



*Ministry of
Attorney General*

**SERVICE PLAN
2005/06 – 2007/08**



National Library of Canada Cataloguing in Publication Data

British Columbia. Ministry of Attorney General

Service Plan. — 2002/2003/2004/2005 —

Annual.

ISSN 1705-4214 = Service plan — British Columbia.

Ministry of Attorney General

1. British Columbia. Ministry of Attorney General —
Periodicals. 2. Justice, Administration of — British Columbia —
Periodicals. I. Title. II. Title: Ministry of Attorney General service plan.

KEB475.A72B74

353.4'09711'05

C2003-960026-2

KF5106.A6B74

For more information on the British Columbia
Ministry of Attorney General

visit our website at

<http://www.gov.bc.ca/ag/>

Published by the Ministry of Attorney General

Table of Contents

Message from the Attorney General and Accountability Statement	3
Ministry Overview and Core Business Areas	5
Resource Summary	7
Vision, Mission, Culture and Values	9
Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Results	11
Related Initiatives and Planning Processes	24



Message from the Attorney General and Accountability Statement

I am pleased to present this Service Plan, which furthers the ministry's efforts to promote innovation and provide more affordable, accessible, efficient and convenient justice services.

The Ministry of Attorney General plays a key role in the debate and development of law that is just, principled, easy to understand and that serves the public interest. During the past year, the ministry strengthened its commitment to innovation and reform within the provincial justice system. We redefined our focus for the next three years and restated our guiding principles — vision, mission, culture and values, goals and objectives. This public Service Plan illustrates our renewed mandate. By building on our prior successes with innovation and reform, we will continue to improve justice services and keep costs low while improving access.

It is also our aim to inspire and lead law reform and justice innovation in the province. We have already taken the lead in the prosecution of highly complicated criminal mega-cases by pioneering new technology and creating new case management techniques. We have introduced novel and affordable out-of-court alternatives for resolving some family and civil disputes. We have streamlined administrative procedures and developed simpler and more efficient legislation. Working with our justice partners and our highly motivated public service workforce, we will vigorously pursue our renewed vision of an efficient justice system with the capacity to meet future challenges.

As Attorney General, I also have the unique responsibility in government to see that public affairs are administered in accordance with the law. My ministry will continue to exercise this function diligently by providing government with high-quality, cost-effective legal advice.

The 2005/06 – 2007/08 Ministry of Attorney General Service Plan was prepared under my direction in accordance with the *Budget Transparency and Accountability Act*. I am accountable for the basis on which the plan has been prepared. All material fiscal assumptions and policy decisions as of January 31, 2005, have been considered in preparing the plan, and I am accountable for achieving the specific objectives in the plan.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Geoff Plant". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Honourable Geoff Plant
Attorney General
Ministry of Attorney General and Minister Responsible for Treaty Negotiations
January 31, 2005

Ministry Overview and Core Business Areas

The Attorney General is the Law Officer of the Crown and has a unique role in government as the person who must see that the administration of public affairs is in accordance with the law. The Ministry of Attorney General fulfills that role under the Attorney's direction and is responsible in government for law reform, the administration of justice and for providing legal services that ensure lawful public administration. For financial and administrative purposes, the ministry's responsibilities are organized into five core business areas.

Court Services delivers all administration services, including security and order enforcement, to support courts presided over by the independent judiciary at three separate levels — the Court of Appeal, the Supreme Court and the Provincial Court. By doing so, it contributes to effective civil and criminal justice systems.

Prosecution Services assesses and conducts all prosecutions and appeals of offences under the *Criminal Code of Canada*, the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* and a number of provincial statutes. This role is central to the goal of an effective criminal justice system.

Justice Services is responsible for civil and family law reform, administrative justice reform and justice services. These services include developing and implementing alternative dispute resolution processes, enforcing registered maintenance orders and agreements, and managing the provincial funding of legal aid. This business area contributes to law reform and to the effective functioning of the civil and criminal justice systems.

Legal Services provides legal services to government, including advice to ministries and Cabinet, drafts of legislation and representation of the government in court and before administrative tribunals. This business area is central to the ministry's role of seeing that public affairs are administered according to the law.

