

2007

COURTS SERVICE
ANNUAL REPORT



COURTS SERVICE
An tSeirbhís Chúirteanna

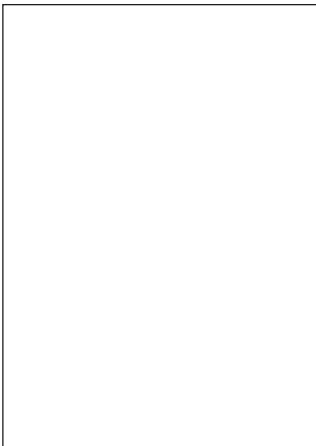


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TO MANAGE THE COURTS, SUPPORT
THE JUDICIARY AND PROVIDE A HIGH
QUALITY AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICE
TO ALL USERS OF THE COURTS

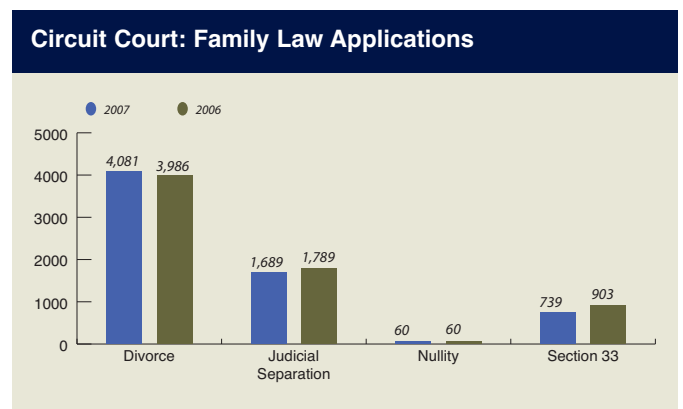
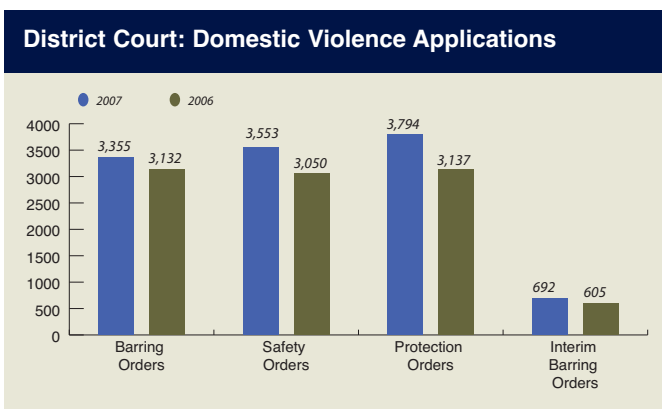
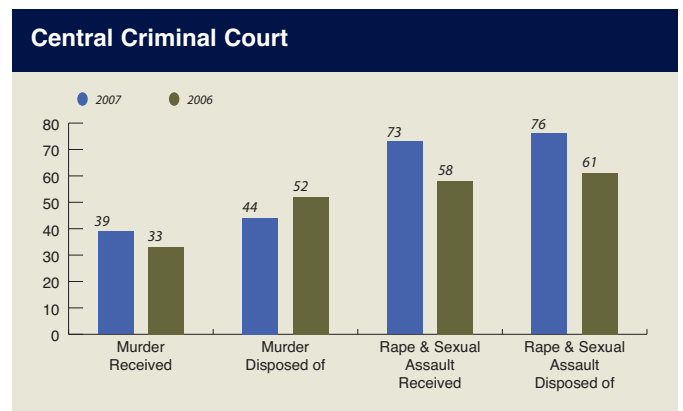
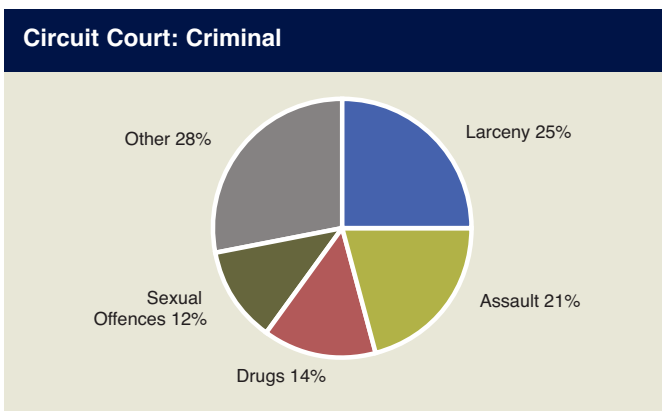
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2007 HIGHLIGHTS

COURT OPERATIONS

- 26% increase brings new cases in the High Court to 19,435 (including a 70% increase in medical negligence cases)
- 73% increase in the number of new cases entering the Commercial Court list
- 30% increase in Solicitors' Act cases
- More than 50% (17,481) of the 30,435 new civil cases issued in the Circuit Court relate to breach of contract/debt collection
- 1,552 or 41.5% of all Small Claims cases are received through the *Small Claims Online* system
- New pub licence applications decrease by 17% and new hotel bar licences by 36%
- Applications under domestic violence legislation increase by almost 15% with a 21% increase in protection orders sought and a 16% increase in safety orders
- Murder or manslaughter cases increase by 18% with rape cases showing an increase of almost 26%
- Almost 25% of all offences in the Circuit Criminal Court relate to larceny, theft or robbery while a further 21% involve assaults
- Drug offences account for almost 14% of the work of the Circuit Criminal Court with sexual offences almost 12%
- Criminal matters in the District Court increase by more than 15%
- Road traffic offences continue to account for over half of all cases dealt with in the District Court – a total of 281,641 in 2007 - an increase of more than 25% on 2006.



MODERNISING THE COURTS

- Construction of the new Criminal Courts Complex in Parkgate Street Dublin commences and is scheduled for completion by early 2010
- Central Accounts Office is established to handle all District Court financial transactions
- 24/7 access to court services improves as *Small Claims Online* completes its first full year of operations at initial pilot sites and work on *High Court Case Tracking* system to allow the public access is completed
- Independent survey ('*mystery shopper*' model) and study reveals that 96% of staff interactions in public offices and on the phone were professional and polite with 91% finding that staff were courteous and 88% finding that staff gave them confidence in the interaction
- System is installed in Limerick District Court to allow for video conferencing between Limerick District Court and Limerick Prison on a pilot basis from mid-2008
- Information on operation of family law courts is made available as *Family Law Matters* containing statistics, trends, judgments and reporting on family law proceedings completes its first year of publication
- Work with An Garda Síochána continues to develop and implement an interface for the electronic sharing of information and data between both organisations
- *Let's Look at the Law*, a resource pack to enable teachers who have no previous knowledge of the law introduce young people to law and the courts system in Ireland, is published.

Criminal Courts Complex

Video Conferencing

Family Law Matters

Let's Look at the Law

MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF JUSTICE AND CHAIRPERSON OF THE BOARD



This is the eighth Annual Report of the Courts Service and, in reviewing its strategies and activities for the year 2007, it highlights the progress which continues to be made to modernise the administration and functioning of the courts system in an ever busier and demanding environment.

The Courts Service is a large decentralised organisation with administrative responsibility for some 170 courthouses and court venues throughout the country. Its 1,100 staff provide a vast array of services and administrative support to the judiciary, the public and court users.

The volume of cases coming before the courts continues to increase. In 2007 this resulted in many extra court sittings, an increased demand on facilities and people, and a concentration of effort by the judiciary and the management and staff of the Service. As this Report illustrates, a great deal of success has been achieved with the use of forward thinking, planning and management strategies. In his introduction the Chief Executive Officer highlights the extent of many of these initiatives. The body of the Report gives a detailed account of the excellent efforts which continue to enable the Service provide world class court services.

One of the main reasons for those successes is the day-to-day willingness of staff, at all levels, not only to accept and implement new ideas and new practices, but to initiate much of that innovation themselves.

In being so responsive and forward thinking the Board, management and staff of the Service enable the judiciary to deal with and increase efficiency in the administration of justice in many ways. In 2007 improvements in many areas saw an increased workload dealt with in a very professional and timely manner. For example appeals disposed of by the Supreme Court in 2007 increased by 13%, from 202 in 2006 to

229 in 2007 and reserved judgments increased by 25% in 2007 over 2006.

The workload of the Supreme Court continues to increase, including the number of cases with a multiplicity of complex issues. This will lead to an unavoidable increase in the time which cases must wait to be listed for hearing.

- Appeals received in the Court of Criminal Appeal increased by 9%, 267 in 2007 as compared with 244 in 2006
- A total of 19,435 new cases commenced in the High Court in 2007, a 26% increase on the 2006 figure of 15,432
- Civil bills issued in the Circuit Court in 2007 increased by 15% to 30,435 from 26,503 in 2006
- Civil business in the District Court increased by more than 18%, from 49,965 in 2006 to 59,061 in 2007
- Applications under domestic violence legislation, increased by almost 15% from 9,924 in 2006 to 11,387 in 2007
- Criminal matters in the District Court increased by more than 15%, from 378,047 in 2006 to 436,617 in 2007
- Cases related to drug offences increased by almost 12% from 8,842 in 2006 to 9,870 in 2007
- More than 5,500 people were convicted of dangerous driving in 2007, an increase of less than 2%
- There was an increase of over 8% in the number of people convicted of drink driving, from 26,919 in 2006 to 29,127 in 2007.

I refer to the above by way of highlighting the range, extent and increase of the work of the courts and the Service and as an introduction to the importance and success of the administrative initiatives mentioned throughout this Report.

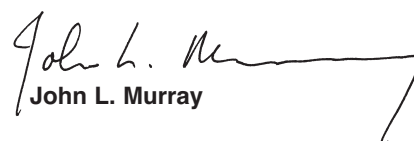
To meet the increasing demands being made on the courts as well as to permit the more efficient hearing and disposal of cases, the judiciary have introduced continuous improvements and changes in practice and procedures, and in particular case management techniques. These efforts have achieved success through partnership and cooperation with the Courts Service. My colleagues in the judiciary greatly appreciate the continual and tremendous support which the work of the Courts Service has provided to the administration of justice.

The task of the Courts Service is aided by the wider legal sector. The legal professions, other justice agencies and the other State and voluntary agencies with whom we work with on a daily basis have created a sense of partnership in advising and aiding the Courts Service.

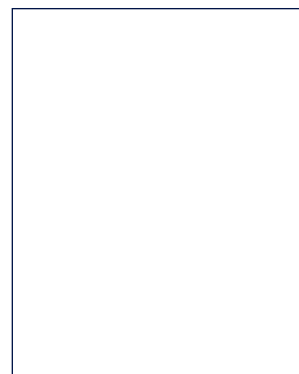
I wish to thank the members of the Board, the many who work on our committees, my judicial colleagues, our Chief Executive Officer Mr P.J. Fitzpatrick, his staff, and the extended legal community for their work and support in the past year.

I would also like to acknowledge the continued support of the State and in particular the Minister of Justice, Equality and Law Reform and the staff of his Department. Knowing that the support and resources exist which are essential to the functioning of the Service makes it possible to plan confidently for the future.

The efforts involved in producing an Annual Report as comprehensive as this one cannot be overstated. I would like to thank all those involved in its compilation and presentation.


John L. Murray

INTRODUCTION BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



Following eight very busy years the challenge for the Courts Service continues to be the provision of a world class service delivered in a manner which meets the needs of our citizens. In introducing this Annual Report I am very conscious of the extraordinary effort and work across the organisation which helped us achieve the many positive outcomes described in this Report.

To consolidate on our achievements to date we must continue to change and further modernise so as to create a modern, forward thinking organisation equipped to deal with the challenges facing 21st century Ireland.

To assist us further manage these changes, we have developed a Change Management/Leadership Programme focused on staff development and court user's needs. In 2007 this programme continued to be driven by a number of major projects including the Courts Accounting System, the Funds Accounting System, the Civil Case Management System, the Criminal Case Management System, the new Criminal Courts Complex, Business Planning and the revised Performance Management and Development System.

Some of these projects were included in our *Output Statements*. These are a key element of the Budget and Estimate Reform measures announced by the Minister for Finance in the Budget 2006. They represent a new level of transparency and accountability across the public service and allow for enhanced Oireachtas scrutiny of the Estimates process. During 2007 we published our first Annual Output Statement.

WORKING WITH THE JUDICIARY

We continued to support the judiciary in their work and worked with them on measures aimed at improving the processing of court work during the year:

- the President of the High Court continued a pilot project to expand the number and range of cases heard by the High Court in provincial towns
- draft rules for case progression of family law proceedings were approved by the Circuit Court Rules Committee with the approval of the President of the Circuit Court and following consultation with the County Registrars. This scheme provides for County Registrars to perform case management duties to ensure that proceedings are prepared for trial in a manner which is just, expeditious and likely to minimise costs and, that the time and other resources of the court are employed optimally
- work continued on a major reorganisation of the District Court Districts. This is the first major revision of District Court Districts since 1961 and involved a full review of court venues, sittings and workloads. The reorganisation created more equitable workloads in the 11 Districts it was implemented in by year end. Many of these Districts have seen very significant demographic and population shifts in recent years.

USE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

We are very conscious of the need to make courts more accessible, more secure and more cost effective. During the year we installed video conferencing systems in Cloverhill, Tullamore and Castlebar courthouses as part of the overall programme to make video conferencing available in all county towns. We also upgraded the video conferencing and video link facilities in five courtrooms in the Four Courts.

The *Small Claims Online* system allows applicants lodge claims 24/7 over the internet, pay the court fee online and follow the progress of their application as it progresses through the various stages of the process using a unique personal identifier (PIN). 2007 represented the first full year of operation of the system at the initial 16 pilot sites.

We completed work on the development of an online public search facility for the High Court Case Tracking System during the year. Legal practitioners and members of the public can now obtain details of High Court cases at any time, from anywhere, using the internet.

INFORMATION FOR THE PUBLIC

We continued to improve the range of information explaining various aspects of our court system and how it works.

A resource pack for second level students, *Let's Look at the Law*, developed with the cooperation of the Department of Education & Science will

enable teachers with no prior legal knowledge to introduce young people to the law and the courts system in Ireland. It comprises a manual for teachers, a series of teaching aids and a DVD.

We completed the first year of a pilot project to report on family law. This included the publication of statistics, trends, judgments and reporting on proceedings in family law courts in a series titled *Family Law Matters*. The pilot project concluded with an evaluation report containing recommendations for the future of family law reporting.

BUILDINGS

The refurbishment of buildings continued to be a priority for us. Two new courthouses were built in Bray and Belmullet in 2007, and work was completed on the refurbishment of Tullamore and Fermoy courthouses. The family law District Courts in Dolphin House, Dublin were totally refurbished to provide modern accommodation for the judiciary, staff and all family court users.

Work neared completion on the provision of new court facilities in Ardee and continued on Thurles, Clones, Gorey and Blanchardstown.

Plans were completed for the refurbishment and extension of Kilkenny, Monaghan and Mullingar courthouses and sites were acquired to provide new courthouses in Wexford and Letterkenny. By year end the Service was working to progress major upgrades for Wicklow, Roscommon, Swinford, Manorhamilton, Youghal and Kilmallock courthouses.

The Criminal Courts Complex project is one of our major change projects and forms the largest part of the Capital Building Programme. This Public Private Partnership (PPP) project made considerable progress in 2007 with construction commencing in early May. We expect the complex to be operational in early 2010.

PARTNERSHIP AND OUR STAFF

The Central Partnership Committee, which I chair, continued to address issues of interest and concern. Regional Partnership Committees dealt with a range of issues including disability and accessibility obligations, developments in customer services, health screening, technical training, performance management and issues of health and safety.

We continued to enjoy a constructive and productive working relationship with the trade unions representing our staff. Through the combined use of the partnership arrangements and the Conciliation and Arbitration Scheme a positive industrial climate continued to be maintained. I am very pleased to report that we had no industrial disputes, and thus no lost work days.

MY GRATITUDE

I am very grateful to the Chief Justice and Chairperson of the Board, The Hon. Mr. Justice John L. Murray and to all of the members of our Board, to the Presidents of each of our Courts and the judiciary generally for their continued support in the past year and since our establishment eight years ago.

The staff once again demonstrated that their openness and willingness to embrace new approaches is second to none. To each and every one I extend my sincere appreciation and gratitude.

I also very much appreciate the cooperation and assistance we continued to receive from the many other agencies within the wider justice sector, the organisations representing the legal profession and the many other State and voluntary organisations and agencies, too numerous to mention.

I would also like to acknowledge and thank the Chairman of the Office of Public Works and his staff for their ongoing assistance with our building programme.

I would like particularly to thank the Secretary General and staff of the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, and the Secretary General and staff of the Department of Finance for their wholehearted and ongoing support for our work. The support of everybody ensured that 2007 was another year of improvements and developments.

This Annual Report contains a detailed account of the volume and complexity of the work done in our courts during the year. My sincere thanks to Ms Helen Priestley Information Officer, the staff of the Information Office and to all who assisted in its production.



P.J. Fitzpatrick

STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE

CHAPTER 1

STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE

FUNDING AND STAFFING OF THE SERVICE IN 2007

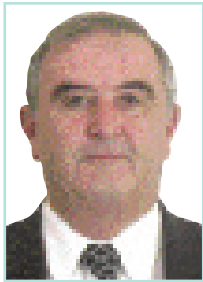
Bulk of funding provided by the State:	€131 million
Budget:	
Revenue:	€92 million
Capital:	€39 million
Staff:	1,100
Funds managed in a trustee capacity:	€1.022 billion
Fees collected:	€39 million
Fines collected:	€22 million
Offices nationwide:	82
Number of court venues:	173

The functions of the Service are to:

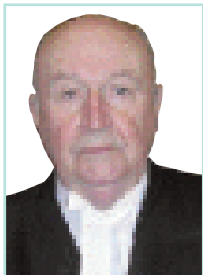
- Manage the courts
- Provide support services for the judges
- Provide information on the courts system to the public
- Provide, manage and maintain court buildings
- Provide facilities for users of the courts.

The Board consists of a Chairperson and 16 Members. Its functions are to consider and determine policy in relation to the Service and to oversee the implementation of policy by the Chief Executive Officer.

THE BOARD OF THE COURTS SERVICE



The Hon. Mr. Justice **John L. Murray**,
Chairperson
Chief Justice of Ireland



The Hon. Mr. Justice **Richard Johnson**
President of the High Court



The Hon. Mrs. Justice **Susan Denham**
Elected by the judges of the Supreme Court



The Hon. Mr. Justice **Iarfhlaith O'Neill**
Elected by the judges of the High Court



The Hon. Mr. Justice **John Quirke**
Nominated by the Chief Justice in respect of his experience or expertise in a specific area of court business



The Hon. Mr. Justice **Matthew Deery**
President of the Circuit Court



His Honour Judge **Patrick Moran**
Elected by the judges of the Circuit Court



Her Honour Judge **Miriam Malone**
President of the District Court



Judge **Flann Brennan**
Elected by the judges, other than the President, of the District Court



Mr. P.J. Fitzpatrick
Chief Executive Officer



Mr. Eoghan Fitzsimons, S.C.
Nominee of the Council of the Bar of Ireland

Replaced Turlough O'Donnell S.C. in October 2007



Mr. Owen Binchy, Solicitor
Nominated by the President of the Law Society of Ireland



Mr. Kevin Fidgeon
Elected by the staff of the Service



Mr. James Martin
An officer of the Minister nominated by the Minister



Ms. Olive Braiden
Nominated by the Minister to represent consumers of the services provided by the courts



Ms. Esther Lynch
Nominated by the Irish Congress of Trade Unions



Mr. Liam Farrell
Nominated by the Minister for relevant knowledge and experience in commerce, finance or administration

STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE BOARD

FINANCE COMMITTEE

- The Hon. Mr. Justice John L. Murray, Chairperson
- The Hon. Mr. Justice Richard Johnson
- The Hon. Mr. Justice Iarfhlaith O'Neill
- The Hon. Mr. Justice Matthew Deery
- Her Honour Judge Miriam Malone
- Mr. James Martin
- Mr. P.J. Fitzpatrick

AUDIT COMMITTEE

- Mr. Tom O'Higgins, Chartered Accountant, *external member*, Chairperson
- The Hon. Mr. Justice Matthew Deery
- Judge Cormac Dunne, Judge of the District Court
- Mr. Jim Farrell, former Director of the National Treasury Management Agency, *external member*
- Mr. James Martin

BUILDING COMMITTEE

- The Hon. Mr. Justice John Quirke, Chairperson
- The Hon. Mr. Justice Iarfhlaith O'Neill
- His Honour Judge Michael White, judge of the Circuit Court
- Judge Catherine Murphy, judge of the District Court
- Mr. Fergal Foley B.L., *nominee of the Council of the Bar of Ireland*
- Mr. Gerard Doherty, solicitor, *nominee of the Law Society of Ireland*
- Mr. Kevin Fidgeon
- Ms. Olive Braiden
- Mr. Michael Haugh, Office of Public Works
- Mr. Brendan Ryan, Director of Corporate Services, *Courts Service*
- Mr. Shay Kirk, Principal Officer, *Courts Service*
- Mr. John Mahon, Principal Officer, *Courts Service*

FAMILY LAW COURT DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

- The Hon. Mrs. Justice Catherine McGuinness, President of the Law Reform Commission, Chairperson
- The Hon. Mr. Justice Liam McKechnie, judge of the High Court
- Her Honour Judge Mary Faherty, judge of the Circuit Court
- His Honour Judge Gerard Haughton, judge of the District Court
- Ms. Olive Braiden
- Ms. Catherine Forde B.L., *nominee of the Council of the Bar of Ireland*
- Mr. David Bergin, solicitor, *nominee of the Law Society of Ireland*
- Mr. Kevin Fidgeon
- Ms. Nuala McLoughlin, Chief Registrar and Director of Operations, Supreme & High Courts, *Courts Service*
- Mr. Diarmaid MacDiarmada, Director of Operations, Circuit & District Courts, *Courts Service*

BOARD COMMITTEES TO ADDRESS SPECIFIC ISSUES

STEERING COMMITTEE TO PROVIDE INFORMATION ON SENTENCING

- The Hon. Mrs. Justice Susan Denham, Chairperson
- The Hon. Mr. Justice Kevin O' Higgins, judge of the High Court
- The Hon. Mr. Justice Esmond Smyth, judge of the Circuit Court
- Her Honour Judge Miriam Malone
- Professor Thomas O'Malley, Senior Lecturer in Law, National University of Ireland Galway

DISTRICT COURT REVIEW COMMITTEE

- The Hon. Mr Justice Joseph Finnegan, judge of the Supreme Court, Chairperson
- Judge Oliver McGuinness, judge of the District Court
- Judge Catherine Murphy, judge of the District Court
- Mr. Jim O'Farrell, Department of Finance
- Ms. Oonagh McPhillips, Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform
- Mr. Diarmaid MacDiarmada
- Ms. Olive Caulfield, Northern Regional Manager, *Courts Service*

FAMILY LAW REPORTING PROJECT COMMITTEE

- The Hon. Mr. Justice Nicholas Kearns, judge of the Supreme Court, Chairperson
- The Hon. Mrs. Justice Catherine McGuinness
- The Hon. Mr Justice Henry Abbott, judge of the High Court
- His Honour Judge Michael White, judge of the Circuit Court
- Judge Gerard Furlong, judge of the District Court
- Mr. Kevin Fidgeon
- Ms. Olive Braiden
- Ms. Esther Lynch

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE



REGIONAL OFFICES

There are regional offices in Monaghan, Naas, Tullamore, Cork and Castlebar.

