the implementation and monitoring of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody recommendations. It is also responsible for implementing the decision of SCAG to fund periodic meetings of the National Aboriginal Justice Advisory Committee.

The **International Trade Law and Intellectual Property Branch**, in conjunction with the Australian Industrial Property Organisation, participated in the making of a video on intellectual property which was distributed to 1,300 indigenous communities as part of the *Indigenous Australians* video magazine. The purpose of the video was to make indigenous creators and communities more aware of the range of intellectual property protection (e.g. copyright, designs, trade marks, patents) that is available to them. The principles of copyright law and other intellectual property laws were outlined, as well as information on where further advice can be obtained.

During 1995–96 **Legal Aid and Family Services** made a significant contribution to social justice. As a result of the 1995 Justice Statement substantial initiatives were implemented to increase access to justice for those in greatest need, including people from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds, women (including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women) and people in rural and remote areas. Services provided by these initiatives had a preventive focus, seeking early resolution of issues and reduced recourse to litigation.

Measures such as increased access to legal advice, marriage/relationship education and mediation, as well as new initiatives such as changeover and visiting services, sought to achieve this objective.

Internal and External Scrutiny

In his report on the results of *1994–95 Financial Statement Audits of Commonwealth Entities* (Audit Report No. 13 of 1995–96), the Auditor-General noted the key finding in relation to the Attorney-General's portfolio to be that the systems and processes adopted within the Department could be relied upon to produce accurate and reliable information. The Department had implemented sound procedures to address financial and business risk and had issued a detailed code of conduct to assist in formalising what was, and was not, acceptable behaviour. The Department's financial statements were again free of qualification by the Auditor-General. A full list of Australian National Audit Office reports of relevance to the Department appears at Appendix 9.1.

Internal Audit coverage of the Department was carried out in accordance with a three-year rolling plan. There continued to be an emphasis on audits associated with the Department's information technology systems, reflecting not only the significant investment the Department has made in this area but also the high degree of reliance which the Department places on these systems for its day to day operations. Emphasis was also placed on the public sector's concern for issues of accountability and propriety, and the planning process recognised this concern even where potential risks may not have been financially material. The views of senior departmental management were canvassed for contributions to draft audit programs. In view of the scrutiny of billing operations and general commercial performance already undertaken elsewhere in the Department, Internal Audit sought to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of those systems used in the revenue raising process. ITSA's coverage entails the review of each of its offices every second year and this requirement was met. Coverage of LAFS alternates yearly between grants administration and office administration reviews, whereas the APS and Auscript are scheduled to receive coverage of all offices on a biennial basis.

Significant among those tasks identified in the Internal Audit annual work program were reviews of the security access controls and data integrity of the FISCLE/UNIX migration from the mainframe, and LAW3000 management controls.

In the Department's Legal Practice, audit coverage extended to reviews of Practice Development, the Security Division and AGS offices in Melbourne, Brisbane, Townsville, Perth, Darwin and the ACT. Following on from this scheduled coverage, Internal Audit undertook a survey of the processes of time-sheet monitoring in relation to the Legal Practice's billing potential. In ITSA reviews of office administration, bankruptcy administration and proceeds of crime were conducted in NSW, Queensland (including Townsville), WA, Tasmania and the ACT offices. Internal Audit's coverage of the APS extended to office administration reviews of the ACT region, the APS national headquarters and South Australia. In addition to such reviews Internal Audit provided quality assurance services for the first time, assisting in the pre-quality assurance certification review of stations in the APS's newly-formed Western Region as well as in Sydney. A joint management review of rostering practices in the APS was completed as scheduled. Auscript's audit coverage encompassed accounts and office administration reviews of the general manager's office and the NSW, Queensland and WA/South Australian regional offices.

During the year the Departmental Audit Committee monitored the implementation of action arising from the fraud control plan, as well as that required as a result of promulgation of the Commonwealth fraud control policy and the interim ministerial direction on fraud control. The Secretary also issued a management memorandum on fraud control arrangements in the Department to all staff. Three members of staff completed a fraud investigation course conducted by the Australian Federal Police and approved by Commonwealth Law Enforcement Board. Talks aimed at developing fraud control awareness in recruits to the Department are included as a part of the induction process, with ad hoc addresses delivered to various other groups as required. The Department commenced the mandatory biennial review of its fraud control plan.

The Department has a number of measures in place for monitoring relations with clients, including clients outside the Australian Public Service. A description of those measures and the nature of client comments, including complaints, is provided at Appendix 8.

A list of Auditor-General reviews and parliamentary committee inquiries relating to the Department during the financial year appears at Appendix 9.