Executive and Support Services includes the Criminal Justice Reform Office and the Strategic Planning and Legislation Office. These groups assist the entire ministry and support law reform and innovative justice processes. Executive and Support Services also include the Deputy Attorney General's Office and the Management Services Branch, which provide coordination as well as corporate financial and administrative services for the entire ministry.

The Resource Summary on the following page is organized on the basis of these core business areas. For consistency with the *Estimates*, the Summary also includes the following five additional areas, which are funded through separate appropriations.

- The Treaty Negotiations Office negotiates agreements with First Nations. The Office publishes a separate Service Plan.¹
- The independent judiciary functions at arm's length from government.
- The *Crown Proceeding Act* provides for payments to be made pursuant to the *Act*, as a result of judgments against the government or of settlements reached in litigation.
- The B.C. Utilities Commission operates independently and produces a separate service plan.²
- The Public Guardian and Trustee of British Columbia is partially funded by a special account and prepares a separate service plan.³

¹ See <http://www.prov.gov.bc.ca/tno> for more information on the Treaty Negotiations Office, including their Service Plan.

² See <http://www.bcuc.com/ServicePlan.aspx> for the B.C. Utilities Commission Service Plan.

³ See <http://www.trustee.bc.ca/publicat.htm> for the Public Guardian and Trustee Service Plan.

Resource Summary

Core Business Areas	2004/05 Restated Estimates ¹	2005/06 Estimates	2006/07 Plan	2007/08 Plan
Operating Expenses (\$000)				
Court Services	132,563	133,608	133,055	133,064
Legal Services	15,002	14,923	15,011	15,011
Prosecution Services	77,490	81,799	84,816	84,520
Justice Services	84,593	91,181	93,010	94,598
Executive and Support Services	41,655	41,961	41,669	41,697
Treaty Negotiations Office	28,782	21,729	21,729	21,729
Judiciary	51,166	52,281	60,249	61,128
<i>Crown Proceeding Act</i>	27,500	27,500	27,500	27,500
B.C. Utilities Commission	1	1	1	1
Public Guardian and Trustee (Special Account)	10,442	10,406	10,453	10,453
Total	469,194	475,389	487,493	489,701
Full-time Equivalent (Direct FTEs)				
Court Services	1,288	1,295	1,302	1,302
Legal Services	330	330	330	330
Prosecution Services	714	737	759	759
Justice Services	170	177	177	177
Executive and Support Services	244	243	243	243
Treaty Negotiations Office	88	88	88	88
Judiciary	396	399	403	403
B.C. Utilities Commission	26	26	26	26
Public Guardian and Trustee	212	214	214	214
Total	3,468	3,509	3,542	3,542

¹ These amounts have been restated, for comparative purposes only, to be consistent with the presentation of the 2005/06 Estimates. Schedule A of the 2005/06 Estimates presents a detailed reconciliation.

Ministry of Attorney General

Core Business Areas	2004/05 Restated Estimates ¹	2005/06 Estimates	2006/07 Plan	2007/08 Plan
Ministry Capital Expenditures (Consolidated Revenue Fund) (\$000)				
Court Services	4,135	9,022	6,129	4,481
Legal Services	23	298	298	298
Prosecution Services	2,255	1,200	991	430
Justice Services	260	510	840	430
Executive and Support Services	871	1,175	850	850
Treaty Negotiations Office	331	31	10	10
Judiciary	402	2,236	969	430
B.C. Utilities Commission	12	12	12	12
Public Guardian and Trustee (Special Account)	794	794	794	794
Total	9,083	15,278	10,893	7,735
Capital Plan (\$000)				
Refurbishment (Surrey Courthouse)	2,650	3,340	3,044	—
Total	2,650	3,340	3,044	—
Other Financing Transactions (\$000)				
Executive and Support Services				
Receipts	700	700	700	700
Disbursements	700	700	700	700
Net Cash Source (Requirements)	—	—	—	—
Treaty Negotiations Office				
Disbursements	16,967	3,589	1,029	1,029
Net Cash Source (Requirements)	(16,967)	(3,589)	(1,029)	(1,029)
Total Receipts	700	700	700	700
Total Disbursements	17,667	4,289	1,729	1,729
Total Net Cash Source (Requirements)	(16,967)	(3,589)	(1,029)	(1,029)

¹ These amounts have been restated, for comparative purposes only, to be consistent with the presentation of the 2005/06 Estimates. Schedule A of the 2005/06 Estimates presents a detailed reconciliation.