Northern Region:



Paula Lyons
Regional Manager

Office location -
Monaghan

Counties covered
Monaghan, Cavan, Leitrim,
Donegal, Louth

* replaced Olive Caulfield
in June 2007

Eastern Region:



Gerry Nugent
Regional Manager

Office location -
Naas, Co. Kildare

Counties covered -
Kildare, Wicklow, Carlow,
Kilkenny, Wexford

Midland Region:



Anne Price
Regional Manager

Office location -
Tullamore, Co. Offaly

Counties covered -
Laois, Longford, Offaly,
Roscommon, Westmeath,
Meath

Southern Region:



Eamonn Kiely
Regional Manager

Office location -
Cork City

Counties covered -
Cork, Kerry, Limerick,
Waterford, Tipperary

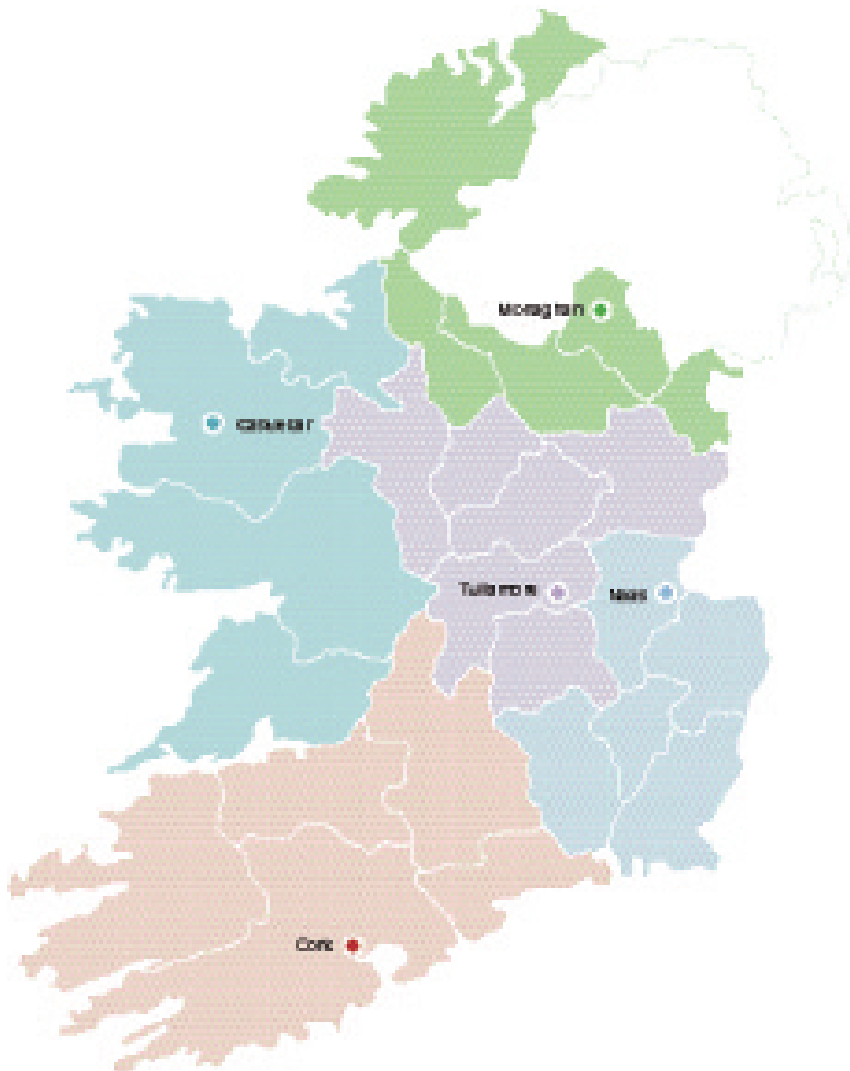
Western Region:

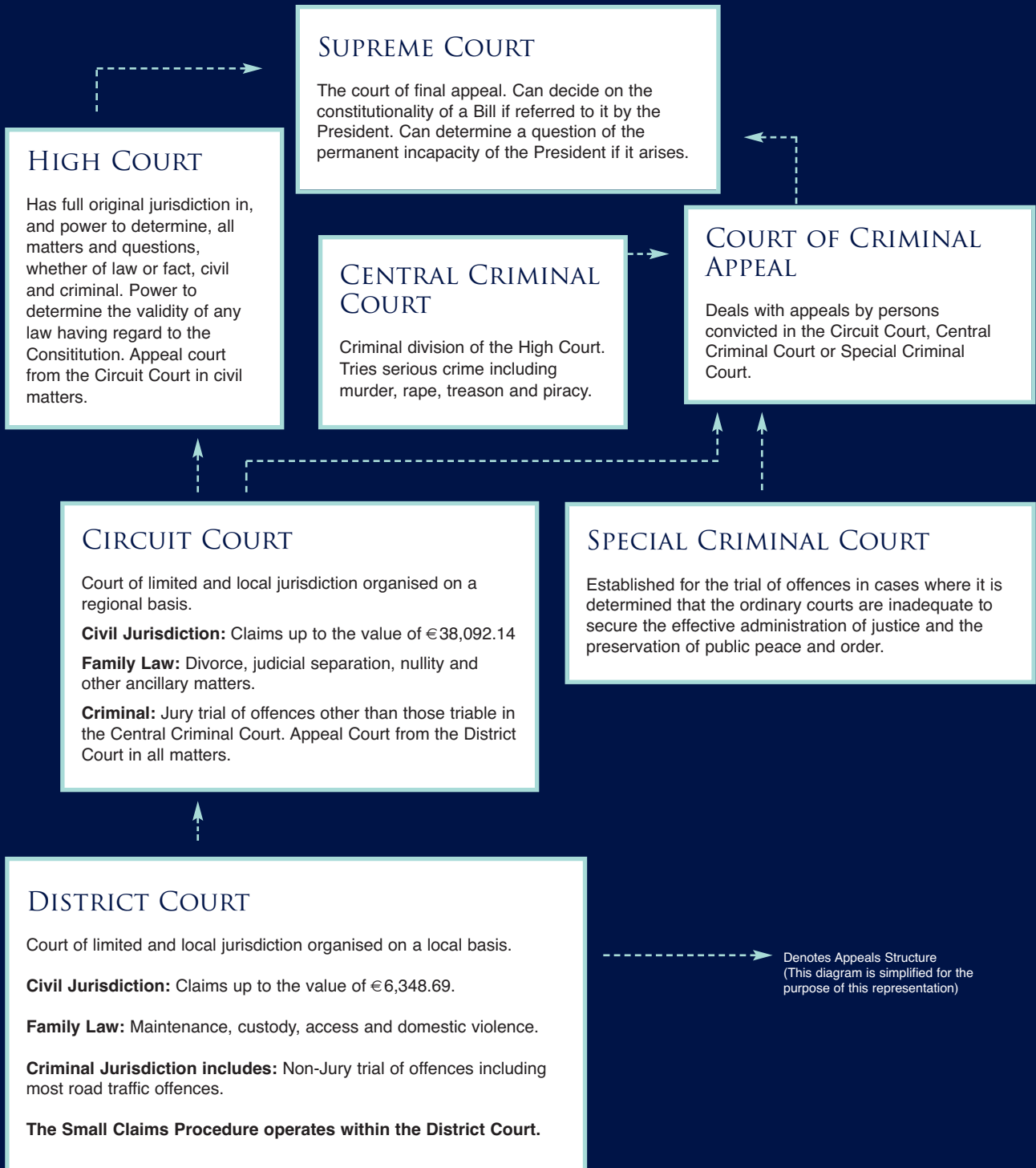


Brendan J. McDonald
Regional Manager

Office location -
Castlebar, Co. Mayo

Counties covered -
Galway, Mayo, Sligo, Clare





ACCOUNTABILITY

The Service is accountable to the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform and through the Minister to the Government. The Chief Executive Officer is the Accounting Officer and in that capacity attends Public Accounts Committee and other Oireachtas Committee meetings.

GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

The functions of the Service are set out in the Courts Service Act, 1998. While the Act contains accountability and governance mechanisms, the Service is proactive in putting additional governance arrangements in place. These underpin best practice in the management of the organisation and the delivery of services to meet the expectations of users while at the same time ensuring accountability for expenditure of funds. A Governance Framework Document approved by the Board defines the functions reserved to the Board itself and the functions delegated to Committees and the Chief Executive Officer.

The Service continues to implement the recommendations of the Working Group on the Accountability of Secretaries General and Heads of Offices (*the Mullarkey Report*). During 2007, the Service continued to make significant progress in developing new systems, structures and management practices.

AUDIT COMMITTEE

The Audit Committee advises the Board on internal audit policies and the management of risk. The Committee provides assurance to the Board on the robustness and effectiveness of internal controls. The Committee is chaired by one of the two external qualified accountants.

INTERNAL AUDIT UNIT

Audits are conducted by the Internal Audit Unit augmented by outsourced internal auditors across the full range of activities of the Service including financial, operational, information and communications technology, capital building and governance. This provides assurances on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Service's risk management, control, and governance processes.

Thirty one audits were completed during the year. All reports were submitted directly to the Audit Committee and to the Chief Executive/Accounting Officer.

RISK MANAGEMENT

The risk management programme is designed to ensure that business risks are identified and assessed, that mitigating actions are put in place and that risks are monitored on an ongoing basis.

Further progress continued to be made during 2007 in embedding the risk management framework. An independent external review of the framework and the effectiveness of risk management within the Service was completed. This highlighted a high level of engagement with the programme with sound fundamentals and structures in place. The Risk Management Committee, which comprises the Senior Management Team, met regularly to monitor the implementation and operation of the risk management framework. It reported on a quarterly basis to the Audit Committee.

PROCUREMENT

Revised Procurement and User Guidelines were prepared and disseminated during 2007. The Guidelines ensure that all procurement is in full compliance with National and EU procurement rules. This was supported during the year by targeted training for staff involved in procurement.

MANAGING THE COURTS - PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW

CHAPTER 2

MANAGING THE COURTS

- PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW

During 2007 the courts dealt with various civil law (including family law) and criminal law matters. This Chapter provides an overview of the work of the courts across all jurisdictions. Comprehensive statistics together with trends in some areas are contained in Chapter 5.

THE SUPREME COURT

Appeals finalised by the Supreme Court increased by 13%, from 202 in 2006 to 229 in 2007. Forty seven appeals were withdrawn by consent, an increase from 35 in 2006. Reserved judgments increased by 25%, from 67 in 2006 to 84 in 2007.

Fewer appeals were lodged, down from 484 in 2006 to 373 in 2007. Of these, 49 (13.1%) were lodged by appellants in person. Certificates of readiness lodged increased, from 218 in 2006 to 236 in 2007. There was a slight reduction in motions issued, down to 129 from 136 in 2006. There were 132 motions disposed of, one fewer than in 2006.

There was a 58% increase in appeals of decisions made in the High Court's Commercial List, 22 compared to 14 in 2006. There was a significant increase in appeals against final orders made in chancery actions, 24 compared with nine in 2006. Appeals in Companies Act matters doubled, from five in 2006 to ten in 2007. There was a 22% increase in appeals against orders made under the European Arrest Warrant Act, 2003, from 22 in 2006 to 27 in 2007. There was also an increase of 57% in appeals against final orders refusing judicial review, 28 in 2006 to 44 in 2007.

The largest category of appeals lodged was in personal injury actions, which decreased to 42 from 58 in 2006. Four appeals were lodged from the Court of Criminal Appeal, the same as in 2006.

A notable increase in the workload of the Supreme Court Office in 2007 was certificates of authentication of the seal and signature of notaries public or the signature of commissioners for oaths on public documents for use abroad, principally in connection with the adoption of children. In 2007, a record 9,937 certificates were issued, an increase of 12.5% on 2006.

CIVIL

The High Court

New cases

A total of 19,435 new cases were commenced in the High Court in 2007, a 26% increase on the 2006 figure of 15,432. Much of this was due to the continued increase in personal injuries summonses, of which there were 5,951 in 2007 twice the 2006 figure of 2,673.

There was a substantial increase in new medical negligence cases – 566 new cases were initiated, an increase of 70% on the 2006 figure of 334. New claims for liquidated debt increased by 21%, up to 2,292 in 2007 from 1,894 in 2006. European Arrest Warrant cases also saw an increase of 21%, from 171 in 2006 to 207 in 2007. There were a greater number of Garda Compensation Act summonses, an increase of 85% from 171 in 2006 to 317 in 2007. More liquidated debt claims resulted in an increase in the number of cases in which judgment for a liquidated sum was granted. Judgment in default of appearance was

marked in the Central Office in 881 cases, significantly up from the 576 cases in 2006 and 724 in 2005. Judgment on foot of Master's Order increased by 25%, from 157 in 2006 to 196 in 2007. There was also a 17% increase in judgment mortgage affidavits, from 402 in 2006 to 471 in 2007. High Court *lis pendens* registrations (disputes relating to the sale of property) more than doubled, increasing from 127 in 2006 to 274 in 2007. Registration of judgment, regardless of the court in which it is marked, is done in the High Court. In 2007 there were 3,324 registrations, a 12% increase in the overall number of registrations, compared with 2,960 in 2006.

Judicial Review

In 2007, there were 368 certiorari applications to the High Court, a 27% increase on the number in 2006; 95 mandamus applications, a slight increase on the 2006 figure of 90; and 87 applications for prohibition, again a slight increase on the 74 applications made in 2006.

The total number of all types of judicial review applications to the High Court in 2007 was 1,730, a 12% increase on the 2006 figure of 1,541.

Judicial Review Applications in Asylum Related Matters

Applications for judicial review of the decisions of the Office of the Refugee Appeals Commissioner, the Refugee

European Arrest Warrant Act: Orders made in 2007

Year of commencement of proceedings	Extradition (final)	Extradition (final – on consent)	Extradition refused	Remand in custody	Warrant to arrest	Bail pending extradition	Endorse warrant for extradition	Extradition (outgoing applications)	Misc	Total by year of case
2004	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
2005	-		1	1	-	-	-	-	3	5
2006	21	9	1	5	-	7	2	1	10	56
2007	36	23	3	17	13	61	139	31	14	337
Total	57	32	5	23	13	68	141	32	28	399

Appeals Tribunal and the Minister for Justice, Equality & Law Reform in asylum related matters are all listed in the High Court Asylum List. There were 1,024 new asylum related judicial review applications made in the High Court in 2007, a 12% increase on the figure for 2006.

There were 263 orders made granting leave to seek judicial review in asylum related cases in 2007. This is an 89% increase compared with 2006 when 139 such orders were granted. Leave to appeal was refused in 56 cases. There was a slight reduction in cases in which a final order was made on consent, with 343 such orders being made in 2007 compared with 358 in 2006.

Judicial Review Applications in Other Matters

Judicial Review applications in other matters also increased, with a total of 706 such applications in 2007, an increase of 13% on the 2006 total of 626. There was little change in applications for leave to seek judicial

review in cases under the Planning Acts, with 49 new cases in 2007 compared with 50 in 2006.

European Arrest Warrant Act

Applications under the European Arrest Warrant Act continued to increase as in previous years. In 2007, the High Court made 399 such orders, a 23% increase on the 323 orders made in 2006. Of the 399 orders made in 2007, 337 or 84% were in respect of proceedings commenced in 2007.

Companies Acts

During 2007, cases commenced in the High Court for relief under the Companies Acts increased by 4% to 480 from 462 in 2006. However, orders made in new and existing Companies Acts cases increased by 18.6%, from 591 in 2006 to 701 in 2007. This increase was most notable in respect of orders for the winding up of a company where 42 such orders were made compared with 32 in 2006.

JUDICIAL REVIEW

An application for leave to seek judicial review can be made to the High court for certiorari (to quash an order or ruling of a District Court, a regulator or tribunal), mandamus (requiring a District Court, a regulator or tribunal to do a certain act) or an order of prohibition (prohibiting a District Court, a regulator or a tribunal from doing an act). Typically such applications are made in respect of the orders or decisions of government ministers, local authorities and others including An Bórd Pleanála, the Environmental Protection Agency, the HSE, the Residential Institutions Redress Board and the Medical Council.

Commercial List

The business of the Commercial List has increased each year since its commencement in 2004. In 2007, 196 cases entered the List representing a 73% increase on the number of new cases compared with 2006 or 43% of all the cases entered during the four years the List has been operating.

A total of 362 cases have been dealt with in the List since 2004. Of these, almost half (48%) or 173 cases were dealt with in 2007. The increase over 2006 was 64 cases (59%).

The average waiting time from entry to the List to the allocation of a hearing date was 10 weeks. And from entry to the List to the conclusion of the case took an average 21 weeks.

Regulating the Professions

The President of the High Court has jurisdiction to deal with applications to

regulate the medical, dental, nursing, veterinary and solicitors professions.

Solicitors Act Applications

In 2007, 63 applications under all sections of the Solicitors Acts were made to President of the High Court, a 30% increase on the 48 such applications received in 2006.

Many of these applications were made under section 48 of the Solicitors Act, 1954 (as amended by the Solicitors (Amendment) Act, 1994) for the renewal of a practising certificate where there is a defect in the renewal application to the Law Society. There were 27 such applications made in 2007.

The Solicitors Disciplinary Appeals Tribunal investigates allegations of misconduct by solicitors initiated by the Law Society or by a member of the public. The Law Society refers reports of this Tribunal to the High Court. In such cases the Tribunal will have made recommendations for sanctions which may include the suspension of a solicitor or that he/she be struck off the Roll of Solicitors.

The Solicitors Acts also provide that an applicant or the solicitor against whom the allegation of misconduct has been made may appeal the decision of the Tribunal to the High Court in whole or in part. During 2007, there were seven appeals from the findings of the Solicitors Disciplinary Appeals Tribunal to the High Court. This represented a decline on the number of such appeals on 2006 when there were 17 such cases.

In 2007 the Law Society made seven applications for the production of client records (under section 11(3) of the

Solicitors (Amendment) Act, 1994). A further 20 applications were made to the High Court in 2007 under the Solicitors Acts (1954-2002). These applications included appeals by solicitors from a ruling of the Law Society's Client Relations Committee, referrals of Tribunal reports by the Law Society, and applications by the Law Society under section 20 of the Solicitors (Amendment) Act, 1960 (as amended) for a freezing order.

In addition, during 2007 the Law Society made two applications to the High Court under section 18 of the Solicitors (Amendment) Act, 2002 for an order prohibiting contravention of the Solicitors' Acts or regulations.

Medical, Dental and Nursing Council

The Medical Council, the Dentists Council and An Bórd Altranais have power to apply to the High Court for an order suspending the registration of any practitioner. Similarly, when the regulatory bodies of the respective professions find a registered practitioner unfit to practice, the practitioner may apply to the High Court for an order cancelling that decision.

Some of these matters are required by law to be heard otherwise than in public. In 2007, there were 24 applications to the High Court under the Medical Practitioners Act, a reduction on the 29 applications in 2006. There were 35 applications under the Nurses Act, just under double the 19 applications made in 2006. There were three applications under the Dentists Act, while none were made in respect of veterinary practitioners.

There were significant increases in orders made in the High Court in

respect of the medical profession, with 15 interim orders and 23 final orders in Medical Council matters (up from 10 and 16 respectively in 2006). Similarly, there were 13 interim and 28 final orders made under the Nurses Act in 2007, compared with two interim orders and 19 final orders in 2006.

Personal Injury

In 2007, the High Court saw a sizable increase in the number of personal injury actions. There were 8,045 personal injury actions finalised, an increase of 49% on the 5,389 actions disposed of in 2006.

Most of these increases arose from the management of the Dublin Personal Injury List where 5,910 cases were disposed of, more than double the 2,448 in 2006. Dundalk dealt with an increased number of cases, beginning the year with 452 cases on hand at 1st January and ending it with just 124 on 31st December. Exactly 164 new cases entered the Dundalk list in 2007 and 492 were finalised. The only venues with more cases on hand at the end of 2007 than there were at the beginning of the year were Cork (695 at end 2007 compared with 534 at end 2006) and Limerick (1,049 at end 2007 compared with 794 at end 2006).

Examiner's Office

There were 36 new company liquidations in 2007 compared to 29 in 2006. 75 cases were completed.

Winding up Orders by identity of Petitioner				
Year	Revenue	Other creditor	Company itself	Others
2003	12	9	6	1
2004	22	7	5	6
2005	24	11	5	4
2006	11	8	5	5
2007	20	7	8	1
Total	89	42	29	17

Bankruptcy

While there was no increase in the number of persons adjudicated bankrupt in 2007, there were 20 bankruptcy petitions presented to the court compared to 11 in 2006.

The Circuit Court

Civil bills issued in the Circuit Court increased by 15% in 2007 to 30,435 from 26,503 in 2006. More than 50% (15,481) related to breach of contract/debt collection. Personal injury cases accounted for a further 25% or 7,154 cases. The largest percentage increase was in Carlow where 553 civil bills were issued in 2007 compared to 330 in 2006, an increase of 67%. Four counties (Kilkenny, Mayo, Monaghan and Galway) issued fewer civil bills of which Galway had a 34% decrease, from 1,350 in 2006 to 886 in 2007.

The District Court

General

Civil business in the District Court increased by more than 18%, from 49,965 in 2006 to 59,061 in 2007. Committal orders also increased, up from 5,930 in 2006 to 6,425 in 2007, an increase of over 8%. There was a 15% increase in summary judgments, from 20,391 in 2006 to 23,389 in 2007.

Small Claims

Applications under the Small Claims procedure increased by almost 25% in 2007, from 2,990 in 2006 to 3,734 in 2007. The largest increase was in relation to claims involving furniture which almost doubled from 160 in 2006 to 311 in 2007. Applications relating to damage to private property increased by over 90%, from 158 in 2006 to 303 in 2007. Applications relating to holidays accounted for 10% of the total claims.

There was a considerable increase in the applications which could not be dealt with under the Small Claims procedure, from 44 in 2006 to 589 in 2007. This may be attributed to the introduction of the *Small Claims Online System* (see page 43) which allows the public to lodge claims online without discussing them in advance with their local Small Claims Registrar.

Of all applications received, 1,552 or 41.5% were received through the *Small Claims Online System*.

Over 50% of all the claims finalised were settled by the Small Claims Registrar with only 33% referred to court. There was a 20% reduction in decrees by default (where the person against whom the claim was made did not respond or take any part in the case), from 377 in 2006 to 294 in 2007. There were 857 cases referred to court, an increase of more than 17% on the 2006 figure. Of that number, 446 were dismissed, struck out or withdrawn with decrees granted in the remaining 411.

LICENSING

The Circuit Court

Overall, licensing business in the Circuit Court decreased by 17% in 2007. Only special restaurant certificates showed an increase, with 64 in 2007 as opposed to 51 in 2006. Pub licences granted decreased by 17% to 267 from the 2006 total of 322. There was a 36% reduction in hotel licences granted, down from 98 in 2006 to 62 in 2007. Club licences granted decreased by 20%. There was a 25% increase in special restaurant certificates granted.

The District Court

Licensing applications in the District Court increased from 106,721 in 2006 to 107,317 in 2007. Applications for the renewal of pub licences increased by 29%, from 1,111 in 2006 to 1,432 in 2007. Miscellaneous business including applications for music and singing licences and applications for licences for public bars in hotels increased by 12%, from 8,897 in 2006 to 9,933 in 2007.

High Court: Family Law Orders								
Year	Divorce (order by the court)	Divorce – settled prior to hearing	Divorce settled at hearing	Judicial separation	Judicial separation - settled prior to hearing	Judicial separation - settled at hearing	Miscellaneous High Court Family Law applications	Circuit appeals
1998		-	-	-		-	4	
1999	-	-	-	-		-	-	
2000	-	-	-	-		-	1	
2001	-	1	-	-		-	2	
2002	2	-	-	-		-	3	1
2003	1	2	-	1	1	-	2	1
2004	2	-	1	5	4	-	4	1
2005	1	3	3	4	2	7	12	12
2006	8	7	-	7	5	3	15	28
2007	12	4	-	1	2	-	16	15
Total	26	17	4	18	14	10	59	58

FAMILY

The High Court

There was a 15% reduction in family law cases commenced in the High Court in 2007, with 97 new cases compared with 112 in 2006.

In contrast to 2006, husbands made more divorce applications than wives in 2007 (17 or 51.5%). Meanwhile, 47 or 90% of High Court judicial separation applications were made by wives.

During 2007 a total of 58 final orders were made in family law appeals from the Circuit Court and 81 final orders in divorce and judicial separation proceedings. Divorce proceedings were settled prior to final hearing in 17 cases and during hearing in four cases. Judicial separation proceedings were settled prior to final hearing in 14 cases and during final hearing in 10 cases. One order for the recognition of a foreign divorce was made as were 59

orders for final disposal of miscellaneous family proceedings (including orders post-divorce or separation for property and pension adjustments). The court also made 150 interim family miscellaneous orders. Approximately 38% of all divorce cases commenced in the High Court in 2007 concluded within 12 months of the date of issue.

Parties seeking divorce are required by law to have been living apart for not less than four years. There is no similar requirement for judicial separation.

Based on returns made on a voluntary basis by the parties, four of the parties seeking a High Court divorce in 2007 already had a judicial separation and one party had a pre-existing foreign divorce decree. One divorce applicant was also pursuing a maintenance claim in the District Court and one judicial separation applicant had a child access claim before the District Court.