During 1995–96 the Department completed its response to a report by the Ombudsman under s.15(2) of the *Ombudsman Act 1976*, recommending an ex gratia payment in respect of possible negligence on the part of the former Australian Legal Aid office in the Northern Territory. The Secretary sought the views of the

Department of Finance in accordance with the requirements of his delegation from the Minister of Finance under the Audit Act, which also requires that a recommendation to make a payment be made by the Ombudsman. On the basis of the recommendation by the Ombudsman, and the response received from the Department of Finance, the Secretary authorised a payment in August 1995.

Abbreviations

AAT	Administrative Appeals Tribunal
ACC	Australian Consumers Council
ACCC	Australian Consumer and Competition Commission
ACL	Access to Commonwealth Law
AD(JR)	Administrative Decisions Judicial Review
ADR	Alternative Dispute Resolution
AFP	Australian Federal Police
AGPS	Australian Government Publishing Service
AGS	Australian Government Solicitor
AGSM	Australian Graduate School of Management
AIDC	Australian Industry Development Corporation
AIPO	Australian Industrial Property Organisation
AILEC	Australian International Indochina Legal Cooperation Program
ALAB	Australian Legal Assistance Board
ALRC	Australian Law Reform Commission
ANU	Australian National University
APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
APMC	Australian Police Ministers' Council
APS	Australian Protective Service
ARC	Administrative Review Council
ASIO	Australian Security Intelligence Organization
ASIS	Australian Secret Intelligence Service
ASVS	Australian Security Vetting Service
ATO	Australian Taxation Office
ATSIC	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission
AUSAID	Australian Agency for International Development
AUSTEL	Australian Telecommunications Authority
BOT	Build Operate Transfer
BRU	Bankruptcy Regulation Unit
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women
CIF	Common Investment Fund
CJC	Criminal Justice Commission
CLASS	Computerised Legal Aid Statistics System
CLC	Community Legal Centres
CLEB	Commonwealth Law Enforcement Board
CLRC	Copyright Law Review Committee
COAG	Council of Australian Governments
CONSOL	An abbreviation for consolidated Commonwealth legislation
CSM	Client Service Manager
CSMC	Corrective Services Ministers' Conference
CSW	Commission on the Status of Women
DAS	Department of Administrative Services
DC & A	Department of Communication and the Arts
DDA	Disability Discrimination Act
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
DIEA	Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs (Now Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs)
EEO	Equal Employment Opportunity
EPIP	Environmental Protection (Impact Proposals) Act 1974
EC	European Community
EU	European Union
FATF	Financial Action Task Force
FBCA	Federal Bureau of Consumer Affairs

FISCLE	Financial Information Systems Clerical Legal Executive System
FLICS	Film and Literature Information Computer System
FOI	Freedom of Information
GII	Global Information Infrastructure
HOCLEA	Heads of Commonwealth Law Enforcement Agencies
HREOC	Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICDR	International Commercial Dispute Resolution
IHL	International Humanitarian Law
ICJ	International Court of Justice
ILO	International Labor Organisation
ILSAC	International Legal Services Advisory Committee
IPPA	Investment Promotion and Protection Agreements
IT	Information Technology
ITSA	Insolvency and Trustee Service, Australia
ITL & IP	International Trade Law and Intellectual Property
LAC	Legal Aid Commission
LAFS	Legal Aid and Family Services
LPMC	Legal Practice Management Committee
LOIS	Legal Office Information System
MINCO	Ministerial Council for Corporations
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NAJAC	National Aboriginal Justice Advisory Committee
NATP	National Anti-terrorist Plan
NCA	National Crime Authority
NCSM	National Client Service Manager
NIDC	National Industrial Democracy Committee
NIS	National Information System
NLAAC	National Legal Aid Advisory Committee
NOMAD	National Organisational Management Data Base
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OFLC	Office of Film and Literature Classification
OH & S	Occupational Health and Safety
ONCB	Office of the Narcotics Control Board
OTISS	Official Trustee Insolvency Services System
PILOM	Pacific Islands Law Officers Meeting
PSCC	Protective Services Coordination Centre
PSPC	Protective Security Policy Committee
RDA	Racial Discrimination Act
SAC-PAV	Standing Advisory Committee on Commonwealth-State Cooperation for Protection Against Violence
SCAG	Standing Committee of Attorneys-General
SCALE	Statutes, Cases Automated Legal Enquiry
SDA	Sex Discrimination Act
SES	Senior Executive Service
SLAJ	Security Law and Justice
SO	Senior Officer
TCIDC	Treasury Centre Industrial Democracy Committee
TPA	Trade Practices Act
TRIPS	Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights
UN	United Nations
UNCITRAL	United Nations Commission on International Trade Law
UNCRAM	United Nations Convention on the Recovery Abroad of Maintenance
WIPO	World Intellectual Property Organisation
WTO	World Trade Organization