Vision, Mission, Culture and Values

Vision

A province governed by the rule of law with an effective justice system serving all British Columbians

THE RULE OF LAW

The rule of law is a fundamental principle in a free and democratic society. It guarantees that law is supreme and that the exercise of public power requires a source in some legal rule. It shields individuals from arbitrary action.

Mission

We are responsible in government for law reform, for the administration of justice and for seeing that public affairs are administered in accordance with the law.

Culture and Values

We are dynamic and innovative leaders in justice and public administration with the following values and operating principles.

1. To be performance- and service-focused
2. To honour members of the ministry and support them in their learning and development
3. To act with professional integrity, independent from interference
4. To be forthright and strategic
5. To be collaborative and inclusive within the justice system and with the public that we serve
6. To adhere to the core values of the British Columbia Public Service, namely integrity, accountability, responsibility, respect and fostering innovation in providing services

INDEPENDENCE IN THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

A free and democratic society based on the rule of law requires a justice system where decisions are made independently and free from interference. Justice system participants must act according to law and policy without being improperly influenced from outside sources or other participants in the system. Perhaps the clearest expression of independence is the independence of judges, who must be free to adjudicate cases without interference. Similarly, other participants in the justice system, such as police and Crown counsel, must also make decisions free of interference or control by others. This independence ensures a fair system. It operates for the benefit of society and not for the participating components of the system.

Equally, the justice system must serve the public interest and be open to public scrutiny to ensure that it does indeed serve the public interest. Justice system components must work together, recognizing the interdependence of the system without compromising the core principle of independence.

Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Results

During the 2004 planning cycle, the ministry strengthened its strategic planning and developed a new corporate framework that supports public sector reform. Branch business plans were revised and then consolidated into a ministry business plan, which in turn became the foundation for this Service Plan. The Service Plan presents high-level strategic goals and objectives that are ministry priorities for the next three years.

The plan includes performance measures that currently are most relevant to the objectives. As a result of the new corporate framework, the ministry must develop baseline data and/or benchmarks for many of the measures as noted throughout the plan. In addition, the ministry is developing indices of related measures that will serve as comprehensive performance indicators. Indices can better reflect the magnitude of ministry operations and the complexity and scope of the ministry goals. Examples of operational volumes that are driving the development of indices are shown in the table below.

The ministry recognizes that our continued success and our achievement of the new corporate framework are possible only through the active participation and engagement of our employees. Our culture and values statements speak to the importance of our people. The ministry will continue to focus on employee development plans that encourage individual and organizational learning as well as development and performance and will continue to ensure that such plans align individual performance with ministry goals. A summary of the ministry's Human Resource Plan can be found at <http://www.ag.gov.bc.ca/relatedinitiativesandplanningprocesses/overview.html>

Examples of Annual Volume in Ministry Operations (Based on 2004/05 Data)

Court Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 330,000 civil and criminal case filings• 132,000 prison escorts• management of 44 courthouses and 44 circuit courts• 200,000 hours of trials and hearings
Prosecution Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 172,000 potential criminal charges assessed• 54,000 new criminal files initiated involving 66,000 accused• 240,000 victims and potential witnesses
Justice Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 42,000 Family Justice Centre clients• 147,000 Family Maintenance Enforcement Program clients
Legal Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 450,000 total hours of legal services provided to client ministries