High Court: Orders made by reference to date of marriage*		
	Divorce cases	Judicial separation cases
1950s	1	0
1960s	0	0
1970s	6	5
1980s	6	8
1990s	3	8
2000 or later	0	1
* where details given		

High Court: Orders made by reference to length of time parties were living apart*		
	Divorce cases	Judicial separation cases
Not living apart	0	4
0-5 Years	4	18
5-10 Years	7	2
More than 10 years	4	0
* where details given		

The Circuit Court

Divorce applications increased by 2% to 4,081 in 2007 from 3,986 in 2006. Almost 60% or 2,430 applications were made by wives. Divorces granted increased by 7% from 3,420 in 2006 to 3,658 in 2007.

Judicial separation applications decreased by over 5% from 1,789 in 2006 to 1,689 in 2007. The majority of

applications (1,190 or 70.4%) were made by wives. Judicial separations granted increased by almost 9% to 1,167 from 1,072 in 2006.

There were 60 applications for nullity. Of that number, 32 or 53% were made by wives.

Maintenance arrangements involving periodic or lump sum payments to spouses or children were agreed in 1,739 cases where final outcomes were agreed. In 1,028 cases the position in relation to the family home (transfer/sale/residence) was determined. Custody/access orders were made in 1,115 cases.

Applications under section 33 of the Family Law Act, 1995 (which was replaced by section 47 of the Civil Registration Act, 2004 with effect from 5th November 2007) decreased by 18%, from 903 in 2006 to 739 in 2007. Orders granted decreased by 34%, from 836 in 2006 to 546 in 2007.

The District Court

There was a slight decrease of just over 1.5% in family law applications, from 26,680 in 2006 to 26,235 in 2007.

Domestic Violence

In 2007, there was a 15% increase in applications made under Domestic Violence legislation, up from 9,924 in 2006 to 11,387 in 2007. There was a 21% increase in the number of protection orders sought, from 3,137 in 2006 to 3,794 in 2007. Of the 2007 figure, 3,235 were granted, an increase of 13.7% on 2006. More safety orders were also sought, with 3,553 applications made in 2007 compared to 3,050 in 2006.

Of the safety orders sought, 1,556 were granted, up 27% on the 2006 figure of 1,221. Applications for interim barring orders increased by more than 14% from 605 in 2006 to 692 in 2007.

Applications granted increased by less than 8% to 586 in 2007 from 544 in 2006. Applications for barring orders increased by 7%, from 3,132 in 2006 to 3,355 in 2007. Applications granted increased by 4.5% from 1,357 in 2006 to 1,420 in 2007. Spouses continue to be the largest group among applicants. Their applications accounted for 55% of the total. The instances of parents applying for safety orders more than doubled, up from 102 in 2006 to 219 in 2007. There was a significant increase (48%) in parents seeking protection orders, from 316 in 2006 to 467 in 2007.

Guardianship, Custody, Access

Applications for custody of, and access to, children increased by 3.6%, from 5,027 in 2006 to 5,210 in 2007. Applications for access increased from 3,281 in 2006 to 3,475 in 2007, an increase of almost 6%. Applications for custody dropped from 846 in 2006 to 814 in 2007, a reduction of 4%. Applications for custody and access increased by just over 2%, from 900 in 2006 to 921 in 2007.

Applications for guardianship by unmarried fathers increased by more than 12%, from 1,742 in 2006 to 1,962 in 2007.

Maintenance

4,448 applications for maintenance were dealt with in the District Court in 2007, an increase of 5% on the 2006 figure of 4,207. In excess of 60% of applications were made by unmarried

applicants with a further 35% by married applicants. The remaining applications were dealt with under the Maintenance (Foreign Jurisdictions) Act, 1974.

Supervision and Care

Supervision orders increased in 2007 from 520 in 2006 to 555 in 2007. Care orders also increased, from 1,125 in 2006 to 1,201 in 2007.

CRIMINAL

The Court of Criminal Appeal

In 2007, 267 appeals were received by the Court of Criminal Appeal, a 9% increase on the 2006 figure of 244. The Court disposed of 232 appeals, a 30% reduction on the 2006 disposals. Of the appeals on hand at the end of 2007, just 17 had been lodged prior to 2006 and 18 lodged in 2006. The remainder were lodged in 2007.

The waiting time for conviction and for conviction and sentence appeals was 8-10 months. Waiting time for sentence/Director of Public Prosecution appeals against undue leniency was between six and eight months. Priority matters continued to be accommodated as part of the ongoing monthly review of appeals by the Court.

The Central Criminal Court

116 new cases commenced in the Central Criminal Court in 2007. Of that number, 39 related to murder or manslaughter, an 18% increase on 2006. Rape cases increased for a third consecutive year. There were 73 rape cases in 2007, an increase of almost

The Central Criminal Court: Murder and Rape					
	Cases received				Cases disposed of
	Murder	Rape	Other	Total	
1996	25	48	0	73	71
1997	28	72	0	100	70
1998	29	130	0	159	106
1999	33	130	0	163	127
2000	42	113	1	156	127
2001	31	92	1	124	131
2002	55	82	0	137	145
2003	39	52	0	91	154
2004	28	40	4	72	135
2005	35	44	4	83	121
2006	33	58	4	95	115
2007	39	73	4	116	123

26% on 2006. There had been a 32% increase in 2006 over 2005. The remaining cases related to aggravated assault, contempt of court and one case under the Competition Act.

For the seventh year in a row the Court disposed of more cases than it received.

Murder

The average murder trial took 8.3 days in 2007 (the two longest trials took 19 and 21 days; the shortest just 4 days).

Of the murder cases dealt with in 2007, 25% (11 out of 44) were dealt with by way of a plea of 'guilty'. A plea of guilty was entered in five murder cases during the course of the trial. Twenty

five murder cases in which a plea of 'not guilty' was entered went to trial by jury, with three murder cases otherwise disposed of (two *Nolle Prosequi* and one deceased).

Eight of the 25 murder cases that went to jury trial resulted in an acquittal, twelve in a verdict of guilty of murder, and the remaining five cases resulted in verdicts of guilty of attempted murder (1), manslaughter (3) and manslaughter with diminished responsibility (1). Eight of the murder cases in which there was a plea of guilty resulted in a conviction for manslaughter.

Rape

Of the 73 rape cases dealt with in 2007, a plea of guilty was entered in 20 cases and a plea of guilty was entered in four cases during the trial. Thirty five pleaded not guilty and were dealt with by way of trial by a jury. The remainder were disposed of as follows: two deceased, six *Nolle Prosequi*, three bench warrants, one unfit to plead and two were quashed.

In the 35 cases that went to trial before a jury there were 21 convictions, 13 acquittals and one case where the jury disagreed.

The average time for a rape trial was 6.6 days (the longest took 14 days; the shortest 4 days).

The Circuit Court

Almost 25% of all offences in the Circuit Criminal Court in 2007 related to larceny, theft or robbery. A further 21% involved assaults. Drug offences accounted for almost 14% while sexual offences were almost 12% of the total number of offences.

The number of jurors summonsed to attend court increased from 97,069 in 2006 to 110,161 in 2007, an increase of 13%. Two thirds of all criminal trials lasted between two and five days with a further 29 trials lasting for six days or more. 26% of trials were completed in a day or less.

The District Court

Criminal matters in the District Court increased by more than 15%, from 378,047 in 2006 to 436,617 in 2007. The main increase was in summary cases which increased by nearly 18% from 329,775 to 388,345. Indictable cases dealt with summarily were unchanged.

Road traffic offences continued to account for a large portion of the work of the District Court with over half of all cases dealt with relating to such offences – a total of 281,641 in 2007 up from 224,848 in 2006, an increase of more than 25% in 2007 on the 2006 figure.

More than 5,500 people were convicted of dangerous driving in 2007, an increase of 2%. There was an increase of over 8% in the number of people convicted of drink driving, from 26,919 in 2006 to 29,127 in 2007.

Cases relating to drug offences increased by almost 12%, from 8,842 in 2006 to 9,870 in 2007. Sexual offences also increased by almost 25%, from 415 in 2006 to 517 in 2007.

There was a 7% reduction in the number of public order offences, from 38,700 in 2006 to 35,964 in 2007 and a 6% reduction in larceny offences, from 24,463 in 2006 to 22,937 in 2007.

There were 164,541 cases struck out in 2007, an increase of 35% on the 2006 figure of 121,871. Of all summary cases dealt with in 2007 40% were struck out. A further 17% were dismissed – 14,646 in 2007, an increase on the 2006 figure of 12,727.

The numbers of fines imposed increased by more than 11%, from 95,913 in 2006 to 106,965 in 2007.

District Court		
Cases disposed of	2007	2006
Summary cases	388,345	329,775
Indictable cases dealt with summarily	48,272	48,272
All cases disposed of	2007	2006
Public order/assault	35,964	38,700
Drugs	9,870	8,842
Larceny	22,937	24,463
Road traffic offences	281,641	224,848
Sexual offences	517	415
Other *	85,688	80,779
Total	436,617	378,047

SUPPORTING THE JUDICIARY

CHAPTER 3

SUPPORTING THE JUDICIARY

NUMBER OF JUDGES AT 31ST DECEMBER 2006

	Number allowed by legislation	Numbers serving
Supreme Court	8	8
High Court	34	33
Circuit Court	34	33
District Court	55	55
Total	131	129

NUMBER OF JUDGES AT 31ST DECEMBER 2007

	Number allowed by legislation	Numbers serving
Supreme Court	8	8
High Court	38	37
Circuit Court	38	38
District Court	61	60
Total	145	143

The goals set out in the Strategic Plan include many initiatives to support the judiciary and enhance day to day working arrangements between the judiciary and staff. They also contain measures to assist the judiciary to manage increasing workloads. Managers continued to meet regularly with the judiciary in 2007 to discuss court business and to devise methods of improving the management of court lists.

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

Judicial Studies Institute and Judicial Appointments Advisory Board

The Service continued to provide administrative support for the Judicial Studies Institute and the Judicial Appointments Advisory Board, both of which are independent of the Service.

Court Rules Committees

The Service also continued to provide administrative support, research and drafting resources for the three Court Rules Committees in the form of a single support unit pending the enactment of the Civil Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill, 2006. The Bill contains a provision to establish a unified secretariat on a statutory basis for these committees.

SUPPORT FOR THE WORK OF THE COURTS

Sittings outside Dublin

The High Court

The High Court has a long tradition of travelling on circuit to hear personal injury cases and Circuit Appeals. The pilot project, commenced by the President of the High Court in 2006 to expand the range of cases to be heard by the High Court in provincial towns, continued in 2007. The objective is to ensure that cases are assigned guaranteed early dates, that High Court business is spread across the country and that the recently refurbished stock of large courthouses across the State is

utilised for the benefit of court users. A major boost for this initiative was the appointment of extra judges to the High Court. In 2007 there were 37 serving High Court judges compared with 33 in 2006.

The High Court sat in regional venues to deal with debt recovery, contract disputes and other non jury matters. During 2007, Dundalk and Naas courthouses were used extensively for cases traditionally heard in Dublin. The High Court also sat in Bray, Cork, Limerick, Bruff, Castlebar and Ennis. The High Court sat for over 200 additional days in 2007 compared with 2006.

The number of sittings and range of venues outside Dublin will increase in 2008 with consequential benefits for parties and for local court users.

BENEFITS OF CONDUCTING HEARINGS OUTSIDE DUBLIN

- Cases receive earlier dates
- High Court business is spread across the country providing more local access to solicitors and the public
- Recently refurbished larger courthouses are utilised to benefit local court users
- There are savings on costs for users including An Garda Síochána, the Prison Service, litigants, witnesses, victims, families and relatives.

The Central Criminal Court

The policy of sitting outside Dublin to deal with murder and rape cases was also continued in 2007. The Service assisted the President of the High Court to arrange hearings in Limerick, Cork, Cavan, Galway, Cloverhill and Tralee – a total of 57 sitting days.

Increase in number of sitting days

The Circuit Court

The priority in the Circuit Court in 2007 continued to be the reduction in backlogs in criminal cases. Additional judicial resources were assigned by the President of the Circuit Court for this purpose to Tullamore, Mullingar, Portlaoise, Roscommon, Kilkenny, Trim, Limerick, Ennis, Naas, Wicklow, Letterkenny, Galway, Carrick-On-Shannon, Monaghan, Sligo, Nenagh, Waterford, Cork, Wexford, Wicklow and Tralee. Six judges remained assigned fulltime to criminal work in the Dublin Circuit Court.

The District Court

Additional District Court sittings were held in Dublin in August and September 2007 facilitating the earlier disposal of a number of cases.

Special sittings of the District Court were held in almost every county. Examples include:

- Bray District Court where an additional four weeks of sittings were held between September and December 2007 with an additional judge assigned by the President of the District Court to clear a backlog of cases

- Wexford District Court where five weeks of additional sittings were held specifically to target drink driving cases and more than 100 additional cases were disposed of
- Wicklow and Arklow District Courts where additional judicial resources allowed the President fix a dedicated family law day every month
- In addition two dedicated criminal hearing days per month were fixed for Bray with remand and summons courts increasing from four to six per month.

District Court Family Law

Progress continued to be made during the year to separate family law cases from the other work of the court by the provision of separate sitting days. In Dublin and Cork District Courts judges continued to be assigned on a full time basis to the family law courts. By year end dedicated sittings were taking place in 42 venues nationwide. Family law cases are increasingly being dealt with in the larger centres such as county towns where appropriate facilities and more privacy is available. In Dublin family law cases are heard in Dolphin House (Dublin City Centre), Swords, Dún Laoghaire and Balbriggan.

Provision of reports to the Family Courts

By year end arrangements had been made for the Probation Service to manage the provision of reports under section 47 of the Family Law Act, 1995 for the family law courts through the establishment of a panel of

Court Registrars continued to facilitate the efficient disposal of High Court cases by calling over lists prior to the judges sitting in certain lists including common law, chancery and personal injury.

probation/social workers. The service will be funded by the Courts Service.

Case progression

The Service continued to assist judges improve the processing of cases before the courts. In 2007 a number of initiatives resulted in improvements in the matter of case progression:

The High Court

A detailed draft scheme of rules for case progression in respect of High Court litigation generally, as well as a scheme in the area of court rules were prepared. These are referred to in greater detail on *page 41*.

The Circuit Court

Draft rules for the progression of family law cases in the Circuit Court were approved by the Circuit Court Rules Committee during the year. Further details of the scheme envisaged are on *page 42*.

Juvenile cases

During 2007 a number of District Courts organised separate days for the

District Court venues with dedicated sittings for family law		
District No.	Venue	Frequency of Family Law Sittings
	Dublin	Daily
1	Donegal Town	one day every month
1	Letterkenny	one day every month
2	Sligo	one day every month
3	Ballina	one day every month
3	Castlebar	one day every second month alternating with Westport*
3	Westport	one day every second month alternating with Castlebar*
5	Cavan	one day every month
5	Monaghan	one day every month
6	Drogheda	one day every month
6	Dundalk	one day every month
7	Galway	two days every month (except for September – one day)
8	Athlone	afternoon of every court sitting
8	Nenagh	afternoon of every court sitting
9	Mullingar	one day every month
9	Tullamore	one day every month
10	Trim	every Friday afternoon (doesn't sit on 5th Friday of a month)
12	Ennis	one day every month
13	Listowel	one day every month
14	Limerick	one day every week
14	Thurles	one day every month
15	Portlaoise	one day every month
16	Arklow**	one day every month
16	Bray	one day every month
16	Wicklow**	one day every month
17	Killarney	one day every second month
17	Tralee	one day every second month
19	Cork	two days every week
20	Fermoy	one day every month
20	Mallow	one day every month
21	Clonmel	one day every month*
21	Youghal	heard at end of list
22	Kilkenny	one day every month
22	Carlow	one day every month
23	Wexford	one day every month
24	Waterford	one day every month
25	Naas	one day every month*
* In certain venues, while the day is not entirely dedicated to family matters, arrangements are made to hear family lists separately.		
** In Arklow and Wicklow, some civil cases may also be listed on these days.		

BENEFITS OF REORGANISATION OF DISTRICT COURT DISTRICTS

- Addresses the demographic and social changes (including improvements in roads and increased road use) which have occurred in the past 45 years
- Eliminates short sittings in small venues freeing up full days for sittings in larger venues
- Provides opportunity to have additional days dedicated to the hearing of family law cases only
- Allows for more equitable distribution of workloads for judges particularly in the eastern half of the country.

hearing of juvenile cases. They included Carlow, Galway, Castlebar, Westport, Ballina, Waterford and Cork.

Work to organise local sittings of the Children Court in Dublin continued. From September 2007 all new juvenile cases are heard in Tallaght. Juvenile cases will be heard in Blanchardstown when new court facilities are in place in 2008.

Reorganising District Court Districts and areas

Work on a major reorganisation of the District Court Districts continued in 2007. This is the first major revision of District Court Districts since 1961 and involves a full review of court venues, sittings and workloads. The reorganisation will create more

equitable workloads in the Districts many of which have seen very significant demographic and population shifts in recent years.

The first phase of the reorganisation will come into effect on 1st January 2008. It will cover counties Monaghan, Cavan, Louth, Meath, Kildare, Carlow, Kilkenny, Waterford, Wexford and Wicklow. Two new Districts will be established: District No. 24 will cover Waterford City while District No. 25 will cover County Kildare. Work on the second phase of the reorganisation which will cover the remaining 15 counties will continue in 2008.

District Court Committee

The reorganisation of District Court Districts will address many of the issues affecting the work of the District Court. Issues of an operational and resource nature require separate consideration. The Board established a committee during the year chaired by a judge of the Supreme Court to examine these operational and resource needs. In particular the committee will objectively examine the judicial and administrative resources required in the District Court with reference to changes in the nature and complexity of its work in recent years. It will also examine the support services required by the Court and make recommendations to the Board.

Restorative Justice

The District Court continued to work with the local Probation Service in implementing community based restorative justice schemes in Nenagh and Tallaght.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

Digital Dictation Systems

A digital dictation application with an embedded voice recognition system to assist judges was selected during the year. Work on a pilot project commenced with the support of members of the judiciary. The pilot will be reviewed in mid 2008.

Digital Audio Recording System

During 2007 the Service completed a major procurement for the selection of a digital audio recording system. This system will enable proceedings in courtrooms to be recorded providing an accurate record of evidence which can subsequently be accessed for the preparation of transcripts or for playback either within the courtroom or otherwise as required.

Initial implementation of the system will be on a pilot basis in the Central Criminal Court and Circuit Criminal Court. Further details are on *page 43*.

Video Conferencing/Video Link

Work continued during the year to increase the number of courtrooms where evidence can be given using video conference/video link facilities. Further details are on *page 43*.

Video Viewing

The Service continued to provide facilities for the viewing of evidence during the hearing of cases. Such evidence includes recordings of interviews in garda stations and CCTV security footage. Further details are on *page 43*.

Statistical information

The continued improvement in information and technology systems has afforded an opportunity to increase the range and quality of statistical information on the work of the courts

for judges. During the year reports on court activity across the jurisdictions were provided to assist judges manage court lists, highlight areas where work is increasing and decreasing and provide information on a range of matters.

Equipment

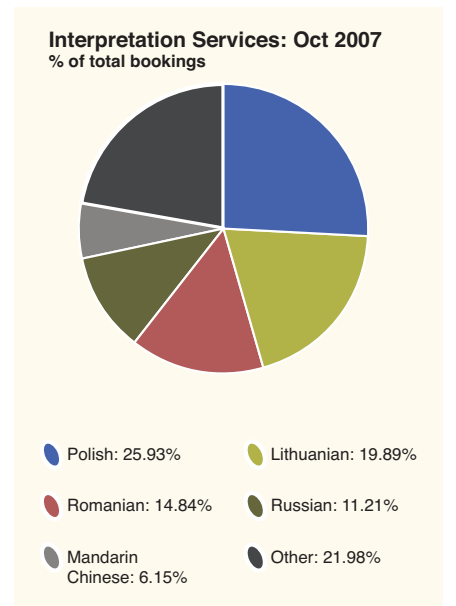
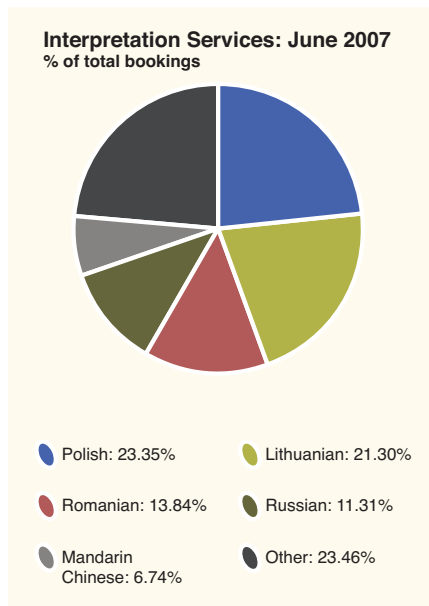
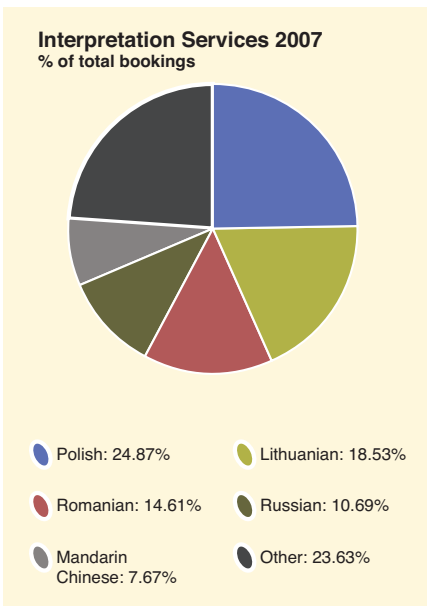
Judges continued to be provided with wireless handheld devices during the year. The next phase of improving remote access facilities includes modernising the existing laptop system. This will allow access to the network of the Service using a range of communications media such as broadband, WiFi and mobile technology (GPRS/3G). Testing of this new remote access system was completed in 2007.

By year end arrangements had been made to procure new laptops and tablet PCs for deployment to judges commencing with Supreme Court judges early in 2008.

INTERPRETATION SERVICES

The Service continued to provide quality interpretation services to the courts during the year. Interpreters were provided in all courts to facilitate access to justice for those for whom English is not their first language. A single service provider continued to be engaged to deal with the increasing need for interpreters, the diverse range of languages required and to ensure an appropriate standard of service.

The Service provided interpretation services in 75 languages in 2007. The main languages requested were Polish, Lithuanian, Romanian, Russian and Mandarin Chinese. There was a month on month increase in the volume of requests for these languages in 2007.



LIBRARY AND RESEARCH FACILITIES

Library facilities

The information resources made available to the judiciary through the Judges' Library continued to grow in 2007. In addition to a broad range of quality online electronic sources, the library holds a considerable hardcopy collection of textbooks, periodicals, reference works, law reports and unreported judgments, legislation, indexes and digests, Oireachtas Debates and official publications.

Items were obtained on inter-library loan or from document supply services when they were not held within the collection. Readers availed of the service on the premises, through email communications, by telephone and fax, and by using electronic subscriptions directly.

Staff of the library provided training and assistance in the use of various information resources for readers. Library personnel availed of opportunities for professional development and training to keep abreast of trends and best practices.

Judicial fellows

By year end arrangements were being made to engage judicial fellows to assist High Court judges. The fellows will carry out legal research, writing, collation of material, editing and other tasks, including attendance in court.

ACCOMMODATION

Improved accommodation and other facilities for judges continued to be provided as part of the Capital Building Programme detailed in Chapter 4.

FOREIGN VISITS

The Service facilitated judicial visitors from many countries during the year. They included the United Arab Emirates, Lesotho, Norway, Sweden,

Finland, Switzerland, the United States of America, Sri Lanka, Bosnia, France, England, Northern Ireland, Australia and Taiwan. Programmes tailored to meet the specific needs of the individual groups included opportunities to meet members of the judiciary and court staff and attend a range of court hearings. A programme of events was also arranged for the members of the European Court of Justice.

MODERNISING THE COURTS

CHAPTER 4

MODERNISING THE COURTS

The modernisation of the courts continued to be guided by the Courts Service Strategic Plan 2005-2008, which itself is in line with the Government's modernisation programme for the public service. Many of the measures featured in the Strategic Plan were subsequently set out by the social partners in *Towards 2016*.

Among them are commitments to improved customer service, better regulation, new technology, development of eGovernment services, improved buildings, better information for the public and changes in existing structures and processes to improve services. Reports on progress made to deliver on the targets outlined in the Service's *Towards 2016* Action Plan were submitted to the Department of Justice, Equality & Law Reform in March and December 2007.

The challenge for the Service continues to be to provide a world class service, delivered in a manner which meets the needs of citizens. To meet this challenge the Service must continue to change and restructure so as to create a modern, forward-thinking organisation equipped to deal with the issues facing 21st century Ireland. To focus this process of change and restructuring, the Service has, in recent years, developed a change management / leadership programme focused on staff development and customer needs. In 2007 the Change Programme was driven by major projects such as the Courts Accounting System, the Funds Accounting System, the Civil Case Management System, the Criminal Case Management System, the new Criminal Courts Complex, Business Planning and the Performance Management and Development System.

CUSTOMER SERVICE

User groups

The Service remains committed to providing a high quality customer focussed service for those who use the courts. In fulfilling this commitment, representative groups are regularly consulted to better inform the Service of customer needs. These groups include professional bodies such as the Law Society of Ireland, the Council of the Bar of Ireland, Solicitors Bar Associations, the Family Lawyers Association, the Office of the Director of Corporate Enforcement, the Consultative Committee of Accounting Bodies in Ireland, the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Ireland, the Prison Service, An Garda Síochána, the Probation and Welfare Service, the Legal Aid Board, the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, the Chief Prosecution Solicitor's Office, the Chief State Solicitor's Office, Law Agencies, Victim Support organisations and various other advocacy groups.

In Dublin, six user groups met three times during the year. Regional and local groups organised on a cross-jurisdictional basis met at least once and also when specific local projects were being undertaken.

In addition the Service hosts an annual forum for all its users, the third of which was held in April 2007. It was attended by representatives of groups including those supporting victims and their families, other government agencies, the legal profession and An Garda Síochána. The forum discussed the Capital Building Programme, the new Criminal Court Complex, the online search facility for the *High Court Case Tracking System*, *Small Claims Online* and the website. The fourth annual forum will take place in April 2008.

In 2007, the Service's regional offices introduced special user group meetings for victims groups, which will continue to be held on a quarterly basis throughout 2008.

Mystery Shopper

The Service engaged an external company to undertake a number of 'mystery shops' using face-to-face visits to court offices and telephone and email surveys. Offices were selected independently and randomly, subject to the stipulations that they were of varying size and spread nationally. No advance warning of a visit was given to the offices and each office was visited twice, ensuring any once off problems would not distort their score.

The survey revealed that 96% of mystery shoppers reported that staff were professional and polite, 91% reported that staff were courteous and 88% reported that staff gave them confidence in the interaction.

Complaints

The Service dealt with 11 formal customer complaints during 2007.

New Customer Service Action Plan

The preparation of a new Customer Service Action Plan commenced at the end of 2007. Representatives of the various court user groups will be consulted about the plan during 2008.

Improved telephone facilities

In 2007 the Service commenced a strategic review of its telephony requirements nationwide, both fixed line and mobile, with a view to introducing an updated telephony infrastructure. This will provide a cost effective solution and additional options to improve customer service.

Improved telephone access, including voicemail messaging, was introduced in several offices around the country including Cork, Athlone, Bray, Carlow and Naas.

BUSINESS PLANNING

A revised business planning process was developed during 2007. It was undertaken by all offices by the end of 2007, facilitating planning for 2008.

BETTER REGULATION

Reform of court processes and procedures

The management structure of the Service continued to include a Directorate of Reform & Development (*see page 16*) tasked with identifying and promoting measures to reform court procedures and, in conjunction with the draftsman to the Court Rules Committees, prepare various schemes of court rules. List of these rules can be found in the Reports of the Rules Committees in Chapter 8 of this Report.

The Supreme Court

A Supreme Court practice direction to expedite the preparation of documentation for appeals and providing that submissions be lodged by e-mail in addition to hard copy was prepared by the Chief Justice and came into effect in February 2007. An existing practice direction concerning Child Abduction/Hague Convention appeals was revised in September 2007 to conform with a similar direction regarding the listing of European Arrest Warrant Act appeals. A further practice direction was issued to take account of changes introduced under the Criminal Justice Acts, 2006 and 2007 pending the coming into force of rules of court.

The High Court

A detailed draft scheme of rules for case progression in respect of High Court litigation generally, as well as a scheme of court rules to implement recommendations of the Haran Working Group Report on Legal Costs was prepared. Rules of court to assign litigation under the Cape Town Convention on securities on aircraft and similar high value assets to the Commercial Court were also prepared.

A Practice Direction for the allocation by the President to the Master of various categories of application for judgment by consent was introduced in 2007. A second practice direction to allow the Registrar of the Asylum and Immigration Judicial Review List take consents in specified aspects of cases listed for hearing before the judge was also introduced. The practice direction also provides that any solicitor who needlessly leaves a case in the list for the judge may be penalised on costs.

The High Court: Office of Wards of Court

The Service submitted observations to the Department of Justice, Equality & Law Reform, Civil Law Reform Division in relation to a draft scheme for a Mental Capacity Bill prepared by the Department. The Service will continue to liaise with the Department in relation to the draft scheme in 2008.

The High Court: Office of the Official Assignee in Bankruptcy

A number of modernisation measures were put in place in the Office of the Official Assignee in Bankruptcy in 2007. The measures, which included a computerised case management system, are designed to improve efficiencies in the management and processing of bankruptcy cases at each stage of the bankruptcy process from adjudication to discharge. The case management system has facilitated the development of a register of assets vested in the Official Assignee. By year end plans were in place to further develop the system and in particular its management reporting capabilities.

The High Court: Probate Office

A pilot project to improve the application form for solicitors applying for Grants of Representation concluded in 2007. Fifty solicitors firms around the country volunteered to participate in the project with feedback used to develop the improved form. Reaction to the new form was very positive. It will be available for use from mid-2008.

The Circuit Court

With the approval of the President of the Circuit Court, and following consultation with the County Registrars, draft rules for case progression of family law proceedings were approved by the Circuit Court Rules Committee during the year. The scheme provides for County Registrars to perform case management duties to ensure that proceedings are prepared for trial in a manner which is just, expeditious and likely to minimise the costs of proceedings and, that the time and other resources of the court are employed optimally.

In order to facilitate the provision of case management duties in high caseload areas such as Dublin, a draft Head of Bill was furnished for inclusion in the Civil Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill, 2006. This would amend section 9 of the Court Officers Act, 1945 so as to allow County Registrars to exercise jurisdiction concurrently with each other where assigned to provide back-up to their colleagues in high caseload counties. A Practice Direction and related forms were prepared for the Circuit Court governing the procedure under section 99 of the Criminal Justice Act, 2006, as amended by the Criminal Justice Act, 2007, in cases in which an accused is convicted of an offence during the period of suspension of a sentence for a previous conviction.

A committee of County Registrars and Chief Clerks was established to develop improved procedural manuals for staff of the Circuit Court. By year end a detailed criminal manual had been completed and was being reviewed by selected staff throughout the organisation.

An A-Z Guide of legal terms and processes in Dublin Circuit Court office

was prepared by that office during the year for the assistance of staff.

The District Court

Rules of court to facilitate the operation of the Criminal Justice Act, 2006, came into operation and court rules were drafted to give effect to the changes in bail, amongst other matters, contained in the Criminal Justice Act, 2007.

Work was undertaken during the year to revise the District Court Family Law and Criminal Law Training Manuals in view of legislative changes made since the manuals were originally drafted. These step-by-step guides are prepared in house and cover practice and procedure as it applies to court offices.

Civil Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill

Heads of Bill proposed for inclusion in the Bill include (i) the establishment of the Combined Courts Office which would enable the provision of a single point of delivery for court business, combining two or more jurisdictions, or categories of court business, and (ii) provision for assistance for visually impaired lawyers and other persons participating in court proceedings. The Service will continue to liaise with the Department regarding these and other courts related provisions for inclusion in the Bill in 2008.

Codification of Courts Legislation

The Service provided input to the project to consolidate courts legislation initiated by the Law Reform

Improved pre-court procedures were introduced in Cavan District Court for the Annual Licensing Court. All proofs and publications were lodged in the office for checking in advance of the court sitting. This facilitated more efficient use of court time and significantly reduced the level of adjournments.

Commission at the request of the Department of Justice, Equality & Law Reform. The Commission published a Consultation Paper and draft Consolidation Bill in July 2007.

Business Process Reviews

Measures were taken during the year to implement the recommendations made following reviews of business processes in the Dublin Family Law District Court Office, the Probate Office and the Office of Wards of Court. A review of the District Court Custody Office will be undertaken in 2008.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

Civil Case Management System

The development of an integrated computerised civil case management system is one of the major change projects being undertaken by the Service (*see page 40*). Phase 1 of the project, a review of civil and family law processes to standardise and simplify, in so far as possible, processes and court forms across regions and jurisdictions to improve efficiency and

customer service was completed during the year. This process standardisation is an essential requirement for the success of the system.

Phase 2 of the project, the identification of a high level series of improved processes will be developed at workshops with senior managers during early 2008.

Criminal Case Management System

Another of the major change projects is the computerised Criminal Case Management System. The criminal business of the District Court continues to be supported by this system which has also delivered significant benefits to the reporting capability of the Service. A number of enhancements were implemented during the year specifically associated with the introduction of the Criminal Justice Act, 2007.

A business case for the extension of the system to the Circuit Criminal Court, Central Criminal Court and Special Criminal Court was nearing completion by year end.

Video Conferencing/Video Link

During the year video conferencing systems were installed in Cloverhill, Tullamore and Castlebar courthouses as part of the overall programme to have video conferencing available in all county towns. An upgrade of the video conferencing and video link facilities in five courtrooms in the Four Courts was also completed during the year.

The Service continued to work with the Prison Service to complete the testing

ELECTRONIC RECORDS

Projects to harness technology to improve the quality of the service provided to court users continued during the year. An example was in Cavan Circuit Court where a project to replace manual indictment and appeal books with electronic versions commenced. The new versions will allow for improved efficiencies and speedier issue of post-court documentation.

of a video conferencing system to provide for video conferencing between courts and prisons. A system was installed in Limerick District Court with a view to commencing video conferencing between Limerick District Court and Limerick Prison on a pilot basis from mid-2008.

Video viewing facilities

At the end of 2007 new video viewing facilities were available in seven courtrooms in Dublin. Similar facilities will be available during 2008 in selected courthouses nationwide. These facilities allow for viewing of all types of evidence during the hearing of cases including recordings of interviews in garda stations and CCTV security footage.

Digital Audio Recording System

During 2007, the Service completed a major procurement for the selection of a digital audio recording system for implementation in all courtrooms

nationwide. A pilot implementation of the system will commence in the Central Criminal Court and Circuit Criminal Court in early 2008. Subject to satisfactory completion of the pilot full deployment to all Central and Circuit Criminal Courts will take place in 2008.

eGOVERNMENT

The provision of 24/7 access to services continued to be a major priority for the Service in 2007.

Small Claims Online

In 2007, the *Small Claims Online* system marked its first full year of operation in the initial 16 pilot offices. At year end 46% of small claims applications were being received online in these offices. *Small Claims Online* enables applicants to lodge claims 24/7 over the internet, pay the court fee online and follow the progress of their application as it progresses through the various stages of the process using a unique personal identifier (PIN). The system, available in English and Irish, was implemented in a further six District Court offices by the end of 2007.

Small Claims Online won a 'Government to Citizen' best project award in 2007 at the 'Innovation Through Technology' awards organised by *Inside Government* magazine in association with eircom. The awards recognise excellence and creativity in technology initiatives across the public sector.

High Court Case Tracking System

Work on the development of an online public search facility for the *High Court Case Tracking System* was completed during the year. Legal practitioners and members of the public can now obtain details of High Court cases at any time, from anywhere, using the internet. The data in the system is updated every day, and shows the position in each case as of close of business the previous working day.

The system gives access to a wide range of information about High Court cases including the names of parties, name of the solicitors on record, the case record number, court listings and a brief description of the outcome, the types of documents filed and the date on which the court gave its written judgment. The system does not provide information on family law and other 'in camera' cases nor the contents of court orders or affidavits.

Electronic transfer of summonses

During the year, the Service continued to work with An Garda Síochána to develop and implement an electronic interface for the electronic sharing of information and data between both organisations. Arising from this initiative, the Service will receive applications for all summonses electronically. In return the Service will provide electronically to An Garda Síochána details of court schedules and court outcomes for all prosecutions initiated by An Garda Síochána in the District Court. At year end, user acceptance testing of the system had commenced with a scheduled implementation date of mid-2008.

PROVISION OF INFORMATION FOR THE PUBLIC

Improving range of publications

Leaflets on courthouse buildings were published to provide practitioners, jurors, witnesses, victims, litigants and the general public with a range of information including courthouse location and facilities. This project will continue in 2008.

The Service continues to mark the opening of new and refurbished courthouses with brochures for official openings. Brochures were published for the official opening of Tullamore and Bray courthouses in 2007.

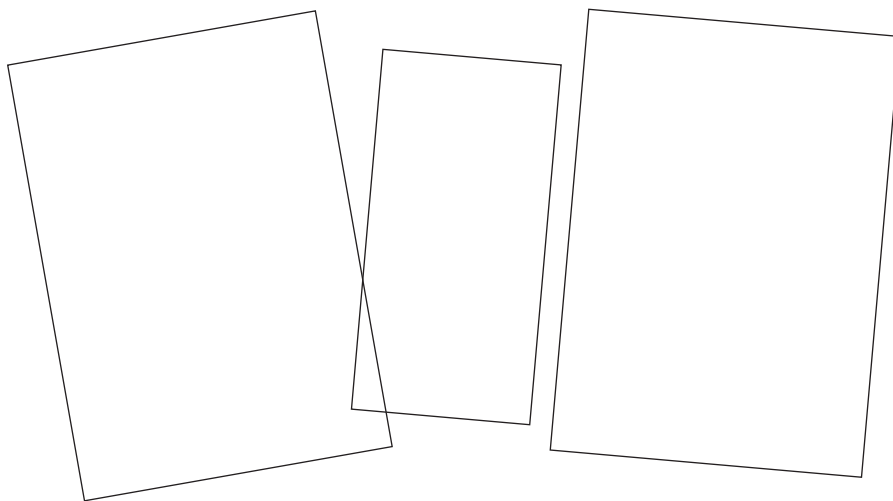
A catalogue of publications available from the Service was updated during the year and made available in hard copy and on the website.

The Service continued to promote publications of other agencies in the justice sector in court offices around the country during the year.

Young citizens

The programme to encourage young people to visit the courts as part of their general education continued in 2007. Visits to the Four Courts continued to be particularly popular with second-level schools. The tour programme includes a presentation on the court system, a discussion with a practising barrister and an opportunity to attend court hearings. Similar visits were organised in all five regions of the Service and involved schools from all parts of the country.

A resource pack for second level students, *Let's Look at the Law* was completed during the year with the cooperation of the Department of Education & Science. The pack is designed to enable teachers who have no previous knowledge of the law to introduce young people to the law and the courts system in Ireland. It comprises a manual for teachers, a series of teaching aids and a DVD. The pack, available in English and Irish, will be presented to the Minister for Education & Science by the Chief Justice in early 2008.



Family Law

Family Law Reporting Project

The Service completed the first year of a pilot project to report on family law. This included the publication of statistics, trends, judgments and reporting on proceedings in family law courts in a series titled *Family Law Matters*. The pilot project concluded with an evaluation report containing recommendations for the future of family law reporting.

In October the Board decided to continue the reporting project for a further year. A committee was established chaired by a judge of the Supreme Court to oversee and review the project. The committee was also asked to consider the recommendations contained in the pilot project evaluation report in so far as they relate to the Service and to make proposals concerning their implementation.

By December 2007 arrangements had been made for the publication of further issues of *Family Law Matters* in March, July and October 2008.

General information on family law matters

The Service continued to consult with a wide range of groups to produce family law information in hard copy and online during the year. At year end work had commenced on the production of improved information on domestic violence, divorce, judicial separation, custody and access. Information on maintenance was updated.

Information on the hearing of family law cases was published in hard copy and on the website. This included an

analysis of and statistics on the number of cases for hearing and orders made by the courts in relation to applications for divorce, nullity, judicial separation, custody and access, maintenance, childcare and domestic violence.

Website

The Service continued to use the website to provide a comprehensive range of information on the work of the courts in English, Irish and a range of other languages including Spanish, French, Chinese (Traditional and Simplified), Polish and Russian. Additions to the site during the year included improved information on a variety of court offices such as the Probate Office, the Office of the Official Assignee in Bankruptcy, the High Court Central Office, family law in the Circuit Court and practice directions. Judgments of the Supreme Court, Court of Criminal Appeal and High Court continued to be posted to the website. Additional court forms were added to the site together with practice directions and improved information for

jurors. Matters of particular interest, including notices and advertisements, were highlighted on the homepage of the site.

The *Legal Diary*, with details of court sittings, hearings and notices, continued to be updated daily during the court terms. In 2007, details of sittings of the Circuit Court in every county became available on the site.

The website was shortlisted at the end of the year in the 'Best State Body' category of the Irish eGovernment awards. This is the second time the site was shortlisted for this award, having been a category winner in 2005. The winners will be announced in March 2008. The awards organised by *Public Sector Times* and *Elucidate*, celebrate excellence in eGovernment and technology innovation in Ireland.

Visits to the site continued to increase during 2007 as month by month comparisons with visits for 2006 indicate (*see page 46*). The October 2007 figure of 139,336 visits was the highest to date.

Total monthly visits to website		
Month	2007	2006
January	103,354	77,530
February	105,740	76,522
March	109,231	84,389
April	103,353	64,416
May	125,590	78,726
June	114,116	69,875
July	129,541	76,119
August	89,147	58,863
September	94,898	63,616
October	139,336	91,086
November	136,752	99,377
December	101,029	73,855

Freedom of Information

In addition to formal requests (*see table*) a large number of queries under the Freedom of Information Acts were dealt with by telephone, email and through general correspondence requesting information relating to the courts and/or requesting court records. A total of 64 written requests were dealt with outside of the Act and approximately 80 queries by telephone.

During the year deciding officers and appeals officers availed of ongoing training to maintain a high standard of decision making skills.

The Freedom of Information Officer continued to participate in the Public Service Users Network group (PSUN), a group of FOI officers in Public Service bodies who exchange information relation to requests under the Act.

Freedom of Information Acts		
	2007	2006
Requests received	20	16
Access granted / part granted	13	13
Refused	2	1
Transferred / Withdrawn	5	2

Data Protection

In 2007, the policy of the Service in relation to data protection issues was published in an easy to use handbook. The policy is a statement of the commitment of the Service to protect the rights of individuals in accordance with Data Protection legislation. A second handbook containing guidelines for staff was also published. During the year the Data Protection Compliance Officer of the Service dealt with a variety of queries under the legislation.

Jurors

A series of leaflets was published during the year to assist those called for jury service in the Circuit Criminal Court, Central Criminal Court and High Court in Dublin.

Outreach

During the year a variety of organisations availed of tailored outreach programmes. This initiative allows the Service provide information in a targeted way tailored to meet the particular needs of individual groups. The programmes include an opportunity to meet and discuss matters of interest with court personnel including judges, court staff, media relations personnel and barristers together with an opportunity to observe a court hearing.

Media

During 2007 the Service continued to provide a dedicated Media Relations Service as a single reference point and source of information for national and local media including television, radio, internet and print. The Media Relations Service also acted as a conduit between court offices and a wide range of media interests locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.

Over 10,000 queries were dealt with during the year covering a broad range of issues including details of court proceedings, practice and procedure in the courts, statistics on the work of the courts and information to assist with historical research. Over 90% of these media queries were dealt with on the day of receipt.

A number of media releases were issued during the year relating to a wide variety of matters including the opening of courthouses, clarification of inaccuracies, information to inform public debate, updates on building projects and details of major initiatives.

The Media Relations Service continued to work with third level institutions to

organise simulated news days and investigative training programmes. The Media Relations Advisor lectured in a number of third level colleges and other centres of education at undergraduate and postgraduate level in Dublin. The Service also facilitated several visits to the courts together with workshops for journalism students during the year.

The Service will be expanded in 2008 to provide extended hours of availability to the media and the organising of a series of media seminars on law related topics.

Capital Building Programme

The allocation of €540 million under the National Development Plan 2007-2013 enabled the Capital Building Programme to continue at pace in 2007 with the opening of new courthouses, the refurbishment of existing ones and the ongoing planning for projects due to commence in 2008. The implementation of the Capital Building Programme continues to be overseen by the Building Committee. (*see page 14*).

The Courts Service Capital Building Programme

The refurbishment of court buildings has been a major part of the modernisation programme of the Service since its establishment in 1999. Over 50 projects have been completed and over €200 million invested to ensure that facilities meet modern requirements. Most county towns now have four courtrooms with adjoining judges offices, facilities for jurors, office accommodation for staff supported by up to date information technology, legal practitioner's rooms, consultation rooms, victim support rooms, rooms for An Garda Síochána, facilities for the media and holding cells for prisoners. These buildings are designed so that separate circulation is provided for the judiciary, juries, prisoners and the public. Disability access issues have been addressed by way of lifts and ramps and through the provision of induction loops in courtrooms for people with hearing difficulties and the provision of Braille signage where appropriate. In larger towns dedicated family law facilities have been provided including courtrooms, waiting rooms and consultation rooms.

Public Private Partnerships

New Criminal Courts Complex

Construction of the new Criminal Courts Complex, which is being delivered by way of a Public Private Partnership commenced in May and is scheduled for completion by early 2010. At the end of 2007, construction was ahead of schedule. The complex will include 22 courtrooms and ancillary facilities including 33 consultation rooms over 10 floors. There will be much improved facilities for jurors including a dedicated juror reception area, comfortable jury retiring rooms and catering for juries on site. In addition, there will be a suite of rooms for use by victim support organisations. For the first time all of the key stakeholders in the criminal trial process will have a permanent presence on site. In addition to the judiciary and staff, up to 200 barristers will be located in the Complex together with solicitors, staff from the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, the Probation Service, the Prison Service and An Garda Síochána. The public and practitioners will be well served by large comfortable courtrooms with good acoustics and good levels of natural light and by public areas suited to a courthouse of this size and national importance.

Other Public Private Partnership Projects

Work continued on the appraisal stage of other public private partnership projects during 2007. Sites were secured in Cork and Letterkenny. Other venues subject to appraisal were Swords and Limerick. The project in Drogheda will proceed as part of a larger decentralisation public private partnership sponsored by the Office of Public Works. Work also continued on site acquisitions for Maynooth, Waterford, Limerick and Swords.

Four Courts Complex

The Criminal Courts Complex Project will address many of the security and service delivery problems associated with the current criminal trial venues in the Four Courts and associated buildings. It will also pave the way for a major redevelopment of the Four Courts as a new Civil and Family Law Courts Complex. A concept for the redevelopment of the Four Courts as a Civil and Family Courts Complex was developed in 2007. The preliminary appraisal was completed and approved by the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform. By year end work was well advanced on the detailed assessment.

Projects completed in 2007

New courthouses were constructed in **Bray** and **Belmullet** in 2007.

The **Belmullet** courthouse was a joint development with Mayo County Council. It includes court facilities, a theatre, and offices for the Council and Údarás na Gaeltachta. The courthouse in **Bray** includes two main courtrooms

and a dedicated family law court suite with office accommodation for the District Court office. Modern office accommodation has been provided for the judiciary together with facilities for the legal profession, juries and the public. Secure holding cells with secure access to courtrooms are also provided.

The courthouses in **Tullamore** and **Fermoy** were refurbished. By restoring these 18th century buildings to their original condition the Service helped preserve the built heritage of these towns. Meanwhile, modern court and office accommodation was provided for the benefit of all court users.

The Dublin family law District Courts in **Dolphin House, Dublin** were totally refurbished to provide modern accommodation for the judiciary, staff and all family court users.

Projects in progress at the end of 2007

Construction of new court facilities in **Ardee** neared completion as part of a joint development with the Office of Public Works and Louth County Council.