Ministry of Attorney General

Government Strategic Goals	Ministry Mission		
	The Ministry of Attorney General is responsible in government for law reform, for the administration of justice, and for seeing that public affairs are administered in accordance with the law.		
	Ministry Goals	Ministry Objectives	Performance Measures / Indicators
Goal 2: A supportive social fabric	1. A ministry that is a leader in law reform and innovative justice processes	→ 1. Ministry a centre for promoting law reform	→ Strategic plans for all areas of law reform Percentage of budget directed to reform activities
		→ 2. Innovation in civil, criminal and administrative justice procedures	→ Milestones for innovative dispute resolution procedures Year-over-year percentage increase in total criminal cases managed using the Criminal Litigation System Continuous implementation of new technology to streamline procedures
		→ 3. Ministry innovative in providing legal services	→ Percentage of litigation files for which ministry considers mediation and alternative dispute resolution options Continuous utilization of new technology in provision of legal services
	2. An effective criminal justice system	→ 1. Timely criminal prosecutions and appeals	→ Yearly percentage change in average time to trial for adult criminal cases
		→ 2. Appropriate and fair criminal prosecutions and appeals	→ Completion rate of persons referred to Alternative Measures Number of successful malicious prosecution lawsuits against the Crown Number of successful wrongful conviction lawsuits per year
		→ 3. Secure and affordable criminal programs and services	→ Percentage of video conference appearances as a portion of total in-custody appearances Percentage of serious security incidents as a portion of all prisoners escorted and guarded for court appearances and persons searched at search gates
	3. An effective civil justice system	→ 1. Accessible and efficient civil and family justice services as alternatives to court	→ Mean rate of satisfaction with Small Claims mediation Number of cases mediated in Small Claims Court Mediation Program Recovery rate for support payments to families enrolled in FMPEP Cost of collecting family maintenance payments per dollar recovered
		→ 2. Timely, accessible and efficient court processes	→ Number of client civil court record searches conducted remotely via internet Percentage of uncontested divorces processed in 5 days from filing to signing Proportion of provincial population residing within 1 hour of travel time to court
	4. Effective legal services enabling government to administer public affairs in accordance with the law	→ 1. High-quality, cost-effective legal services to government	→ Costs of legal services compared to private sector Percentage of clients satisfied with timeliness, quality, consistency of services
		→ 2. Legal risks and issues managed proactively and strategically	→ Legal risk management processes in use compared with those of other public sector organizations System in place for early identification of significant cases

Goal 1: A ministry that is a leader in law reform and innovative justice processes

The ministry will be a centre for law reform and innovative justice policies, practices and processes. The ministry will be strategic and forward-thinking and will foster dialogue and collaboration throughout the broader justice sector. The ministry will influence, stimulate, coordinate and implement reform and innovation within the Province.

The law has a profound practical effect on the legal rights, duties and liabilities of individuals and organizations in our society. Law and justice processes must keep pace with contemporary society. The ministry has a lead role in the debate and development of law that is just, principled, easy to understand and serves the public interest. The ministry also leads development of innovative justice processes that are current, fair, simple and cost-effective.

Objective 1.1: Ministry as a centre for promoting law reform

Core Business Areas: All

Law reform is a ministry priority. By engaging in strategies that promote and support law reform inside the ministry and among other justice agencies, the ministry assumes a central role in modernizing laws and justice procedures within the Province. For example, the ministry is a key participant in, and provides resources to support, the B.C. Justice Review Task Force. The Task Force will recommend reforms through the Street Crime Working Group, the Family Justice Reform Working Group, the Civil Justice Reform Working Group and the Mega Trials Working Group.

Performance Measure 1.1.1	2004/05 Actual/Base	2005/06 Target	2006/07 Target	2007/08 Target
Strategic plans for all areas of law reform	Not applicable	Relevant areas, milestones and dates identified	Milestones and dates made available in Service Plan	Milestones and dates made available in Service Plan

Performance Measure 1.1.2	2004/05 Actual/Base	2005/06 Target	2006/07 Target	2007/08 Target
Percentage of budget directed to reform activities	Not applicable	Benchmark established	To be developed	To be developed

Objective 1.2: Innovation in civil, criminal and administrative justice procedures

Core Business Areas: Justice Services, Prosecution Services, Court Services

The ministry is committed to continuous improvement of civil, criminal and administrative justice processes. To achieve this objective, the ministry continually works with justice participants to develop new and improved procedures inside and outside the courtroom to increase the effectiveness of the justice system.