Construction work continued at **Thurles, Clones, Gorey** and **Blanchardstown**. The courthouse in Thurles is being refurbished and extended with a completion date set for June 2008. Accommodation in Blanchardstown was acquired in 2007. By the end of the year it was being fitted out to provide two courtrooms and all necessary ancillary accommodation. Work will be completed at Clones and Gorey in 2008.

Plans were completed for the refurbishment and extension of

**AWARD FOR
TULLAMORE
COURTHOUSE**

Tullamore Courthouse won an Opus Architecture and Construction Award in the Heritage Category in November 2007 for the sensitive refurbishment of the courthouse building.

Kilkenny, Monaghan and **Mullingar** courthouses to provide additional courtrooms and all necessary ancillary accommodation to meet modern demands.

Sites were acquired to provide new courthouses in **Wexford** and **Letterkenny**. The Service is working to acquire additional space at the rear of **Wicklow** courthouse to facilitate a refurbishment and extension of the courthouse. A site for a new courthouse in **Roscommon** was being actively pursued at the end of the year.

Planning was also advanced for the **Swinford, Manorhamilton, Youghal** and **Kilmallock** courthouses.

Projects to commence in 2008

Work will commence on the refurbishment of **Kilkenny** courthouse early in 2008. This major project will provide two additional courtrooms together with modern office accommodation. It will also deliver ancillary facilities required in a county town courthouse including those for family law, juries, legal practitioners, the public, victims, the media, An Garda Síochána and the Prison Service.

Tenders will be invited early in 2008 for the refurbishment of **Monaghan**

Freephone facilities for jurors were introduced in several locations around the country including Cork, Limerick, Tipperary and Waterford.

An example of improved jury facilities was in Carrick in Shannon where a separate entrance to the courthouse was provided for those serving on a jury. This avoided the possibility of contact with witnesses, victims and relatives of accused persons and reduced the risk of trials being abandoned because of inappropriate contact.

courthouse to provide modern facilities. Tenders will also be invited in mid 2008 for the refurbishment and extension of **Mullingar** courthouse.

Health and Safety

In cooperation with An Garda Síochána security in court buildings was reviewed in many major court venues around the country during the year.

Jury facilities

Efforts continued during the year to improve facilities for jurors. All county towns and Four Courts venues have modern public address systems and jury rooms. Jurors are provided with lunch on the days of a trial. As part of the development of the new Criminal Court Complex a dedicated jury dining facility will be provided.

Victims and Witnesses

The Service continued to work to improve the experience of victims of crime as they attend court. During 2007 the system of reserving special seating for victims’ families in murder and manslaughter cases continued in the Central Criminal Court and the Circuit Criminal Court. Special rooms for victims are now available in over 50 newly refurbished courthouses around the country.

The new Criminal Court Complex courtrooms are designed to minimise the proximity of victims and their families to defendants and accused persons. The complex will contain remote video link and victim support and consultation rooms.

EFFICIENT USE OF RESOURCES

Output Statement

Output Statements are a key element of the Budget and Estimate Reform measures announced by the Minister for Finance in Budget 2006. They represent a new level of transparency and accountability across the public service and allow for enhanced Dáil scrutiny of the Estimates process. During 2007 the Service published its first Annual Output Statement.

As part of these initial statements government departments and agencies committed to deliver specific outputs on foot of their 2007 Estimates allocations. The three key outputs identified by the Service for 2007 were (i) commence construction of a Criminal Courts Complex, (ii) establish a Central Accounts Office to handle all District Court financial transactions and (iii) implement an Online Small Claims

system. The progress made to deliver on these projects is referred to elsewhere in this Chapter.

Courts Accounting Project

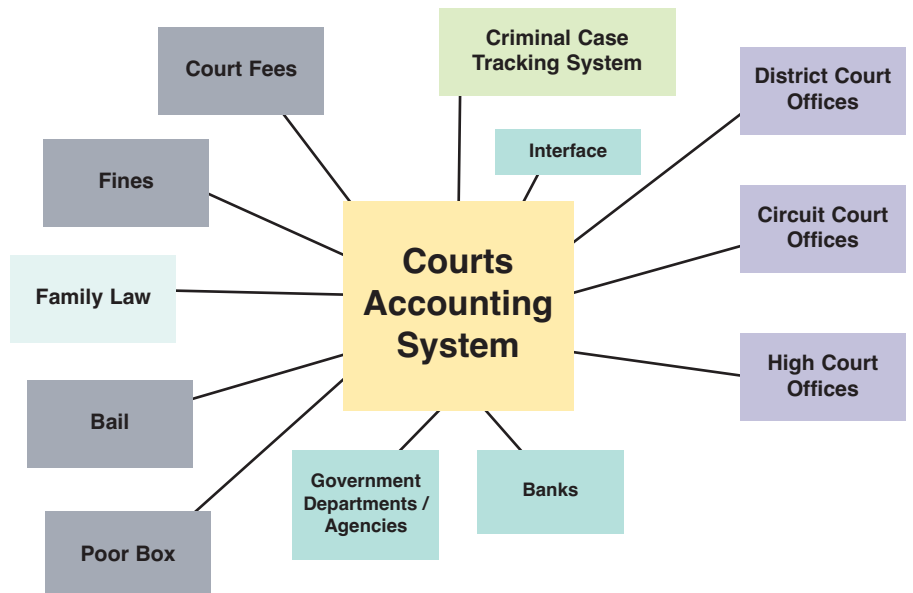
The establishment of the Central Accounts Office is part of the Courts Accounting Project. The project is in turn one of the major change projects of the Service and one of the three key outputs referred to in the Output Statement.

The objective of the project is the establishment of a central processing centre to process the financial transactions of the 42 District Court offices around the country. This will be facilitated by deploying a modern financial accounting system and making optimal use of technology to both improve customer service and efficiencies.

The Courts Accounting Project has demonstrated that customer service and improved organisational performance can be delivered while achieving excellent value for money for the tax payer. There has been significant demand for the electronic payment of family law maintenance directly into bank accounts. Also in 2007 testing was completed on an online payment facility for court fines. This facility will be rolled out in 2008. Roll out of the system to all District Court offices will continue during 2008.

During 2007 significant progress was made on the Courts Accounting Project with the establishment of the Central Accounts Office in February and the successful implementation of the system to a number of locations namely: Sligo, Naas, Drogheda, Galway and a number of offices in Dublin Metropolitan District.

Courts Accounting System



COURT FUNDS

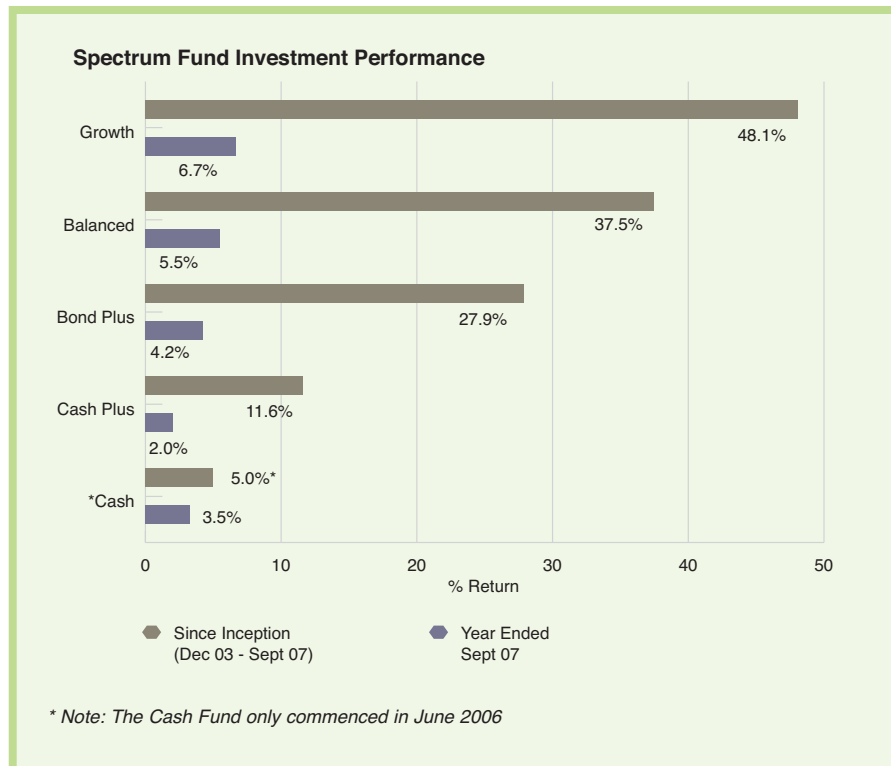
The courts have a custodial role in relation to funds lodged in court pursuant to orders of the courts or in compliance with legislative requirements. The funds held by the courts principally include:

- The funds of persons taken into wardship (Wards of Court)
- Financial awards made by the courts to persons under 18 years
- Lodgments by parties to court proceedings.

The benefits are significant for District Court offices. In particular a significant amount of time spent on accounting related activities is being released to support the core business of the courts.

Management of court funds

Total assets managed by the Office of the Accountant of the Courts of Justice (the Accountants Office) increased to €1.022 billion at the end of September 2007, an increase of €75 million on the previous year. Of the total assets managed by the Office, €899.4 million were invested in Spectrum Funds established in December 2003 as part of the modernisation programme for the management and investment of court funds. €26.3 million of the increase was attributable to gross investment performance. The average investment return for the year ended 30th September 2007 was 3.94% (gross of fees). Investment performance for the year for each of the five funds ranged from 2.02% (Cash Plus Fund) to 6.68% (Growth Fund) net of fees.



Fund Performance (Net of Fees)

During the year very good progress was made in transferring funds from Circuit and District Courts to the Accountants Office. At year end the total assets managed by the Office included €66.6 million from the Circuit Courts and €3.3 million from the District Courts. The transfer of these funds will be completed in 2008.

In October 2007 the Investment Committee initiated a comprehensive review of all aspects of the management and investment of court funds. This review will be completed in April 2008.

The annual financial statements for the Accountant of the Courts of Justice for the financial year ended 30th September 2007 have been audited by Deloitte & Touche, who provided an unqualified audit report. These financial statements have been submitted to the both the Minister for Finance and the Minister for Justice, Equality & Law Reform. Extracts from the financial statements are on pages 121-130.

SUPPORTING STAFF

CHAPTER 5

SUPPORTING STAFF

Well motivated, highly trained staff are the most important resource in the delivery of a world class service. During 2007 a wide variety of courses and programmes were provided to develop and improve staff skills and encourage staff participation at all levels. The management and development of staff was identified as critical to the success of the change programme. This resulted in a particular emphasis on the development of a successful performance management and development system and a determined effort to encourage management and staff to buy in to its success.

In addition to availing of opportunities for development during office hours, many staff were given financial and other support in pursuing out-of-hours courses on a variety of topics relevant to their work.

TRAINING

A training needs analysis for the Service was carried out during 2007. A new training and development strategy was drafted and will be in place in early 2008.

Supporting Staff in Further Education

One of the ways the Service encourages and supports staff to enhance their knowledge and skills is by refunding educational course fees. In 2007, fees were refunded to forty staff. Courses pursued included LLB (Hons) Legal Studies, MA Financial Management and Diploma in Business Studies.

Health & Safety

Fire Warden training was provided for 80 staff during the year. Thirty-five staff in Dublin completed a three day Occupational First Aid course. In the Northern and Western Regions 10 staff were trained as Safety Officers. A Courts Service Health and Safety Co-ordinator was also appointed.

General Training

The Training Unit of the Service continued to organise training courses for all grades during the year.

In addition, staff were encouraged to attend conferences, seminars and workshops relating to their work and professional duties. Events included legal seminars on legislative change, human resource conferences on development in employment law, project management programmes and mediation seminars.

On the Job Training

The vast body of knowledge acquired by staff in the course of their work continued to be a much valued element of the training programme of the Service. During the year offices across all jurisdictions, assisted by the Training Unit, organised seminars and training days to allow experienced staff share and transfer this knowledge to colleagues.

Promoting the Irish language

The Service continued to support staff interest in the Irish language. Staff attendance at courses organised by Gaeleagras was supported by the

Training Unit. In-house Irish training courses were also available. These courses offer training at beginner, intermediate and advanced levels of Irish and will continue throughout 2008.

Henley Management College

The change management/leadership programme *'Managing Change Through Projects'* developed with Henley Management College continued in 2007. A third group of senior managers attended the programme. Its objective is to provide managers with the skills to effectively manage the Service's ongoing projects in a manner that realises identified business benefits. By year end 50 staff had completed the programme.

DEVELOPMENT

Performance Management and Development

During 2007 the Performance Management and Development System was fully integrated and aligned with other human resource management systems including promotions, increments, training and career development. Training in the operation of the new approach was delivered to staff during the year.

Work on an electronic performance management and development records system commenced during the year. The new system which will be available in early 2008 will allow staff to create, save, approve, sign off and file forms electronically. It will replace the existing paper based system saving considerable time and resources for the Service.

Promotion

All staff promotions continued to be achieved by process of competitive interview in 2007. A total of 256 staff were interviewed with over 100 placed on promotion panels.

SUPPORT

Employee Assistance

The Service continued to provide an employee assistance service during the year. The service is an in-house counselling, information, support and referral service. It helps staff to manage or resolve work-related and personal difficulties which, if left unattended, may adversely affect attendance, work performance and quality of life. The Employee Assistance Officer (EAO) is an accredited psychotherapist and group therapist who consults with and provides support to managers dealing with sensitive staff welfare issues.

During 2007, the EAO continued to organise monthly information talks during the lunch break. Topics covered included probate, collaborative law in family law matters, pensions and drug awareness.

Work Life Balance

The Service continued to offer staff a range of flexible working arrangements including term-time and flexi-time during the year.

CONSULTING WITH STAFF

Partnership

The Central Partnership Committee chaired by the Chief Executive Officer continued to address issues of interest and concern to the Service at eight meetings during 2007. Regional Partnership Committees dealt with a range of issues including disability and accessibility obligations, developments in customer services, health screening, technical training, performance management and issues of health and safety.

Regional Partnership Committees continued to meet regularly during the year affording staff and management the opportunity to deal with a range of local issues.

In May 2007, Regional Partnership Committees were consulted for views on how the Service might improve the partnership process. A report on the exercise will be considered by the Central Partnership Committee in early 2008.

ASSISTING STAFF WITH DISABILITIES

The Service continued to assign a Disability Liaison Officer in 2007 to assist staff. The necessary organisational and technical supports were evaluated and are now in place to facilitate the employment of persons with a disability and to support existing employees with disabilities.

DECENTRALISATION

The Government's decentralisation programme continued to impact on the

Service in 2007. Twenty-seven staff transferred to decentralising departments under the terms of the programme.

STABLE INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

The Service continued to enjoy a constructive and productive working relationship with the trade unions who represent staff. Through the combined use of the partnership process and the Conciliation and Arbitration Scheme a positive industrial climate continued to be maintained.

The ambitious programme to modernise the courts outlined in the Strategic Plan and restated in the *Towards 2016* Action Plan owes much of its continued success to the support of the staff and the staff trade unions. There were no working days lost due to industrial disputes in 2007. This harmonious industrial relations climate has been instrumental in encouraging staff to become, and remain, involved in the many projects, large and small, underway throughout the Service.

SOCIAL AND VOLUNTEERING

Staff continued to be involved in many activities outside of the workplace. The skills they acquire continue to be used to great effect within the Service. From sport to the arts, from travel to a variety of courses and projects, the Service continued to benefit in 2007 from talents and skills honed across a varied field of events.

Choir

The choir of the Service performed at the Mass to celebrate the commencement of the Legal Year in October and at several staff events during the year.

Retired judges and staff

The Service acknowledges the contribution made by those judges and staff who have retired, many following long years of service. Social events including a '*Summer Evening*' in June and a Mass and function in November were organised. These events afforded retired judges and staff to opportunity to meet each other and to spend time with serving judges and staff. Similar events will be organised in 2008.

Sports

Staff continued to be involved in a wide range of sporting activities including golf, soccer, Gaelic football and hurling, basketball, walking and mountain climbing. The sports club of the Service organised a number of events for the benefit of charitable organisations.

STATISTICS

STATISTICS

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INTRODUCTION

The Service continued to improve statistical information on the work of the courts and court offices in 2007. The information and communications technology programme continued to deliver significant enhancements which in turn increased the range and quality of statistical information. An example is in the Circuit Court where improvements in the quality of information on family law will further assist those interested in this important area of our legal system.

An equally important part of the statistics programme continues to be the development of enhanced data quality control measures to ensure accuracy and consistency of data.

The statistics in this Chapter are for the period from 1st January 2007 to 31st December 2007. In some instances statistics for 2006 and previous years are provided for comparison purposes. They are presented by reference to specific categories of law: criminal, civil (including family) and licensing.

An overview of the work of the courts in 2007 is contained in Chapter 2.

The classification and categorisation used by the Service has been used to produce the statistics in this Chapter. These may differ from other agencies such as An Garda Síochána, the Director of Public Prosecutions and the Office of the Director of Corporate Enforcement.

Law Terms 2007	
Hilary:	11th January to 30th March
Easter:	16th April to 24th May
Trinity:	6th June to 31st July
Michaelmas:	1st October to 21st December

A glossary of terms is contained in Chapter 9.

SECTION 1 SUPREME COURT

APPEALS RECEIVED AND DISPOSED OF: 2001 TO 2007

Year	Received	Disposed of
2007	373	229
2006	484	202
2005	446	211
2004	531	722*
2003	440	304
2002	415	324
2001	361	243
Total	3,050	2,235

* 432 of these appeals were disposed of in a review of uncertified appeals list.

Outcome of Appeals Disposed of	2007	2006
Appeal dismissed: High Court order affirmed	85	102
Appeal allowed: High Court order set aside	59	19
Appeal allowed: High Court order varied	14	26
Appeal struck out	70	54
Cases stated determined	1	1
Total	229	202

JUDGMENTS

	2007	2006
Outstanding at 01/01	11	14
Judgments reserved	75	64
Judgments delivered	84	67
Outstanding at 31/12	2	11

APPEALS RECEIVED AND DISPOSED OF

Nature of Appeal	Received	Disposed of
Arbitration	0	2
Asylum	10	11
Bail	7	8
Case Stated: Circuit Court	1	1
Case Stated: District Court Appeal	11	0
Case Stated: High Court	0	5
Central Criminal Court	1	0
Chancery: final order	24	19
Chancery: interim/interlocutory	10	1
Circuit Court	3	0
Commercial List	22	1
Common Law interim/interlocutory	27	4
Companies Act	10	2
Consolidation	0	0
Criminal Assets Bureau	3	2
Defence amend	0	1
Discharge Masters Order	1	0
Discovery	0	2
Discovery: competition	0	1

Dismissed for want of prosecution	18	10
Extradition /European Arrest Warrant	27	24
Family	10	4
Foreign judgment	0	1
Habeas Corpus/Article 40	17	11
Hague Convention	0	1
Injunction: interim/ interlocutory	0	2
Judgment assessment no defence	0	1
Judgment: Summary Summons	5	1
Judicial Review: ex parte refused	12	9
Judicial Review: final refused	44	25
Judicial Review: interim/interlocutory	6	3
Judicial Review: planning	1	2
Judicial Review: planning injunction	0	1
Judicial Review: planning refusal final	0	1
Judicial Review: injunction final	0	7
Judicial Review: declaration final	3	5
Judicial Review: strike out final	2	1
Judicial Review: certiorari final	5	4
Judicial Review: prohibition final	2	5
Jury actions	2	0
Medical Practitioners Act	2	2
Motions	17	6
Motion affirm Masters order	0	1
Non Jury action	10	1
Personal injury	42	29
Planning Act: Section 160 final	2	0
Plenary hearing	4	0

Preliminary issue	0	1
Probate	1	1
Section 29 Court of Criminal Appeal	4	7
Security for costs	2	1
Solicitors Act	2	0
Solicitor Off Record	2	0
Wards of Court	1	2
Total	373	229

Length of appeal

One day or less	209
Two days or more	20

Motions

Lodged	129
Disposed of	132

Supreme Court office	
Commissioners appointed	32
Notaries Public appointed	6
Certificates of authentication issued	9,937
Number called to the Inner Bar	8
Number called to the Outer Bar	202
Declarations made by newly appointed judges	13
Extensions of time granted to County Registrars/District Judges	7

SECTION 2 CRIMINAL

COURT OF CRIMINAL APPEAL

Court	On hand 01/01	Lodged	Disposed of	On hand 31/12
Circuit Criminal Court	109	184	154	139
Central Criminal Court	43	37	35	45
Special Criminal Court	12	4	3	13
Courts-Martial Appeal Court	0	0	0	0
Appeals by the Director of Public Prosecutions*	28	42	39	31
Criminal Procedure Act	2	0	1	1
Total	194	267	232	229

** The Director of Public Prosecutions can appeal against sentence to the Court of Criminal Appeal on the grounds of undue leniency under section 2 of the Criminal Justice Act, 1993. In the case of an alleged miscarriage of justice, an appeal may be lodged under section 2 of the Criminal Procedure Act, 1993.*

Type of appeal	On hand 01/01	Lodged	Disposed of	On hand 31/12
Conviction and sentence	52	39	39	52
Conviction only	37	27	35	29
Sentence only	105	201	158	148
Total	194	267	232	229

Section 2 Criminal Justice Act, 1993	2007	2006
Refused	6	15
Original sentence quashed and sentence imposed in lieu	30	33
Struck out	2	0
Liberty to withdraw granted	1	2
Total	39	50

Appeals against sentence	2007	2006
Refused	35	56
Liberty to withdraw granted	19	28
Original sentence quashed and sentence imposed in lieu	22	40
Struck out appeal	7	10
Adjourned generally with liberty to re-enter	0	3
Total	83	137

Appeals against conviction	2007	2006
Refused	24	34
Liberty to withdraw granted	0	2
Conviction quashed, re-trial directed	1	1
Conviction quashed re-trial directed and admit to bail	1	0
Conviction quashed (no re-trial)	2	3
Appeal struck out	1	0
Adjourned generally with liberty to re-enter	0	5
Total	29	45

Appeals against conviction and sentence	2007	2006
Refused	25	19
Conviction affirmed, sentence varied	3	14
Conviction quashed, re-trial directed	2	7
Conviction quashed (no re-trial)	2	8
Appeal struck out	2	2
Adjourned generally with liberty to re-enter	0	4
Liberty to withdraw granted	1	3
Total	35	57

Note: There were 45 ordinary appeals withdrawn in the office in 2007.

APPEALS RECEIVED AND DISPOSED OF: 2000 TO 2007

	Received	Disposed of
2007	267	232
2006	244	329
2005	257	290
2004	257	266
2003	257	347
2002	237	273
2001	287	216
2000	237	233
TOTAL	2,043	2,186

HIGH COURT (BAIL)

Only the High Court has jurisdiction to deal with bail applications where a person is charged with murder. Application may also be made to the High Court where an applicant wishes to obtain a variation of the terms of a bail order made by a District Court judge.

	2007	2006
Orders made on own surety	432	500
Orders made on own surety and cash lodgement	149	94
Orders made on third party surety	277	199
Refused	286	323
Refused under Bail Act, 1997	31	16
Revoked	52	72
Withdrawn	267	212
Struck out	82	153
Orders varied	129	140
Consolidate	18	32
Other orders made	86	56

Outcome of applications	2007	2006
Granted	858	793
Refused	317	339
Withdrawn/ struck out	349	365
Varied	129	140

HIGH COURT :

CENTRAL CRIMINAL COURT

MURDER

	Received	Disposed of
2007	39	44
2006	33	52
2005	35	42
2004	28	59
2003	39	58
2002	55	48
2001	31	32
2000	42	33
Total	302	368

Cases disposed of	2007	2006
Convicted of murder	16	15
Convicted of offences other than murder	15	22
Found not guilty by reason of insanity	2	2
Acquitted	8	9
Other (including nolle prosequi)	3	4
Total	44	52

Sentences imposed	2007	2006
Life imprisonment	17	17
Over ten years	4	2
Over five years to ten years	8	13
Over three years to five years	1	6
Other	3	3
Not guilty by reason of insanity	0	2

Pleas / jury trials	2007	2006
Guilty pleas	11	6
Jury trials	25	42

RAPE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT

	Received	Disposed of
2007	73	76
2006	58	61
2005	44	75
2004	40	72
2003	52	100
2002	82	93
2001	92	98
2000	113	94
Total	554	669

Cases disposed of	2007	2006
Convicted of rape	9	27
Convicted of rape and other offences	27	0
Convicted of other sexual offences	12	14
Acquitted	13	8
Other (including nolle prosequi)	15	12
Total	76	61

Sentences imposed	2007	2006
Life	2	1
Over 12 years	2	3
Over five years to 12 years	34	24
Up to five years	7	9
Other*	3	4

* Includes suspended sentences, bench warrants

Pleas / jury trials	2007	2006
Guilty pleas	27	23
Jury trials	35	23

Other cases	Received	Disposed of
	4	3*

* Comprises 2 contempt of court cases and 1 Competition Act case.

SPECIAL CRIMINAL COURT

	Trials	Accused persons	Convicted on plea of not guilty	Convicted on plea of guilty	Struck out/nolle prosequi/acquitted
2007	7	10	3	7	0
2006	10	16	12	0	4
2005	6	21	10	11	0
2004	15	30	13	10	7
2003	9	19	7	6	6
2002	13	22	10	9	3
2001	18	32	7	22	3
Total	78	150	62	65	23

CASES DISPOSED OF BY OFFENCE

Offence	Convicted	Struck out /discharged/ nolle prosequi/acquitted
Membership of an unlawful organisation	5	0
Possession of an explosive substance	4	0
Possession of firearms	2	0
Possession of ammunition	5	0

CIRCUIT CRIMINAL COURT

DUBLIN

Cases disposed of	Road traffic	Drug offences	Sexual offences	Firearms offences	Larceny/ Fraud/ Robbery	Assault	Child Abuse	Man-slaughter	Other	Total
Defendants	114	226	37	51	417	255	3	0	193	1,296
Defendants pleading guilty	97	214	23	43	377	191	3	0	159	1,107

Outcome of trials	Road traffic	Drug offences	Sexual offences	Firearms offences	Larceny/ Fraud/ Robbery	Assault	Child Abuse	Man-slaughter	Other	Total
Convicted	7	4	2	2	13	17	0	0	9	54
Acquitted	3	2	6	1	7	22	0	0	9	50
Nolle prosequi	7	6	6	5	20	25	0	0	16	85

Sentences	Road traffic	Drug offences	Sexual offences	Firearms offences	Larceny/ Fraud/ Robbery	Assault	Child Abuse	Man-slaughter	Other	Total
Community Service	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	110	110
Suspended sentence	12	54	4	9	56	38	0	0	26	199
Fine	4	2	0	0	0	4	0	0	1	11
Imprisonment up to 2 years	11	17	4	2	29	22	0	0	8	93
Over 2 years to 5 years	37	62	14	21	179	80	1	0	72	466
Over 5 years to 10 years	8	42	2	12	28	18	0	0	11	121
Over 10 years	0	27	0	5	0	2	0	0	5	39

CIRCUIT CRIMINAL COURT

PROVINCIAL

Cases disposed of	Road traffic	Drug offences	Sexual offences	Firearms offences	Larceny/ Fraud/ Robbery	Assault	Child Abuse	Man-slaughter	Other	Total
Defendants	107	183	90	102	378	468	0	14	169	1,511
Defendants pleading guilty	74	160	60	86	318	326	0	7	126	1,157

Outcome of trials	Road traffic	Drug offences	Sexual offences	Firearms offences	Larceny/ Fraud/ Robbery	Assault	Child Abuse	Man-slaughter	Other	Total
Convicted	14	7	9	0	15	32	0	3	10	90
Acquitted	8	1	14	10	26	66	0	4	18	147
Nolle prosequi	11	15	7	6	19	44	0	0	15	117

Sentences	Road traffic	Drug offences	Sexual offences	Firearms offences	Larceny/ Fraud/ Robbery	Assault	Child Abuse	Man-slaughter	Other	Total
Community Service	0	0	0	1	5	10	0	0	1	17
Suspended sentence	37	59	25	28	145	185	0	1	73	553
Fine	11	3	1	1	5	5	0	0	28	54
Imprisonment up to two years	11	26	12	14	78	44	0	1	17	203
Over two years to five years	23	43	18	31	108	80	0	1	21	325
Over five years to 10 years	7	26	4	5	19	14	0	3	4	82
Over 10 years	0	6	1	0	3	0	0	0	0	10
Other	20	9	18	2	24	45	1	1	40	160

CIRCUIT COURT

COUNTRYWIDE

Office	Cases disposed of	District Court Appeals
Carlow	29	88
Cavan	26	96
Clare	36	154
Cork	312	1,122
Donegal	23	155
Dublin	1,197	2,461
Galway	75	244
Kerry	61	134
Kildare	73	214
Kilkenny	26	76
Laois	33	106
Leitrim	9	36
Longford	10	45
Louth	49	120
Limerick	112	1,491
Mayo	40	86
Meath	29	121
Monaghan	21	116
Offaly	12	109
Roscommon	21	74
Sligo	34	46
Tipperary	62	156
Waterford	34	52
Westmeath	38	87
Wexford	38	175
Wicklowl	65	120
Total	2,465	7,684

DISTRICT COURT

Cases disposed of	2007	2006
Summary cases	388,345	329,775
Indictable cases dealt with summarily	48,272	48,272
All cases disposed of		
Public order/assault		35,964
Drugs		9,870
Larceny		22,937
Road traffic offences		281,641
Sexual offences		517
Other *		85,688
Total		436,617

** Other includes offences such as criminal damage, breach of bail, litter offences, no television licence, street trading and offences prosecuted by Government Departments and other State agencies such as the Health and Safety Authority.*

Summary cases disposed of	
Public Order/Assault	33,896
Drugs	548
Road Traffic Offences	279,654
Sexual Offences	161
Larceny	6
Other*	74,080
Total	388,345

Indictable cases disposed of	
Public Order/Assault	2,068
Drugs	9,322
Larceny	22,931
Road Traffic Offences	1,987
Sexual Offences	356
Other*	11,608
Total	48,272

Outcomes of summary cases disposed of	
Imprisonment/Detention	11,344
Fines	106,965
Community Service	1,431
Probation	17,183
Struck Out	164,541
Dismiss	14,646
Taken into consideration**	65,882
Adjourn generally and other	5,187
Peace Bond	1,166
Total	388,345

Outcome of indictable cases disposed of	
Imprisonment/Detention	9,960
Fines	7,018
Community Service	1,069
Probation	6,393
Struck Out	10,844
Dismiss	1,754
Taken into consideration**	9,273
Adjourn generally and other	1,289
Peace Bond	672
Total	48,272

**** The Criminal Justice Act, 1951 section 8 provides for the making of such an order in the following circumstances:**

- 1. Where a person, on being convicted of an offence, admits himself guilty of any other offence and asks to have it taken into consideration in awarding punishment, the Court may take it into consideration accordingly.**
- 2. If the Court takes an offence into consideration, a note of that fact shall be made and filed with the record of the sentence, and the accused shall not be prosecuted for that offence, unless his conviction is reversed on appeal.**

DISTRICT COURT

PUBLIC ORDER / ASSAULT

OFFICE		Imp/Det	Fines	Comm Serv/ Pro/ DPOA	Struck Out	Dismiss	TIC	Other/ Adjourn Gen	Peace Bond	Total
Athlone	Cases	49	76	95	116	6	188	7	1	538
	Defendants	43	72	70	80	6	94	5	1	371
Ballina	Cases	61	61	35	84	24	86	3	1	355
	Defendants	36	46	27	47	15	48	2	1	222
Ballinasloe	Cases	42	33	28	62	9	96	11	2	283
	Defendants	30	31	21	40	6	41	4	2	175
Bray	Cases	92	120	129	153	18	211	28	31	782
	Defendants	62	107	111	118	10	127	13	31	579
Carlow	Cases	43	111	249	134	24	89	18	13	681
	Defendants	33	93	172	90	16	58	15	11	488
Carrick-on-Shannon	Cases	41	65	13	69	7	37	3	2	237
	Defendants	26	45	11	46	7	21	3	2	161
Cavan	Cases	207	90	131	295	24	243	20	70	1,080
	Defendants	150	79	115	211	19	127	17	65	783
Castlebar	Cases	50	64	23	35	23	49	4	8	256
	Defendants	29	49	20	28	13	30	3	7	179
Clonakilty	Cases	124	100	100	172	17	95	8	14	630
	Defendants	86	90	91	124	15	57	7	13	483
Clonmel	Cases	105	146	38	42	7	98	2	3	441
	Defendants	62	136	35	35	7	69	2	1	347
Cork	Cases	737	742	474	443	131	796	61	40	3,424
	Defendants	419	599	375	350	104	462	50	38	2,397
Doire an Fhéich	Cases	8	44	20	15	4	20	1	0	112
	Defendants	5	38	16	11	4	16	1	0	91
Donegal	Cases	41	81	37	46	5	61	5	9	285
	Defendants	32	69	27	33	5	42	3	9	220
Drogheda	Cases	100	89	104	48	12	12	12	9	386
	Defendants	32	76	73	38	10	8	9	6	252
Dublin	Cases	1,058	1,861	2,068	3,321	522	2,895	483	107	12,315
	Defendants	721	1,586	1,523	2,419	389	1,663	315	86	8,702
Dundalk	Cases	88	105	164	112	20	17	10	1	517
	Defendants	44	83	103	83	17	9	9	1	349
Ennis	Cases	104	175	85	175	48	202	29	25	843
	Defendants	82	151	75	146	31	137	23	25	670
Fermoy	Cases	72	55	10	25	19	80	7	2	270
	Defendants	51	47	9	20	14	59	2	2	204
Galway	Cases	129	216	128	113	22	152	8	6	774
	Defendants	81	191	92	81	15	110	6	6	582
Kilkenny	Cases	57	73	48	38	12	15	2	0	245
	Defendants	33	62	42	35	8	8	2	0	190
Killarney	Cases	31	87	26	51	11	41	2	0	249
	Defendants	21	72	20	48	10	18	2	0	191

OFFICE		Imp/Det	Fines	Comm Serv/ Pro/ DPOA	Struck Out	Dismiss	TIC	Other/ Adjourn Gen	Peace Bond	Total
Letterkenny	Cases	90	242	67	113	87	117	24	16	756
	Defendants	72	184	54	78	54	78	18	16	554
Limerick	Cases	284	258	143	444	29	517	64	74	1,813
	Defendants	199	233	109	320	16	332	41	64	1,314
Listowel	Cases	88	71	72	6	9	35	16	12	309
	Defendants	58	66	51	4	5	14	9	12	219
Longford	Cases	62	90	51	45	67	60	4	10	389
	Defendants	40	80	39	32	60	40	3	9	303
Loughrea	Cases	14	32	31	31	4	73	7	3	195
	Defendants	12	30	17	22	4	41	6	2	134
Mallow	Cases	89	79	23	28	45	88	4	1	357
	Defendants	72	65	18	23	38	67	3	1	287
Monaghan	Cases	121	123	167	274	45	89	4	45	868
	Defendants	81	98	129	205	28	62	3	41	647
Mullingar	Cases	30	95	46	31	97	41	4	17	361
	Defendants	21	83	32	26	81	33	3	15	294
Naas	Cases	57	104	83	160	24	149	8	65	650
	Defendants	33	86	64	114	18	95	6	52	468
Nenagh	Cases	34	23	45	76	2	87	9	2	278
	Defendants	24	21	38	57	2	40	7	2	191
Portlaoise	Cases	57	82	211	92	13	122	13	17	607
	Defendants	38	69	131	66	11	65	11	9	400
Roscommon	Cases	54	73	30	54	14	83	6	1	315
	Defendants	37	61	22	41	7	45	5	1	219
Sligo	Cases	60	156	18	162	23	39	1	15	474
	Defendants	26	113	13	89	18	26	1	14	300
Thurles	Cases	87	76	68	92	8	188	11	0	530
	Defendants	57	64	43	68	7	97	7	0	343
Tralee	Cases	52	91	100	46	13	48	0	0	350
	Defendants	38	73	79	40	8	25	0	0	263
Trim	Cases	22	257	77	209	45	239	7	4	860
	Defendants	13	225	57	161	29	142	3	3	633
Tuam	Cases	17	50	17	41	5	41	3	0	174
	Defendants	11	42	15	26	4	28	2	0	128
Tullamore	Cases	153	134	77	33	38	81	6	15	537
	Defendants	64	99	49	27	33	56	6	11	345
Waterford	Cases	67	104	51	126	14	18	3	3	386
	Defendants	56	99	37	107	13	15	3	3	333
Wexford	Cases	42	115	100	131	4	232	7	10	641
	Defendants	39	102	88	107	4	149	5	10	504
Youghal	Cases	101	115	13	89	11	71	6	5	411
	Defendants	65	97	10	65	10	54	5	3	309
Total	Cases	4,820	6,764	5,495	7,832	1,562	7,901	931	659	35,964
Total	Defendants	3,134	5,712	4,123	5,761	1,171	4,708	640	575	25,824

DISTRICT COURT

DRUGS

OFFICE		Imp/Det	Fines	Comm Serv/ Pro/ DPOA	Struck Out	Dismiss	TIC	Other/ Adjourn Gen	Peace Bond	Total
Athlone	Cases	2	8	9	4	0	15	0	0	38
	Defendants	2	8	5	4	0	10	0	0	29
Ballina	Cases	3	8	13	0	5	2	3	0	34
	Defendants	3	8	13	0	2	1	1	0	28
Ballinasloe	Cases	1	8	9	3	0	0	0	0	21
	Defendants	1	8	4	2	0	0	0	0	15
Bray	Cases	23	73	50	17	6	39	4	0	212
	Defendants	19	65	42	16	6	20	2	0	170
Carlow	Cases	13	20	109	6	0	19	12	1	180
	Defendants	11	18	85	5	0	9	8	1	137
Carrick-on-Shannon	Cases	1	12	4	7	1	5	0	0	30
	Defendants	1	11	3	7	1	2	0	0	25
Cavan	Cases	17	8	12	3	2	23	0	1	66
	Defendants	15	8	12	3	2	9	0	1	50
Castlebar	Cases	2	14	22	3	1	9	1	0	52
	Defendants	2	12	14	2	1	4	1	0	36
Clonakilty	Cases	13	28	21	11	7	15	4	1	100
	Defendants	12	25	19	10	5	10	2	1	84
Clonmel	Cases	18	65	19	7	3	23	0	0	135
	Defendants	13	56	13	4	2	13	0	0	101
Cork	Cases	67	236	193	68	6	88	4	6	668
	Defendants	53	214	165	60	5	45	4	6	552
Doire an Fhéich	Cases	5	9	3	2	0	2	0	0	21
	Defendants	2	9	3	2	0	1	0	0	17
Donegal	Cases	15	35	15	17	6	24	0	1	113
	Defendants	9	31	14	8	1	10	0	1	74
Drogheda	Cases	16	13	11	12	1	6	1	3	63
	Defendants	13	10	10	8	1	3	1	3	49
Dublin	Cases	355	641	613	1,286	85	765	102	36	3,883
	Defendants	287	567	459	878	70	367	62	31	2,721
Dundalk	Cases	17	8	22	6	1	0	1	0	55
	Defendants	11	6	16	5	1	0	1	0	40
Ennis	Cases	9	46	28	34	1	48	0	0	166
	Defendants	9	42	25	26	1	23	0	0	126
Fermoy	Cases	16	32	2	5	4	12	0	0	71
	Defendants	13	29	2	4	4	5	0	0	57
Galway	Cases	27	89	27	5	3	10	0	0	161
	Defendants	17	78	22	5	2	5	0	0	129
Kilkenny	Cases	54	94	37	56	0	40	0	0	281
	Defendants	39	76	35	47	0	16	0	0	213
Killarney	Cases	0	16	1	2	1	2	0	0	22
	Defendants	0	14	1	2	1	1	0	0	19

OFFICE		Imp/Det	Fines	Comm Serv/ Pro/ DPOA	Struck Out	Dismiss	TIC	Other/ Adjourn Gen	Peace Bond	Total
Letterkenny	Cases	16	54	18	9	10	23	8	3	141
	Defendants	13	39	17	8	3	9	5	3	97
Limerick	Cases	81	120	57	61	4	116	27	21	487
	Defendants	59	114	41	52	3	55	18	20	362
Listowel	Cases	3	41	2	0	0	0	1	0	47
	Defendants	2	36	2	0	0	0	1	0	41
Longford	Cases	12	14	5	2	9	2	4	0	48
	Defendants	9	12	4	2	5	1	4	0	37
Loughrea	Cases	6	12	10	3	0	10	1	0	42
	Defendants	4	11	10	3	0	6	1	0	35
Mallow	Cases	21	48	7	9	3	14	2	0	104
	Defendants	19	43	7	8	2	8	2	0	89
Monaghan	Cases	22	20	63	6	11	23	0	3	148
	Defendants	19	18	54	6	9	12	0	3	121
Mullingar	Cases	18	62	58	9	24	4	3	2	180
	Defendants	14	54	51	9	18	2	3	2	153
Naas	Cases	18	123	40	61	6	85	0	3	336
	Defendants	17	111	38	49	5	33	0	3	256
Nenagh	Cases	20	24	13	23	0	46	2	0	128
	Defendants	18	23	10	17	0	19	2	0	89
Portlaoise	Cases	30	48	179	61	4	65	3	1	391
	Defendants	26	42	136	48	3	28	2	1	286
Roscommon	Cases	7	27	5	11	0	18	0	0	68
	Defendants	6	21	5	5	0	8	0	0	45
Sligo	Cases	5	19	4	12	3	1	0	0	44
	Defendants	4	17	4	12	2	1	0	0	40
Thurles	Cases	5	11	12	8	1	21	1	0	59
	Defendants	5	9	9	8	1	10	1	0	43
Tralee	Cases	4	37	13	9	2	1	0	0	66
	Defendants	3	28	12	8	2	1	0	0	54
Trim	Cases	2	37	33	23	3	16	0	1	115
	Defendants	2	33	33	21	3	11	0	1	104
Tuam	Cases	1	6	1	0	6	2	0	0	16
	Defendants	1	6	1	0	3	1	0	0	12
Tullamore	Cases	22	52	12	1	1	18	17	2	125
	Defendants	15	45	9	1	1	6	12	2	91
Waterford	Cases	87	244	55	133	4	75	2	3	603
	Defendants	57	209	50	124	3	36	2	3	484
Wexford	Cases	7	55	78	40	0	65	4	1	250
	Defendants	7	49	69	36	0	33	3	1	198
Youghal	Cases	19	49	1	14	5	11	1	0	100
	Defendants	16	43	1	11	5	6	1	0	83
Total	Cases	1,080	2,566	1,886	2,049	229	1,763	208	89	9,870
Total	Defendants	848	2,258	1,525	1,526	173	840	139	83	7,392

DISTRICT COURT

LARCENY

OFFICE		Imp/Det	Fines	Comm Serv/ Pro/ DPOA	Struck Out	Dismiss	TIC	Other/ Adjourn Gen	Peace Bond	Total
Athlone	Cases	54	32	53	44	0	120	5	0	308
	Defendants	34	31	47	18	0	35	3	0	168
Ballina	Cases	18	11	46	7	7	17	8	0	114
	Defendants	14	10	22	5	7	7	4	0	69
Ballinasloe	Cases	25	13	18	24	2	69	0	2	153
	Defendants	22	13	8	7	2	19	0	2	73
Bray	Cases	109	35	43	58	3	199	5	21	473
	Defendants	79	33	33	33	3	48	3	21	253
Carlow	Cases	69	37	60	22	1	140	21	1	351
	Defendants	40	35	34	14	1	39	9	1	173
Carrick-on-Shannon	Cases	27	22	5	13	1	22	1	7	98
	Defendants	22	17	4	11	1	8	1	6	70
Cavan	Cases	138	6	30	83	9	47	1	29	343
	Defendants	83	6	26	47	9	29	1	28	229
Castlebar	Cases	33	21	8	7	11	26	11	2	119
	Defendants	20	16	4	5	7	13	4	2	71
Clonakilty	Cases	104	34	49	75	16	69	5	2	354
	Defendants	57	30	28	39	6	21	2	2	185
Clonmel	Cases	74	41	17	3	1	21	0	1	158
	Defendants	43	37	14	3	1	13	0	1	112
Cork	Cases	578	365	269	152	10	334	42	17	1,767
	Defendants	238	307	201	121	10	134	32	15	1,058
Doire an Fhéich	Cases	19	7	9	3	0	6	0	0	44
	Defendants	7	7	5	2	0	2	0	0	23
Donegal	Cases	34	4	1	17	0	23	0	0	79
	Defendants	18	4	1	10	0	6	0	0	39
Drogheda	Cases	164	6	46	11	1	2	0	0	230
	Defendants	30	6	41	10	1	1	1	0	90
Dublin	Cases	1,773	1,019	1,563	2,931	217	2,265	381	121	10,270
	Defendants	954	903	1,059	1,913	173	876	262	80	6,220
Dundalk	Cases	280	13	45	39	4	6	3	0	390
	Defendants	44	9	30	19	4	3	3	0	112
Ennis	Cases	49	46	59	39	7	72	9	6	287
	Defendants	40	42	28	32	6	24	7	6	185
Fermoy	Cases	27	23	5	31	0	26	11	0	123
	Defendants	17	20	1	16	0	11	2	0	67
Galway	Cases	173	148	116	70	3	88	7	4	609
	Defendants	95	129	59	26	3	41	6	4	363
Kilkenny	Cases	204	50	116	16	2	35	1	0	424
	Defendants	45	38	55	12	2	14	1	0	167
Killarney	Cases	25	20	10	0	0	7	1	0	63
	Defendants	17	18	6	0	0	4	1	0	46

OFFICE		Imp/Det Comm	Fines	Comm Serv/ Pro/ DPOA	Struck Out	Dismiss	TIC	Other/ Adjourn Gen	Peace Bond	Total
Letterkenny	Cases	38	51	19	15	5	44	4	3	179
	Defendants	24	31	15	11	5	16	3	3	108
Limerick	Cases	394	75	130	156	10	386	34	67	1,252
	Defendants	182	69	90	111	8	132	22	61	675
Listowel	Cases	55	17	16	1	0	12	9	0	110
	Defendants	22	13	11	1	0	5	3	0	55
Longford	Cases	108	27	70	62	13	10	0	2	292
	Defendants	36	25	30	15	4	4	0	2	116
Loughrea	Cases	17	8	29	4	0	34	6	0	98
	Defendants	12	7	8	4	0	10	1	0	42
Mallow	Cases	51	16	5	30	2	7	4	0	115
	Defendants	29	15	5	25	2	4	3	0	83
Monaghan	Cases	136	20	28	73	11	31	0	29	328
	Defendants	60	19	21	39	11	16	0	21	187
Mullingar	Cases	36	15	31	29	5	36	0	3	155
	Defendants	25	14	7	20	4	11	0	3	84
Naas	Cases	91	41	64	41	5	104	12	28	386
	Defendants	52	33	41	36	5	50	5	27	249
Nenagh	Cases	26	13	16	48	0	16	3	1	123
	Defendants	19	13	13	13	0	11	2	1	72
Portlaoise	Cases	58	51	261	35	0	124	5	0	534
	Defendants	47	46	40	21	0	41	5	0	200
Roscommon	Cases	33	43	14	35	3	25	2	0	155
	Defendants	23	32	7	22	2	11	2	0	99
Sligo	Cases	113	33	65	76	4	15	0	1	307
	Defendants	35	29	18	44	4	7	0	1	138
Thurles	Cases	35	10	12	23	1	26	2	0	109
	Defendants	21	10	10	16	1	13	2	0	73
Tralee	Cases	43	33	17	14	0	7	2	0	116
	Defendants	23	25	14	10	0	5	1	0	78
Trim	Cases	97	30	41	82	10	71	2	9	342
	Defendants	32	30	33	44	9	50	2	9	209
Tuam	Cases	33	16	11	8	0	17	0	0	85
	Defendants	17	12	4	3	0	6	0	0	42
Tullamore	Cases	102	30	41	18	13	53	2	8	267
	Defendants	40	21	23	13	1	12	2	5	117
Waterford	Cases	166	92	124	66	4	58	36	0	546
	Defendants	81	79	92	39	3	22	4	0	320
Wexford	Cases	62	30	68	55	2	211	5	0	433
	Defendants	52	30	46	41	2	59	3	0	233
Youghal	Cases	77	35	41	52	0	37	4	2	248
	Defendants	43	31	24	24	0	14	2	1	139
Total	Cases	5,748	2,639	3,671	4,568	383	4,918	644	366	22,937
Total	Defendants	2,794	2,295	2,258	2,895	297	1,847	404	302	13,092