Performance Measure 1.2.1	2004/05 Actual/Base	2005/06 Target	2006/07 Target	2007/08 Target
Milestones for innovative dispute resolution procedures	Not applicable	Monetary jurisdiction of Small Claims court raised Pilot of simplified, less costly procedures for Supreme Court cases under \$100,000 Pilot of administrative processes as an alternative to court for recalculation of child support orders		To be developed according to strategic plans for all areas of law reform

Performance Measure 1.2.2	2004/05 Actual/Base	2005/06 Target	2006/07 Target	2007/08 Target
Year-over-year percentage increase in total criminal cases managed using the Criminal Litigation Management System	Phase I pilot	Phase II pilot Establish benchmark	To be developed pending benchmark and full system implementation	To be developed pending benchmark
The Criminal Litigation Management System will assist Crown counsel with evidence management and will facilitate case analyses, trial preparation and disclosure.				

Performance Measure 1.2.3	2004/05 Actual/Base	2005/06 Target	2006/07 Target	2007/08 Target
Continuous implementation of new technology to streamline justice procedures	Electronic civil court records system implemented	Electronic e-service (e-search) component implemented Interfaces with judicial systems implemented	E-service e-filing component implemented	Integration of e-services with other technology, e.g., judicial judgments
The electronic civil court records system allows litigants and their counsel to file and search court documents electronically. It will reduce file handling in registries, and by 2006 will enable everyone involved in the civil court process to perform electronic searches for filed court documents.				

Objective 1.3: Ministry is innovative in providing legal services

Core Business Area: Legal Services

Innovative legal services to government, including the use of alternatives to litigation for resolving disputes, support the ministry as a leader in reform. Government and the public benefit from increased efficiencies resulting from technological and administrative innovations in the delivery of legal services.

Performance Measure 1.3.1	2004/05 Actual/Base	2005/06 Target	2006/07 Target	2007/08 Target
Percentage of litigation files for which the ministry considers mediation and alternative dispute resolution options	New measure Actual not available	100%	100%	100%
This measure will address the degree to which the ministry, as a litigant, promotes alternative dispute resolution techniques. Although mediation is encouraged whenever appropriate, there are a number of cases where litigation is more appropriate in order to establish a principle of law or interpret a statute. This measure will be tracked by the Legal Services Branch and will be based on the total number of new litigation files opened per year.				

Performance Measure 1.3.2	2004/05 Actual/Base	2005/06 Target	2006/07 Target	2007/08 Target
Continuous utilization of new technology in the provision of legal services	To be developed after Information Technology Plan approved	To be developed based on Information Technology Plan	To be developed based on Information Technology Plan	To be developed based on Information Technology Plan

Goal 2: *An effective criminal justice system*

The criminal justice system must be — and must be perceived as — fair, impartial, efficient and cost-effective. There must be public trust that the criminal justice system supports public safety.

The criminal justice system is responsible for administering justice fairly, equitably and efficiently. Citizens expect the system to deliver justice on behalf of victims, accused and communities, while safeguarding the rights of the accused.

The ministry works with other justice participants to administer, and to contribute to public confidence in, the criminal justice system.

Performance indices are being developed to serve as key indicators for this goal.

Objective 2.1: *Timely criminal prosecutions and appeals*

Core Business Areas: *Prosecution Services, Court Services*

Criminal matters must be processed within a reasonable period of time or charges against the accused may be dismissed. Timeliness enhances public confidence in the justice process, minimizes distress and disruption for victims and the accused and their families, and leads to efficient use of court and Crown resources. For example, in most cases, Crown counsel conduct pre-charge screening and provide full disclosure documents and an initial sentencing position to the accused or counsel prior to the first appearance.

Performance Measure 2.1.1	2004/05 Actual/Base	2005/06 Target	2006/07 Target	2007/08 Target
Yearly percentage change in average time to trial for adult criminal cases	Provincial benchmark of 6 months	0% change from Provincial benchmark	9% lower than Provincial benchmark	9% lower than Provincial benchmark
<p>This measure represents the average amount of elapsed time between the dates when a trial is scheduled and when it is heard. The actual length of time to trial can be affected by legislative and policy changes related to the prosecution of certain types of offence and by case complexity. This is a system indicator over which no single justice system participant has direct control.</p> <p>Data that support this measure are held on the Court Services Branch CORIN database and undergo data quality reviews to ensure reliability and accuracy.</p>				

Objective 2.2: Appropriate and fair criminal prosecutions and appeals

Core Business Area: Prosecution Services

This objective reflects the importance of fair process and balanced consideration of the interests of the victim, the accused, the witnesses, the families and the public. In determining whether cases should proceed to court, Crown counsel assess all charges reported to them using two criteria: first, whether there is a substantial likelihood of conviction, and second, whether a prosecution would be in the public interest.

Consistent and rigorous application of these standards contributes to the overall effectiveness of the criminal justice system. Careful charge assessments also remove a substantial percentage (17 per cent) of accused persons from the court process where appropriate. Four per cent out of the 17 per cent are directed to Alternative Measures. This ensures that court and Crown resources are used for the cases that warrant full prosecutions.

Performance Measure 2.2.1	2004/05 Actual/Base	2005/06 Target	2006/07 Target	2007/08 Target
Completion rate of persons referred to Alternative Measures	Measure under development JUSTIN system amended to capture the data	Baseline established	To be developed pending baseline	To be developed pending baseline
<p>Referral to Alternative Measures is one result of the Crown charge assessment process. The completion rate indicates appropriateness of referrals as well as the degree of compliance with the terms and conditions of Alternative Measures agreements. Data are housed on the ministry's JUSTIN system and undergo rigorous testing for quality.</p>				

Performance Measure 2.2.2	2004/05 Actual/Base	2005/06 Target	2006/07 Target	2007/08 Target
Number of successful malicious prosecution lawsuits against the Crown	Benchmark of zero	Zero	Zero	Zero
<p>A successful malicious prosecution lawsuit is one that has been concluded in favour of the person who was prosecuted. It must show that the prosecution was based on malicious intent, rather than on the primary purpose of Crown carrying the law into effect. Any malicious prosecution, if proven, would be considered a serious contravention of basic justice tenets of fairness and impartiality. Maintaining the benchmark of zero is critical to the integrity of the prosecution process and to public confidence and trust in the process.</p>				

Performance Measure 2.2.3	2004/05 Actual/Base	2005/06 Target	2006/07 Target	2007/08 Target
Number of successful wrongful conviction lawsuits per year	Benchmark of zero	Zero	Zero	Zero
<p>Wrongful conviction lawsuits do not necessarily represent the current justice system; they can be based on cases that are decades old. Maintaining the benchmark of zero for this measure is critical to the integrity of the prosecution process and to public confidence and trust in the process.</p>				

Objective 2.3: Secure and affordable criminal programs and services

Core Business Areas: Court Services, Justice Services

The safety of all persons who attend or preside in court and the affordability of proceedings are critical to an effective criminal justice system serving the public interest. The ministry provides security training for court staff and promotes the use of innovative courtroom technology.

Performance Measure 2.3.1	2004/05 Actual/Base	2005/06 Target	2006/07 Target	2007/08 Target
Percentage of video conference appearances as a portion of total in-custody appearances	Baseline estimate: 10%	3% increase over baseline	5% increase over 2005/06 actual	2% increase over 2006/07 actual
<p>Court appearances by video conference for accused in custody avoid prisoner transport, guard services and procedures associated with discharge and readmission to correctional centres, all of which reduce security risks. Costs are also avoided and may in the future be reduced when the volume of cases conducted by video conference supports significant scheduling efficiencies. Data are provided by the office of the Project Director, Court Video Conferencing and are considered accurate and reliable.</p>				

Performance Measure 2.3.2	2004/05 Actual/Base	2005/06 Target	2006/07 Target	2007/08 Target
Percentage of serious security incidents as a portion of all prisoners escorted and guarded for court appearances and persons searched at search gates	Baseline to be developed by March 31, 2005	Target to be developed pending baseline and new security enhancements	Target to be developed pending baseline and new security enhancements	Target to be developed pending baseline and new security enhancements
A serious security breach is any incident that requires the use of force, and may include such things as an attempted or successful escape, a medical emergency, a bomb threat or the seizure of weapons.				