DISTRICT COURT

SEXUAL OFFENCES

OFFICE		Imp/Det	Fines	Comm Serv/ Pro/ DPOA	Struck Out	Dismiss	TIC	Other/ Adjourn Gen	Peace Bond	Total
Athlone	Cases	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
	Defendants	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Ballina	Cases	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
	Defendants	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Ballinasloe	Cases	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Defendants	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Bray	Cases	1	1	0	2	0	1	0	1	6
	Defendants	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	5
Carlow	Cases	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Defendants	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Carrick-on-Shannon	Cases	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Defendants	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cavan	Cases	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	5
	Defendants	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	3
Castlebar	Cases	1	1	1	0	3	0	0	0	6
	Defendants	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	4
Clonakilty	Cases	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
	Defendants	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
Clonmel	Cases	1	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	6
	Defendants	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2
Cork	Cases	5	3	2	0	0	2	0	1	13
	Defendants	3	3	2	0	0	2	0	1	11
Doire an Fhéich	Cases	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Defendants	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Donegal	Cases	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Defendants	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Drogheda	Cases	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Defendants	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Dublin	Cases	14	23	40	129	11	47	16	3	283
	Defendants	12	21	33	41	11	19	16	3	156
Dundalk	Cases	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
	Defendants	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Ennis	Cases	1	1	0	5	0	6	0	0	13
	Defendants	1	1	0	4	0	3	0	0	9
Fermoy	Cases	0	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	4
	Defendants	0	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	4
Galway	Cases	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
	Defendants	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Kilkenny	Cases	0	2	0	2	2	0	0	0	6
	Defendants	0	2	0	2	1	0	0	0	5
Killarney	Cases	2	2	0	0	0	10	0	0	14
	Defendants	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	3

OFFICE		Imp/Det	Fines	Comm Serv/ Pro/ DPOA	Struck Out	Dismiss	TIC	Other/ Adjourn Gen	Peace Bond	Total
Letterkenny	Cases	0	3	1	7	0	0	1	0	12
	Defendants	0	3	1	2	0	0	1	0	7
Limerick	Cases	3	4	8	7	0	8	0	0	30
	Defendants	3	4	5	7	0	4	0	0	23
Listowel	Cases	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Defendants	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Longford	Cases	2	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	4
	Defendants	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2
Loughrea	Cases	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
	Defendants	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Mallow	Cases	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	2
	Defendants	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	2
Monaghan	Cases	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	3
	Defendants	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	3
Mullingar	Cases	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	3
	Defendants	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	3
Naas	Cases	2	0	2	1	0	2	0	0	7
	Defendants	2	0	2	1	0	1	0	0	6
Nenagh	Cases	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	2
	Defendants	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	2
Portlaoise	Cases	4	0	7	0	3	1	0	0	15
	Defendants	3	0	3	0	1	1	0	0	8
Roscommon	Cases	1	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	4
	Defendants	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	3
Sligo	Cases	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	2
	Defendants	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	2
Thurles	Cases	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Defendants	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tralee	Cases	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Defendants	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Trim	Cases	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	4
	Defendants	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2
Tuam	Cases	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2
	Defendants	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2
Tullamore	Cases	10	2	0	0	4	4	0	0	20
	Defendants	3	1	0	0	3	1	0	0	8
Waterford	Cases	2	14	1	10	0	1	0	0	28
	Defendants	2	14	1	10	0	1	0	0	28
Wexford	Cases	1	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	4
	Defendants	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	3
Youghal	Cases	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
	Defendants	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Total	Cases	61	67	73	169	27	95	17	8	517
Total	Defendants	45	63	55	74	21	42	17	7	324

DISTRICT COURT

ALL ROAD TRAFFIC

OFFICE		Imp/Det Comm	Fines	Comm Serv/ Pro/ DPOA	Struck Out	Dismiss	TIC	Other/ Adjourn Gen	Peace Bond	Total
Athlone	Cases	23	424	61	951	14	359	25	1	1,858
	Defendants	20	346	37	383	11	112	18	1	928
Ballina	Cases	30	458	15	387	101	428	19	0	1,438
	Defendants	22	274	11	178	60	111	12	0	668
Ballinasloe	Cases	6	385	28	658	16	336	19	0	1,448
	Defendants	5	314	23	313	16	127	19	0	817
Bray	Cases	130	1,335	222	3,189	70	1,457	63	10	6,476
	Defendants	84	1,000	106	1,160	56	339	36	5	2,786
Carlow	Cases	78	1,056	110	1,664	79	830	49	2	3,868
	Defendants	52	807	50	650	46	220	35	2	1,862
Carrick-on-Shannon	Cases	9	390	40	530	127	152	7	0	1,255
	Defendants	7	290	22	258	68	46	5	0	696
Cavan	Cases	93	1,304	25	1,999	412	879	46	16	4,774
	Defendants	63	1,086	20	978	259	249	37	16	2,708
Castlebar	Cases	20	414	12	507	51	228	16	0	1,248
	Defendants	15	235	10	235	20	74	13	0	602
Clonakilty	Cases	80	677	317	1,022	86	677	40	2	2,901
	Defendants	46	559	178	444	56	203	35	2	1,523
Clonmel	Cases	72	1,101	47	297	60	549	32	1	2,159
	Defendants	35	834	40	163	31	183	32	1	1,319
Cork	Cases	555	5,529	288	9,040	1,303	2,887	135	17	19,754
	Defendants	239	3,849	174	3,711	621	830	82	17	9,523
Doire an Fhéich	Cases	15	241	44	181	16	132	12	0	641
	Defendants	8	179	24	96	15	41	12	0	375
Donegal	Cases	42	642	59	214	89	421	18	0	1,485
	Defendants	26	475	28	111	54	140	17	0	851
Drogheda	Cases	82	1,123	78	953	231	35	62	3	2,567
	Defendants	39	689	47	460	121	13	32	2	1,403
Dublin	Cases	1,542	24,000	2,664	77,312	1,811	21,098	1,001	102	129,530
	Defendants	891	16,770	1,628	24,357	1,087	4,771	421	96	50,021
Dundalk	Cases	146	1,060	99	1,197	193	105	57	0	2,857
	Defendants	40	617	42	472	126	26	43	0	1,366
Ennis	Cases	99	1,632	134	2,358	268	1,645	32	7	6,175
	Defendants	60	1,217	105	980	175	505	29	7	3,078
Fermoy	Cases	37	715	12	313	349	354	153	1	1,934
	Defendants	30	492	6	173	229	119	82	1	1,132
Galway	Cases	332	1,618	182	1,363	140	880	64	6	4,585
	Defendants	105	1,169	111	628	91	305	48	6	2,463
Kilkenny	Cases	64	1,215	22	1,699	33	125	14	1	3,173
	Defendants	32	881	19	694	23	50	14	1	1,714
Killarney	Cases	16	511	11	569	134	110	31	0	1,382
	Defendants	8	429	3	243	95	38	31	0	847

OFFICE		Imp/Det	Fines	Comm Serv/ Pro/ DPOA	Struck Out	Dismiss	TIC	Other/ Adjourn Gen	Peace Bond	Total
Letterkenny	Cases	113	1,481	62	554	339	698	71	10	3,328
	Defendants	60	1,060	47	267	193	218	57	9	1,911
Limerick	Cases	294	4,962	320	8,985	353	3,670	171	44	18,799
	Defendants	169	3,678	214	5,584	261	953	89	42	10,990
Listowel	Cases	28	1,108	36	82	176	160	15	3	1,608
	Defendants	22	618	10	42	82	41	15	3	833
Longford	Cases	54	496	213	196	716	194	45	0	1,914
	Defendants	22	397	118	91	389	76	29	0	1,122
Loughrea	Cases	22	260	56	382	8	309	10	0	1,047
	Defendants	15	210	32	161	6	78	8	0	510
Mallow	Cases	82	581	24	237	322	431	31	0	1,708
	Defendants	58	364	15	91	176	140	24	0	868
Monaghan	Cases	106	1,046	66	1,015	237	203	30	20	2,723
	Defendants	70	794	54	519	155	74	25	18	1,709
Mullingar	Cases	66	428	173	146	856	236	16	2	1,923
	Defendants	33	349	90	65	380	86	12	2	1,017
Naas	Cases	126	2,227	125	2,755	136	1,166	52	12	6,599
	Defendants	96	1,531	89	1,237	100	344	43	12	3,452
Nenagh	Cases	16	329	45	640	10	263	18	0	1,321
	Defendants	12	267	29	268	10	79	17	0	682
Portlaoise	Cases	22	299	49	490	25	282	12	0	1,179
	Defendants	18	216	15	199	12	75	12	0	547
Roscommon	Cases	39	1,039	9	1,266	13	311	15	0	2,692
	Defendants	29	656	9	594	7	94	14	0	1,403
Sligo	Cases	30	899	73	846	425	494	31	0	2,798
	Defendants	16	691	36	406	210	107	27	0	1,493
Thurles	Cases	43	775	46	887	73	548	36	0	2,408
	Defendants	34	598	31	382	64	147	30	0	1,286
Tralee	Cases	13	751	59	785	97	150	18	0	1,873
	Defendants	11	607	55	295	83	52	18	0	1,121
Trim	Cases	35	2,751	96	3,002	187	483	43	2	6,599
	Defendants	26	1,793	67	1,278	111	188	38	2	3,503
Tuam	Cases	37	638	32	813	43	262	14	0	1,839
	Defendants	19	384	18	318	20	84	13	0	856
Tullamore	Cases	41	646	324	105	875	300	29	1	2,321
	Defendants	29	517	187	55	397	118	15	1	1,319
Waterford	Cases	114	2,042	56	3,438	59	292	87	6	6,094
	Defendants	54	1,393	33	1,502	33	107	56	5	3,183
Wexford	Cases	106	1,986	327	3,763	71	1,995	99	5	8,352
	Defendants	77	1,586	181	1,486	60	499	83	4	3,976
Youghal	Cases	119	1,129	25	602	281	782	69	1	3,008
	Defendants	73	825	11	318	176	233	44	1	1,681
Total	Cases	4,977	71,703	6,686	137,392	10,885	46,916	2,807	275	281,641
Total	Defendants	2,770	51,046	4,025	51,845	6,185	12,295	1,722	256	130,144

DISTRICT COURT

SPECIFIC ROAD TRAFFIC OFFENCES

Outcome	DANGEROUS DRIVING		DRINK DRIVING		UNAUTHORISED TAKINGS OF MOTOR VEHICLES	
	Offences	Offenders	Offences	Offenders	Offences	Offenders
Community Service Order	36	34	75	72	45	43
Detention	68	56	20	19	175	141
Detention Suspended	28	18	2	2	37	34
Dismiss	261	237	867	837	68	59
Fines	1,243	1,160	11,899	11,557	87	81
Imprisonment	340	243	572	525	244	207
Imprisonment Suspended	89	73	282	271	63	61
Peace Bond	52	50	160	157	65	63
Poor Box	8	8	0	0	1	1
Probation	64	42	83	76	95	80
Struck Out	1,242	870	1,262	1,180	306	278
Taken Into Consideration	793	477	1,147	1,059	271	231
Withdrawn	444	315	286	266	58	55
Reduced Charge	660	651	3	3	0	0
Disqualification	1,283	1,074	12,639	12,168	248	214
Sent forward for Trial	97	86	7	5	170	148
Endorsements	164	156	803	785	19	16
Other	79	52	150	145	40	36
Total	6,951	5,602	30,257	29,127	1,992	1,748

DISTRICT COURT

JUVENILE

Cases dealt with	Defendants	Offences
Community service	49	113
Detention	537	1390
Dismiss	145	311
Dismiss on probation	236	450
Disqualified	132	251
Fine	237	427
No order	126	355
Other	49	82
Peace bond	102	144
Poor box	2	3
Probation order	331	1022
Strike out	619	1703
Returned to higher court on trial	121	286
Withdrawn	127	242
Grand Total	2,813	6,779

SECTION 3 CIVIL

PERSONAL INJURY:

HIGH COURT

Cases Issued	2007	2006
Assault Cases	144	292
Medical Negligence Cases	566	334
Personal Injury Summonses	5,951	2,673
Personal Injury Summonses (Fatal actions)	7	3
Section 12 PIAB Act	32	70

Awards were made in 133 personal injury cases in the High Court in 2007. Judgment was either on consent or followed a hearing or disclosed terms of consent. The highest award was €2.5m and the lowest award was €7,500.00. The total amount awarded in all cases was €21,847,190.00

Awards made	Cases
€0 to €37,999	39
€38,000 to €99,999	56
€100,000 to €199,999	18
€200,000 to €999,999	15
€1m +	5
TOTAL	133

LISTED FOR HEARING

Dublin	2007	2006
On hand at 01/01	9,143	8,754
Received	2,691	2,837
Disposed of	5,910	2,448
Outstanding as of 31/12	5,942	9,143

Provincial venues Dundalk	2007	2006
On hand at 01/01	452	542
Received	164	363
Disposed of	492	453
Outstanding as of 31/12	124	452

Galway	2007	2006
On hand at 01/01	200	498
Received	328	358
Disposed of	388	656
Outstanding as of 31/12	140	200

Cork	2007	2006
On hand at 01/01	534	681
Received	507	409
Disposed of	336	556
Outstanding as of 31/12	695	534

Limerick	2007	2006
On hand at 01/01	794	923
Received	563	536
Disposed of	308	665
Outstanding as of 31/12	1,049	794

Sligo	2007	2006
On hand at 01/01	250	388
Received	168	190
Disposed of	291	328
Outstanding as of 31/12	127	250

Waterford	2007	2006
On hand at 01/01	239	274
Received	146	148
Disposed of	130	183
Outstanding as of 31/12	155	239

Kilkenny	2007	2006
On hand at 01/01	132	167
Received	79	65
Disposed of	190	100
Outstanding as of 31/12	21	132

Total	2007	2006
On hands 01/01	11,744	12,227
Received	4,646	4,906
Disposed of	8,045	5,389
On hands 31/12	8,074	11,744

Orders Made	2007	2006
Assessment of damages	102	119
Dismissed	48	69
Liability in issue	58	85
Settled at hearing	236	259
Listed but settled before hearing	2,623	2,781
Fatal settled	160	118
Minor settled	243	273
Assessment of damages settled	59	61

CIRCUIT COURT:

	Cases issued	Notice of trials disposed of
	7,154	2,826

Awards made by the circuit court or settlements ruled	Cases
Carlow	9
Cavan	6
Clare	16
Cork	142
Donegal	27
Dublin	298
Galway	67
Kerry	32
Kildare	13
Kilkenny	20
Laois	8
Leitrim	2
Limerick	48

Longford	3
Louth	95
Mayo	25
Meath	27
Monaghan	12
Offaly	18
Roscommon	6
Sligo	4
Tipperary	53
Waterford	26
Westmeath	4
Wexford	5
Wicklow	2
TOTAL	968

Awards were made or approved in 968 personal injury cases. The lowest amount awarded was €500.00, the highest €99,174.00. The total amount awarded in all cases was €13,537,667.75.

Awards made	Cases
€0 to €9,999	350
€10,000 to €19,999	414
€20,000 to €29,999	143
€30,000 +	61
Total	968

Outcome of notice of trials and motions disposed of	
Settled	1,469
Dealt with by court	1,147
Adjourned	539
Total	3,155

OTHER CIVIL CASES:

HIGH COURT

CIRCUIT COURT APPEALS

Cases Issued	2007	2006
Northern Circuit	3	9
Southern Circuit	21	22
Eastern Circuit	12	12
Western Circuit	9	11
Midland Circuit	5	12
Dublin Circuit	107	137
South Western Circuit	7	3
Applications to extend time to Appeal	51	48
Total (Excl. High Court on Circuit)	215	254

Orders Made	2007	2006
Family Law Appeals	56	47
Circuit Appeal Final	119	162
Stay Circuit Court Order	5	10
Extend time to Appeal	22	36

CHANCERY MATTERS

Cases Issued	2007	2006
Restoration of Company to Register	193	203
Winding Up Company	120	98
Examinership	24	8
Section 205 Petitions	18	22
Section 106	20	7
Section 150 Companies Acts*	55	50
Section 160	6	21
Other Applications pursuant to Companies Acts	5	53

* see also page 100.

Orders Made	2007	2006
Restore of Company to Register	196	195
Wind Up Company	42	32
Examiner Appointed	19	5
Interim Examiner Appointed	3	5
Section 106	20	6
Section 150 Granted*	85	76
Section 150 Refused*	11	17
Section 160 Granted	10	8
Section 160 Refused	2	2
Other Companies Acts Orders	313	245
Chancery Action: Hearing Final	58	54
Chancery Action: Settled Final	154	163
Chancery Action: Settled at Hearing Final	65	50

Chancery: Special Summons Final	105	102
Injunctions: interim	162	145
Injunctions: interlocutory	55	54
Mortgage Suit (Well charging Order)	33	36
Possession Orders	109	61
Other Chancery Orders	470	582

* **see also page 100.**

REGULATION OF PROFESSIONS

Cases Issued	2007	2006
Dentists Acts	3	1
Medical Council Matters	27	29
Nurses Acts	35	19
Solicitors Matters	17	4

Orders Made	2007	2006
Medical Council Matters Interim	15	10
Medical Council Matters Final	23	16
Nurses Acts Interim	13	2
Nurses Acts Final	28	19
Solicitors Act Interim	42	-
Solicitors Final Act	50	-

ACTIONS TO RECOVER DEBT

Cases Issued	2007	2006
European Enforcement Order	8	2
Examination of Debtors	1	12
Foreign Judgments	48	36
Revenue Summons	818	901
Summary Summons	2,292	1,894

Orders Made	2007	2006
Foreign Judgments	42	25
Liberty to enter final judgment	303	267
Court judgment on foot of summary proceedings	45	45
Appoint receiver (equitable execution)	7	10
Garnishee conditional Order	20	19
Garnishee Final Order	10	11

JUDICIAL REVIEW

Cases Issued	2007	2006
*Asylum	1,024	909
Certiorari	320	289
Certiorari & Declaration	58	67
Injunction	49	53
Mandamus	95	90
Planning	49	50
Prohibition	87	74
Public Procurement	1	3

ASYLUM Orders Made	2007	2006
Leave to apply Granted	263	139
Leave to apply Refused	56	44
Final Order Granted	24	21
Final Order Refused	25	24
Miscellaneous Interim Order	98	147
Final Order (Settled)	343	358

Orders Made	2007	2006
Certiorari Granted	148	128

Orders Made	2007	2006
Mandamus Granted	2	10

PLANNING Orders Made	2007	2006
Leave to Apply granted	8	16
Planning Declaration Final	2	2
Planning Injunction Final	1	1
Planning Mandamus Final	0	1
Planning Refused Final	8	12
Planning Strike Out Final	7	1

PROHIBITION Orders Made	2007	2006
Granted	11	18

Orders Made	2007	2006
Leave to Apply Granted	494	561
Leave to Apply Refused	57	56
Interim Order	226	187
Refused Final	115	70
Strike Out Final	151	123

* **Cases in the Asylum List include all Judicial Review Applications brought under legislative provisions relating to asylum, immigration and refugees. Respondents include the Office of the Refugee Appeals Commissioner, the Refugee Appeals Tribunal and the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform.**

NON-JURY MATTERS

Cases Issued	2007	2006
Breach of Contract	597	613
Nuisance	5	16
Negligence	338	300
Probate	22	27

Orders Made	2007	2006
Final	27	11
Settled at hearing	13	6
Settled	102	51
Interim	40	-

JURY MATTERS

Cases Issued	2007	2006
Defamation	25	25
False Imprisonment	20	18
Libel	88	106
Slander	13	8

Orders Made	2007	2006
Jury Final Order	5	6
Jury Settled	29	21

STATESIDE MATTERS

Cases Issued	2007	2006
Case Stated from District Court	36	33
Habeas Corpus Applications	200	179

Orders Made	2007	2006
Case Stated from District Court	29	27
Case Stated Revenue	6	3

Orders Made	2007	2006
Habeas Corpus Conditional Ex Parte	161	131
Ex Parte Refused	24	24
Refuse Final	30	39
Release Final	96	53

OTHER MATTERS

Cases Issued	2007	2006
Admiralty	14	11
Applications to take evidence	15	14
Appeal from Determination of Pension Ombudsman	0	4
Arbitration Matters	39	30
Conversion	10	5
Criminal Justice Act applications	5	4
Declarations	587	662
Employment Equality Act Applications	2	3
European Convention on Human Rights	1	4
European Arrest Warrants	207	171
Extradition	1	1
Freedom of Information	5	5
Forfeiture	4	4
Garda Compensation	317	171
Hepatitis C Appeal	16	18

Injunctions	409	338
Minor Cases	21	25
Mortgage Suit	95	74
Partition Acts	3	3
Patents Acts	2	10
Possession Orders	375	237
Rescission	29	24
Specific Performance	303	259
Succession	60	62
Section 160 Planning & Development Act 2000	28	16
State Property Act	1	1
Transfer of Prisoners	7	20
Trade Marks Act	1	3
Trespass	21	25
Trustee Matters	16	19
Vendor & Purchaser	11	8
Waste Management Acts	3	4
Water Pollution Acts	0	2

ADMIRALTY Orders Made	2007	2006
Interim	11	3
Final	3	6

EUROPEAN ARREST WARRANTS		
Orders Made	2007	2006
Final Order	57	37
Final Order (Consent)	33	30
Refused	5	11
Remand in Custody	23	31
Warrant to Arrest	13	18
Bail	64	37
Endorse Warrant	144	99
Outgoing	32	40
Miscellaneous	28	20

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION		
Orders Made	2007	2006
Information Commissioner Appeal Allowed	0	0
Information Commissioner Appeal Refused	1	2

Orders Made		
	2007	2006
Garda Compensation	158	150
Hepatitis C Appeals	16	36

SECTION 160 PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT ACT 2000		
Orders Made	2007	2006
Interim Order	3	9
Final Order	8	7

CRIMINAL ASSETS BUREAU MATTERS		
Orders Made	2007	2006
Section 2 (Interim)	15	5
Section 3 (Interlocutory)	7	4
Section 7 (Receiver)	7	5
Miscellaneous	50	104

Masters Orders		
	2007	2006
Adopt from Circuit Court	465	637
Adjourn to Plenary Hearing	106	74
Amend Summons	171	165
Discovery	1,009	1,220
Dismiss Plaintiff's Claim	51	121
Extend Time for Discovery	80	108
Extend time for delivery of Statement of Claim	48	117
Join a Co-Defendant	131	141
Payment out of funds in Court	66	65
Remit to Circuit Court	184	264
Renew Summons	11	20
Refuse Application	218	227
Strike Out Motion with Costs	630	943
Other Masters Orders	772	742

Interim payment out of redress board award	2007	2006
	150	118

COMMERCIAL COURT

Cases on hand 01/01	130
Cases entered	196
Cases disposed of	173
Cases on hand 31/12	107

Analysis of cases disposed of

Motion to dismiss	24
Settled after entry	5
Settled after directions hearing	42
Settled after hearing date set	16
Settled after pre-trial conference	2
Settled at hearing	37
Full hearing	47

WRITTEN JUDGMENTS*

Principal cause of action	Number of judgments
Chancery	65
Personal Injury	30
Companies Acts	16
Non Jury (debt, breach of contract, negligence)	29
Proceeds of Crime Act	2
Arbitration	2
Freedom of Information Act	2
Judicial Review (excluding asylum prohibition and planning)	68

Judicial Review (prohibition)	14
Judicial Review (Asylum related)	72
Judicial Review (planning)	7
S. 160 Planning and Development Act 2000	1
Probate	1
Succession Act	3
Patents Act	1
Trademarks Act 1996	1
Arbitration	4
ECHR	2
Commercial List	25
European Arrest Warrant	25
Taxes Consolidation Act	1
Residential Tenancies Act 2004	1
Employees Fixed Term Work Act 2003	2
Payment of Wages Act 1991	1
Appeal from Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal	2
Hepatitis C Appeal	2
Determination of Pensions Ombudsman	1
Admiralty	1
Family Law (Judicial Separation)	2
Family Law (Divorce)	1
Habeas Corpus / Article 40 Constitution	13
Hague Luxembourg Convention	6
Total	403

* figures do not include all judgments delivered

CENTRAL OFFICE

	2007	2006
Admit (notice to)	25	38
Affidavit	34,779	32,938
Affidavit of Service	4,907	3,913
Notice of Appeal	217	257
Appearance	11,475	8,545
Books of Appeal	147	194
Notice of Indemnity & Contribution	459	461
Cert of Readiness	414	369
Discontinuance	1,496	2,032
Fifa	1,208	914
Default Judgment	881	576
Judgment Mortgage Affidavit	471	402
Judgment on foot of Master's Order	196	157
Lis Pendens	239	127
Master's Motion	3,980	4,741
Notice to Attorney General	2	8
Cert of no appearance	893	632
Notice of Intention to proceed	2,568	3,044
Notice of Appointment of Solicitor	61	76
Notice of Change of Solicitor	2,645	2,740
Notice of discharge of Solicitor	35	42
Notice of Motion (Court)	11,513	11,830
Notice to cross examine	102	104
Notice of Terms of Settlement (PIAB)	55	8
Notice to produce	1,560	1,476
Notice to Trustees	54	42
Statement of Opposition	493	527
Possession Order	43	32

Renew Fifa	52	9
Register High Court judgment	296	218
S. 5 Cert (Judicial Separation)	33	28
S. 6 Cert (Judicial Separation)	29	27
S. 6 Cert (Divorce)	13	16
S. 7 Cert (Divorce)	16	14
Satisfaction Piece	40	39
Setting Down	5,356	5,443
Statement of claim	170	215
Statement of Affairs	39	38
Statement to ground judicial review application	1,803	1,625
Submissions	605	390
Third party notice	203	185
Vacate lis pendens	30	31
Withdraw case by letters	171	226
Total	90,143	85,029

Other activity

Notice As To Stock	73
Withdrawal of Notice as to Stock	4
Unclaimed Dividends	11
Bills of sale/Chattel Mortgage	9
Vacate of Bonds	18
Deed Polls (Enrolled only)	456
Power of Attorney Enrolled	12
Power of Attorney Filed	1

OFFICE OF THE GENERAL SOLICITOR FOR MINORS AND WARDS OF COURT

	2007	2006
Wardship cases	463	467

Reason person admitted to wardship	Cases
Acquired Brain Injury	49
Elderly Mental Infirm	149
Learning or Intellectual Disability	103
Minor	10
Pending cases	6
Psychiatric Illness	144
Residential Abuse	2
Total number of wards	463

Funds held:

At December 31st 2007, the balance in the Committee Account (on behalf of Wards and Minors) amounted to €897,000.