Goal 3: *An effective civil justice system*

The public must trust that the civil justice system is accessible, proportionate and cost-effective.

The civil justice system gives private citizens and organizations options for resolving their disputes and enforcing their rights and the obligations of others. An effective civil justice system fosters stable, healthy business and personal relationships. The civil justice system is broader than the civil courts and includes alternative dispute resolution and the administrative justice system.

The ministry's role in the civil justice system includes providing efficient court services, supporting access to justice, facilitating the resolution of disputes through processes that are most appropriate to the circumstances, and maximizing the performance of all components of the system.

Performance indices are being developed to serve as key indicators for this goal.

Objective 3.1: *Accessible and efficient civil and family justice services as alternatives to court*

Core Business Area: *Justice Services*

An effective civil justice system offers a range of alternatives to the traditional court system to support parties in resolving their disputes. Services must be accessible and affordable to parties who require them.

Ministry of Attorney General

Performance Measure 3.1.1	2004/05 Actual/Base	2005/06 Target	2006/07 Target	2007/08 Target
Mean rate of client satisfaction with Small Claims Mediation on a 5-point scale where 5 is very satisfied	4	> 4	> 4	> 4
User satisfaction promotes increased use of innovative dispute resolution. This measure tracks client satisfaction with Small Claims Mediation. Data are collected through client exit surveys (completed after resolution). The data system is currently undergoing refinement in order to maximize long-term reliability.				

Performance Measure 3.1.2	2004/05 Actual/Base	2005/06 Target	2006/07 Target	2007/08 Target
Number of cases mediated in Court Mediation Program (Small Claims)	875	900	925	950
This measure tracks the number of small claims cases for which mediation was used as an alternative to court. Data are collected by the Court Mediation Program. The data system is currently undergoing refinement in order to maximize long-term reliability.				

Performance Measure 3.1.3	2004/05 Actual/Base	2005/06 Target	2006/07 Target	2007/08 Target
Recovery rate for support payments to families enrolled in the Family Maintenance Enforcement Program (FMPEP)	\$0.80 per \$1 due	\$0.81 per \$1 due	\$0.82 per \$1 due	\$0.82 per \$1 due
This measure is based on the recovery of regular maintenance payments due in the current year combined with the recovery of arrears from previous years. The recovery rate has been increasing since 1992/93, when it was \$0.61 for every dollar due. Data are held on a payment processing and disbursement database.				

Performance Measure 3.1.4	2004/05 Actual/Base (Projected)	2005/06 Target	2006/07 Target	2007/08 Target
Cost of collecting family maintenance per dollar recovered	\$0.09 per \$1 recovered	\$0.09 per \$1 recovered	\$0.09 per \$1 recovered	\$0.09 per \$1 recovered
This measure shows how much the ministry spends to collect each dollar of family maintenance payments. The measure compares total maintenance recovered through the Family Maintenance Enforcement Program against the total expense to government of administering the program. This cost has been decreasing since 1992/93, when the cost was \$0.18 per dollar recovered. Data sources are applications and funding allocation records.				

Objective 3.2: Timely, accessible and efficient court processes

Core Business Area: Court Services

Timely, accessible and efficient civil court processes are necessary for the court to be an effective option for parties in dispute. Public confidence is eroded if the process becomes too costly, cumbersome or bureaucratic.

Performance Measure 3.2.1	2004/05 Actual/Base	2005/06 Target	2006/07 Target	2007/08 Target
Number of civil court record searches conducted by clients remotely through Internet	Measure in development	Baseline to be determined	10% increase over baseline	20% increase over baseline
Electronic access to civil court records will increase accessibility to such records and make the search process more efficient. Phased implementation will begin in 2005/06. Increasing usage levels will reflect the acceptance and functionality of this innovative electronic process. Data collection and analysis procedures are in development.				

Performance Measure 3.2.2	2004/05 Actual/Base	2005/06 Target	2006/07 Target	2007/08 Target
Percentage of uncontested divorces processed in five days from filing the order to signing the order, <i>exclusive of the time required for federal authorities to search the federal divorce registry</i>	90%	90%	90%	90%
This measure indicates timeliness and efficiency in civil registry operations that affect a large volume of cases. The processing time is tracked from the day an uncontested divorce application is filed until the day the application is signed, but does not include the time required for a federal divorce registry search. The federal search is not controlled by the ministry. Data for the ministry-controlled part of the process reside on the ministry's Civil Electronic Information System (CEIS) and are considered reliable.				

Performance Measure 3.2.3	2004/05 Actual/Base	2005/06 Target	2006/07 Target	2007/08 Target
Proportion of provincial population residing within one hour of travel time to the nearest court location	Benchmark of 95%	95%	95%	95%
<p>This accessibility measure was derived from 2001 population figures based on the provincial policing jurisdictions. It includes municipal, rural and First Nations reserve populations. The measure monitors the percentage of the provincial population who are able to reach a court location within one hour's travel time. Since British Columbia has a highly mobile population and migration within the province is hard to predict, 95 per cent is considered a realistic benchmark. However, in 2004 the actual result was 98 per cent.</p> <p>Information sources used to develop this measure include: B.C. Statistics, Police Services Division of the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General, and MapQuest website services.</p>				

Goal 4: *Effective legal services enabling government to administer public affairs in accordance with the law*

Government must receive high-quality legal advice that contributes to the effective achievement of government goals and priorities. Government must understand, anticipate and manage legal matters and risks in the public interest.

This goal supports the Attorney General's unique role in government to see that public affairs are administered in accordance with the law. High-quality legal advice and representation help ensure that government services are delivered effectively.

Objective 4.1: *High-quality, cost-effective legal services to government*

Core Business Area: *Legal Services*

This objective supports the administration of public affairs in accordance with the law and ensures that government is effectively represented before tribunals and the courts. The ministry's Legal Services Branch has made significant progress in reconciling costs with government requirements for legal advice.

Performance Measure 4.1.1	2004/05 Actual/Base	2005/06 Target	2006/07 Target	2007/08 Target
Costs compared to private sector (to indicate competitive rates)	Unavailable	Benchmarks developed	Pending benchmark development	Pending benchmark development
Comparison of the cost of legal services allows the ministry to monitor and demonstrate cost-effectiveness.				

Performance Measure 4.1.2	2003/04 Actual/Base	2005/06 Target	2006/07 Target	2007/08 Target
Percentage of clients satisfied with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> timeliness of services quality and consistency of services 	Survey results for 2003/04 showed 85% of clients satisfied with timeliness and quality of services	87%	89%	92%
The Legal Services Branch delivers legal services to government on the basis of service level agreements with each ministry and agency. These agreements set out the services that are to be delivered, and they require that a ministry or agency provide funding to Legal Services Branch to cover its costs of providing most of these services. The service level agreement process is to be reviewed in 2005/2006. Following that review, Legal Services Branch will conduct another client satisfaction survey.				

Objective 4.2: *Legal risks and issues managed proactively and strategically*

Core Business Area: *Legal Services*

This objective reflects the importance of anticipating, reducing and managing legal risk as part of the stewardship and sound management of public resources.

Performance Measure 4.2.1	2004/05 Actual/Base	2005/06 Target	2006/07 Target	2007/08 Target
Legal risk management initiatives and processes in use compared with those of other public sector organizations	Unavailable	Appropriate risk management initiatives and processes determined Benchmarks established	To be developed pending benchmarks	To be developed pending benchmarks

Performance Measure 4.2.2	2003/04 Actual/Base	2005/06 Target	2006/07 Target	2007/08 Target
System in place for early identification of significant cases	Unavailable	Proposal for identification system completed	Benchmarks determined	To be developed pending benchmarks

Related Initiatives and Planning Processes

Deregulation and Regulatory Reform

The Ministry of Attorney General will continue to apply regulatory reform criteria as new legislation, regulations and policies are developed through 2005/06 – 2007/08.

Overviews of Human Resource Plan and Information Resource Management Plan

Overviews of both the Human Resource Plan and the Information Resource Management Plan are available on the ministry website at:

http://www.ag.gov.bc.ca/public/annualreport/HRMP05-06_07-08.pdf

http://www.ag.gov.bc.ca/public/annualreport/IRMP05-06_07-08.pdf