OFFICE OF WARDS OF COURT

	2007	2006
Wardship cases	2,280	2,663
Applications awaiting hearing	261	499
Miscellaneous applications	339	-
Total	2,880	3,162

Order Made	2007	2006
Inquiry orders	209	206
Declaration orders	186	204
Declaration orders (minors)	9	27
Dismissal orders	155	158
Orders (other)	500	593

Enduring Powers of Attorney	2007	2006
Registered	191	168

PROBATE OFFICE

PRINCIPAL REGISTRY

	2007	2006
Probates (and administrations with wills annexed)	6,021	5,585
Intestacies	2,106	1,835
Personal applicants (included in above)	1,458	1,199
Caveats	641	628
Appearances	55	43
Other forms of proceedings: citations	36	27
Warnings	90	57

Probates and Administrations Granted	2007	2006
On foot of court action	57	36
In the registry without decree or order of the court	8,070	7,420
Revocation of probate or administration	40	16

Fees Generated by office	2007 (€)	2006 (€)
Total amount of fees received	2,770,398	2,357,164
Fees on personal applications	*664,681	*540,622

* included in total figure

LOCAL REGISTRIES

Castlebar	2007	2006
Probates (and administrations with wills annexed)	465	387
Intestacies	190	151

Cavan	2007	2006
Probates (and administrations with wills annexed)	151	160
Intestacies	95	79

Clonmel	2007	2006
Probates (and administrations with wills annexed)	515	487
Intestacies	228	154

Cork	2007	2006
Probates (and administrations with wills annexed)	1,126	1,041
Intestacies	334	320

Dundalk	2007	2006
Probates (and administrations with wills annexed)	413	344
Intestacies	177	134

Galway	2007	2006
Probates (and administrations with wills annexed)	754	577
Intestacies	281	265

Kilkenny	2007	2006
Probates (and administrations with wills annexed)	375	359
Intestacies	146	140

Letterkenny	2007	2006
Probates (and administrations with wills annexed)	204	177
Intestacies	139	98

Limerick	2007	2006
Probates (and administrations with wills annexed)	829	648
Intestacies	350	225

Mullingar	2007	2006
Probates (and administrations with wills annexed)	254	265
Intestacies	86	118

Sligo	2007	2006
Probates (and administrations with wills annexed)	267	246
Intestacies	122	104

Tralee	2007	2006
Probates (and administrations with wills annexed)	407	368
Intestacies	169	167

Waterford	2007	2006
Probates (and administrations with wills annexed)	320	259
Intestacies	96	95

Wexford	2007	2006
Probates (and administrations with wills annexed)	365	336
Intestacies	156	113

**PROBATES
(AND ADMINISTRATIONS WITH WILLS ANNEXED)**

	2007	2006
Dublin	6,021	5,585
Local registries	6,445	5,653
TOTAL	12,466	11,238

Intestacies (No Valid Will)	2007	2006
Dublin	2,106	1,835
Local registries	2,569	2,163
TOTAL	4,675	3,998

EXAMINERS' OFFICE

Cases completed	2007	2006
Liquidations	75	100
Mortgage suits	15	15

Examiners' Certificates filed	2007	2006
	218	245

Court Orders Made	2007	2006
Liquidations	311	283
Mortgage suits	37	37

Bankruptcy Court	2007	2006
Petitions	20	11
Adjudications	4	8
Bankruptcies annulled or discharged	12	11

Section 150 Companies act, 1990	2007	2006
Motions issued	21 (including 1 Sec 160 Motion)	22
Dealt with	29 (including 1 Sec 160 motion)	23

Restriction / Disqualification Orders 2007 in Court Liquidations				
Year	Directors restricted	Directors disqualified	Directors neither restricted nor disqualified	Total number of directors dealt with
2007	48	6	15	69

Restriction Orders 2006 in Court Liquidations			
Year	Directors restricted	Directors not restricted	Total number of directors dealt with
2006	32	17	49

OFFICE OF THE OFFICIAL ASSIGNEE IN BANKRUPTCY

	On hand 01/01	Received	Disposed of	On hand 31/12
Bankruptcies	470	4	12	462
Arrangements	23	1	0	24

Cases disposed of	
Annulled	2
Discharged	10

Analysis of bankruptcies discharged	
Section 41*	6
Section 85(3)(a)(1)**	2
Section 85(4)(c)***	1
Section 85(4)(a)****	1

* Section 41 – An offer of composition.

** Section 85(3)(a)(1) – Payment of 100% dividend.

*** Section 85(4)(c) – 12 year rule and all assets realised.

**** Section 85(4)(a) – Payment of 50% or more in the euro

PROOF OF DEBT

	Number of Cases
Advertisement for Creditors	21

	Commenced	Completed
Bankrupts	20	24
Arranging Debtors	2	2

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

	Amounts	Number of Cases (3)
Funds Received(2)	€2,035,174.22	37
Total Payments out (1)(2)	€594,238.75	47
Of which paid to Creditors		
55 Payments to Ordinary Creditors	€217,401.86	10
4 Payments to Preferential Creditors	€72,019.56	4
Of which paid as Costs & Expenses	€273,613.47	-
Of which paid as High Court Fees	€31,203.86	9

(1) Also includes costs, fees and expenses of petitioning creditors and Official Assignee. Some of these would be relatively minor e.g. payment for advertisements to prove debts, etc.

(2) Does not include amounts paid in and returned in respect of petitions struck out.

(3) Where there were a number of payments in respect of a single case, the case is only counted once.

EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES (PERSONAL INSOLVENCY) REGULATIONS 2002

Entries on 01/01/07	12
Entries in 2007	3
Entries on 31/12/07	15*

* This figure comprises entries from the following countries: Northern Ireland (2), England (5), United Kingdom (7) and Germany (1).

OFFICE OF THE TAXING MASTER

	2007	2006
Bills certified	562	486
Items certified	56,246	53,797
Costs claimed	€41,258,555.55	€41,218,047.94
Costs allowed	€29,735,485.47	€30,490,854.52
Fees (duty)	€2,002,523.00	€1,327,594.48
Duty on summonses	€151,690.00	€141,460.00

CIRCUIT COURT

Cause of Action	Cases issued
Breach of Contract	15,481
Employment Law	204
Equity	3,288
Landlord and Tenant	399
Testamentary	546
Other	3,363
Total	23,281

Cases initiated	2007	2006
Carlow	553	330
Cavan	408	357
Clare	819	509
Cork	3,875	3,071
Donegal	923	669
Dublin	9,996	8,629
Galway	886	1,350
Kerry	830	757
Kildare	1,236	1,063
Kilkenny	340	447
Laois	338	286
Leitrim	159	154
Limerick	1,547	1,212
Longford	281	197
Louth	928	791
Mayo	741	812
Meath	902	833
Monaghan	343	363
Offaly	440	345
Roscommon	309	304
Sligo	326	299
Tipperary	1,151	969
Waterford	874	793
Westmeath	565	516
Wexford	866	811
Wicklow	799	636
TOTAL	30,435	26,503

	Civil Trials Dealt With	Motions Dealt With	District Court Civil Appeals	High Court Appeals Heard
Carlow	42	183	2	4
Cavan	81	186	4	0
Clare	65	326	36	2
Cork	893	1,626	73	65
Donegal	310	643	8	15
Dublin	2,313	6,171	136	107
Galway	253	1,276	38	11
Kerry	242	673	8	8
Kildare	158	321	18	9
Kilkenny	49	294	4	0
Laois	64	146	2	2
Leitrim	58	121	8	4
Longford	38	160	2	8
Louth	322	431	8	18
Limerick	561	701	43	36
Mayo	156	368	6	24
Meath	172	550	2	0
Monaghan	56	131	0	2
Offaly	55	160	1	2
Roscommon	38	190	6	9
Sligo	64	340	11	7
Tipperary	213	545	12	32
Waterford	135	374	20	30
Westmeath	43	241	5	6
Wexford	22	188	5	7
Wicklow	154	428	0	4
Total	6,557	16,773	458	412

Cases disposed of	
Settled	5,680
Dealt with by court	6,557
Adjourned	5,909
Total	18,146

Cases disposed of Cause of Action	Application granted	Application refused	Plaintiff awarded compensation	Defendant ordered to comply with conditions
Breach of Contract	407	90	129	68
Employment Law	17	4	12	3
Equity	450	92	57	100
Landlord and Tenant	62	2	6	6
Testamentary	32	7	2	7
Other	503	104	102	28
Total	1,471	299	308	212

Judgments marked in the office	
2007	8,291
2006	7,989

DISTRICT COURT

Applications disposed of	
Ejectment proceedings	43
Summary judgment	23,389
Small claims	3,628
Ordinary civil process	7,685
Summons for attendance of debtor	13,459
Summonses of a civil nature	7,396
Instalment orders	10,842
Committal orders	6,425
Other	664
Total	73,531

SMALL CLAIMS PROCEDURE

Applications received	2007	2006
Holidays	375	393
Professional services	164	148
Dry cleaners	107	105
Building	109	105
Damage to private property	303	158
Key money	62	41
Electrical goods	341	309
Audio/computer	172	225
Clothing	102	93
Shoes	66	70
Furniture	311	160
Carpets/flooring	86	88
Doors/roofs	82	73
Cars	251	207
Other	1,203	815
Total	3,734	2,990

Claims disposed of	2007	2006
Cases not covered by procedure	589	44
Cases not proceeded with	384	400
Decrees by default	294	377
Settled by Registrar	1,504	1,326
Referred to court	857	730
Total	3,628	2,877

Cases adjudicated by court	2007	2006
Decrees granted	411	377
Cases dismissed	154	101
Cases struck out/withdrawn	292	252
Total	857	730

APPLICATIONS UNDER SECTION 107 AND SECTION 108 OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT, 1992

Section 107	2007	2006
Received	12	11
Successful	6	6

Section 108	2007	2006
Received	73	96
Successful	57	36

SECTION 4 FAMILY LAW

DIVORCE, JUDICIAL SEPARATION AND NULLITY

CHANGING TRENDS: APPLICATIONS RECEIVED

	Divorce		Judicial separation		Nullity	
	High	Circuit	High	Circuit	High	Circuit
2007	28	4,081	52	1,689	0	60
2006	39	3,986	50	1,789	1	60
2005	30	4,096	49	1,658	1	50
2004	34	3,880	48	1,654	0	51
2003	42	3,733	53	1,802	1	92
2002	33	3,912	59	1,871	2	52
2001	31	3,459	76	1,845	8	109
2000	39	3,339	76	1,592	8	84

CHANGING TRENDS: ORDERS GRANTED

	Divorce		Judicial separation		Nullity	
	High	Circuit	High	Circuit	High	Circuit
2007	26	3,658	18	1,167	1	27
2006	47	3,420	27	1,072	0	25
2005	20	3,391	23	950	6	37
2004	42	3,305	42	1,216	5	20
2003	41	2,929	26	1,206	4	33
2002	20	2,571	28	940	1	40
2001	20	2,817	27	1,018	4	59
2000	30	2,710	27	998	5	47

Applications Received	2007		2006	
	High	Circuit	High	Circuit
Divorce	28	4,081	39	3,986
Judicial separation	52	1,689	50	1,789
Nullity	0	60	1	60

Orders Granted	2007		2006	
	High	Circuit	High	Circuit
Divorce	26	3,658	47	3,420
Judicial separation	18	1,167	27	1,072
Nullity	1	27	0	25

While the High Court and the Circuit Court have concurrent jurisdiction in family law matters, there is a right of appeal from the Circuit to the High Court in family law cases.

HIGH COURT

Judicial Separation	
Initiated by wife	47
Initiated by husband	5

Divorce	
Initiated by wife	14
Initiated by husband	17

Guardianship of Children	
Initiated by father	8
Initiated by mother	1

Other Cases Initiated	2007	2006
Adoption	4	24
Appeals from the Circuit Court	123	89
Hague/Luxembourg Convention (child abduction)	45	46
Maintenance	0	2
Guardianship	10	4
Total	182	165

Other Orders Granted	2007	2006
Adoption Final	8	9
Family Law Appeals	56	47
Hague/Luxembourg Convention interim	97	90
Hague/Luxembourg Convention Remain Final Consent	9	29
Hague/Luxembourg Convention Remain Final Court	3	0
Hague/Luxembourg Convention Return Final Consent	20	12
Hague/Luxembourg Convention Return Final Court	2	3
Hague/Luxembourg Convention Assess Child	15	2
Maintenance	6	1
Interim Access	9	14
Other Family Orders	206	247

CIRCUIT COURT

Applications Received	2007	2006
Divorce	4,081	3,986
Judicial separation	1,689	1,789
Nullity	60	60
Section 33 Family Law Act, 1995*	739	903
Family law appeals	593	610

* *Section 33 of the Family Law Act, 1995 allows the court dispense with the necessity to give three months notice of intention to marry and/or allow people under the age of eighteen to marry.*

Orders Granted	2007	2006
Divorce	3,658	3,420
Judicial separation	1,167	1,072
Nullity	27	25
Section 33	546	836

CIRCUIT COURT: COUNTRYWIDE

Gender of applicants	Judicial separation		Divorce		Nullity		District Court appeals	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Applications received	499	1,190	1,651	2,430	28	32	252	341
Orders granted	342	825	1,471	2,187	14	13	241	293

PROVINCIAL ONLY

Cases disposed of by gender of applicants	Judicial separation		Divorce		Nullity		District Court appeals	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Settled out of court	25	98	131	174	0	0	15	12
Settled in court	71	247	413	743	2	10	43	41
Full hearing	66	214	404	522	10	7	48	45

PROVINCIAL ONLY

Orders made by gender of applicants	Judicial separation		Divorce		Nullity		District Court appeals	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Periodic payment to spouse	30	156	132	171	1	0	18	21
Periodic payment to child	52	177	186	223	0	0	13	23
Lump sum payment to spouse	35	113	96	130	2	0	1	1
Lump sum payment to Child	2	13	6	9	0	0	0	0
Pension Adjustment Order	50	135	434	613	0	2	0	1
Transfer of family home	57	218	135	202	3	0	0	0
Sale of family home	17	89	25	91	0	0	0	0
Residence in family home	7	76	20	64	3	0	0	0
Other property order	18	60	50	81	4	0	1	1
Extinguish succession rights	117	444	925	1,415	21	0	0	0
Custody/Access orders	71	255	197	363	9	1	45	36
Domestic Violence Orders	1	12	13	28	1	0	17	16

APPLICATIONS RECEIVED AND GRANTED BY COUNTY										
Applications		Judicial Separation		Divorce		Nullity		Section 33	District Court Appeals	
		Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Applicants	Male	Female
Carlow	Received	8	7	21	24	1	0	17	8	2
	Granted	3	6	23	30	2	0	7	5	1
Cavan	Received	8	19	22	19	2	1	16	5	1
	Granted	2	12	17	33	0	0	14	2	1
Clare	Received	7	40	34	52	3	3	8	1	1
	Granted	5	6	14	24	0	0	8	0	0
Cork	Received	57	115	152	253	3	8	71	35	47
	Granted	31	114	197	274	5	4	69	39	41
Donegal	Received	7	28	54	51	1	0	39	7	2
	Granted	6	14	38	72	0	0	20	0	2
Dublin	Received	214	320	582	872	5	5	226	118	177
	Granted	186	278	514	772	2	3	200	120	180
Galway	Received	36	124	89	142	5	3	47	2	3
	Granted	9	62	50	73	1	1	8	2	3
Kerry	Received	8	27	29	53	0	0	1	1	3
	Granted	4	22	32	52	0	0	1	2	0
Kildare	Received	13	43	61	78	0	1	17	6	5
	Granted	20	45	69	91	0	0	23	11	9
Kilkenny	Received	2	22	37	37	0	0	3	0	0
	Granted	10	18	38	48	0	0	2	0	0
Laois	Received	6	14	30	26	0	0	14	3	1
	Granted	2	7	18	16	0	0	13	4	2
Leitrim	Received	0	6	8	21	1	1	11	0	1
	Granted	1	6	9	16	0	0	10	0	2
Limerick	Received	40	67	85	119	0	1	30	9	13
	Granted	13	18	36	55	0	1	0	0	0
Longford	Received	0	11	12	13	0	0	10	0	3
	Granted	1	4	14	6	0	0	9	0	2

Applications		Judicial Separation		Divorce		Nullity		Section 33	District Court Appeals	
		Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Applicants	Male	Female
Louth	Received	7	32	41	47	0	0	43	7	22
	Granted	3	42	44	78	2	2	37	6	19
Mayo	Received	6	43	59	71	0	1	21	5	7
	Granted	3	23	33	46	1	1	19	3	3
Meath	Received	8	49	20	90	2	1	32	9	3
	Granted	9	35	45	87	0	0	9	0	0
Monaghan	Received	0	19	13	26	0	2	5	2	4
	Granted	1	10	7	29	0	0	2	1	0
Offaly	Received	3	21	19	30	0	0	10	2	0
	Granted	5	6	11	25	0	0	2	6	0
Roscommon	Received	3	11	22	23	0	0	2	1	0
	Granted	2	7	20	21	0	0	1	1	0
Sligo	Received	7	15	26	33	3	1	16	0	2
	Granted	2	15	20	36	0	0	5	1	1
Tipperary	Received	6	39	49	82	2	1	20	6	4
	Granted	2	19	67	79	1	0	20	10	4
Waterford	Received	9	28	37	76	0	2	8	3	5
	Granted	5	14	33	46	0	0	8	7	5
Westmeath	Received	11	26	30	52	0	1	19	1	9
	Granted	0	8	31	41	0	1	16	5	3
Wexford	Received	15	20	44	74	0	0	27	7	9
	Granted	5	19	35	76	0	0	20	8	4
Wicklow	Received	18	44	75	66	0	0	26	14	17
	Granted	11	15	56	61	0	0	23	8	11

DISTRICT COURT

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ACT, 1996

2007

Applicant	Applications	Granted	Refused	With- drawn /struck out
Barring orders	3,355	1,420	115	1,820
Safety orders	3,553	1,556	296	1,701
Protection orders	3,794	3,235	363	188
Interim barring orders	692	586	78	28

2006

Applicant	Applications	Granted	Refused	With- drawn /struck out
Barring orders	3,132	1,357	93	1,682
Safety orders	3,050	1,221	103	1,726
Protection orders	3,137	2,845	99	193
Interim barring orders	605	544	26	35

PROTECTION ORDERS

2007

Applicant	Granted	Interim barring in lieu	Refused	With- drawn /struck out
Spouse	1,741	5	305	111
Common law	947	3	39	55
Parent	467	0	12	15
Other	80	0	1	3
Health Board	0	0	6	4
Total	3,235	8	363	188

2006

Applicant	Granted	Interim barring in lieu	Refused	With- drawn /struck out
Spouse	1,611	0	58	109
Common law	862	0	25	70
Parent	316	0	10	13
Other	50	0	4	0
Health Board	6	0	2	1
Total	2,845	0	99	193

SAFETY ORDERS

2007

Applicant	Granted	Refused	With- drawn /struck out
Spouse	751	211	953
Common law	523	42	487
Parent	219	7	232
Other	62	36	16
Health Board	1	0	13
Total	1,556	296	1,701

2006

Applicant	Granted	Refused	With- drawn /struck out
Spouse	693	38	981
Common law	404	8	469
Parent	102	45	223
Other	22	12	53
Health Board	0	0	0
Total	1,221	103	1,726

BARRING ORDERS

2007

Applicant	Granted	Refused	With- drawn /struck out
Spouse	731	74	1,022
Common law	445	30	496
Parent	198	11	267
Other	43	0	10
Health Board	3	0	25
Total	1,420	115	1,820

2006

Applicant	Granted	Refused	With- drawn /struck out
Spouse	727	62	953
Common law	425	20	462
Parent	200	11	247
Other	5	0	16
Health Board	0	0	4
Total	1,357	93	1,682

INTERIM BARRING ORDERS

2007

Applicant	Granted	Refused	With- drawn /struck out
Spouse	312	59	17
Common law	220	15	9
Parent	52	4	2
Other	0	0	0
Health Board	2	0	0
Total	586	78	28

2006

Applicant	Granted	Refused	With- drawn /struck out
Spouse	298	17	14
Common law	157	2	11
Parent	86	6	3
Other	2	0	0
Health Board	1	0	0
Total	544	25	28

Changing Trends	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Barring order applications	4,908	4,470	4,067	3,586	3,210	3,183	3,132	3,355
Barring orders granted	2,319	2,067	1,740	1,575	1,295	1,265	1,357	1,420
Protection order applications	4,381	4,263	3,677	3,109	3,054	2,850	3,137	3,794
Protection orders granted	3,467	3,711	3,248	2,814	2,810	2,622	2,845	3,235
Safety order applications	2,336	2,903	2,814	2,557	2,611	2,866	3,050	3,553
Safety orders granted	988	1,232	1,187	1,108	987	1,037	1,221	1,556
Interim barring order applications	506	1,159	852	629	698	622	605	692
Interim barring orders granted	415	1,007	706	531	604	550	544	586

* Some interim barring orders were granted on foot of applications for protection orders. Likewise some protection orders were granted on foot of interim barring orders

CUSTODY AND ACCESS

2007

	Applications dealt with	Granted	Refused	Withdrawn /struck out
Custody & access	921	428	21	472
Custody only	814	330	43	441
Access only	3,475	2,334	75	1,066
Total	5,210	3,092	139	1,979

2006

	Applications dealt with	Granted	Refused	Withdrawn /struck out
Custody & access	900	566	41	293
Custody only	846	446	37	363
Access only	3,281	2,441	79	761
Total	5,027	3,453	157	1,417

GUARDIANSHIP

2007

	Applications dealt with	Granted	Refused	Withdrawn /struck out
Non-marital fathers Section 6(a)	1,962	1,258	51	653

2006

	Applications dealt with	Granted	Refused	Withdrawn /struck out
Non-marital fathers Section 6(a)	1,742	1,268	42	432

MAINTENANCE

2007

	Applications dealt with	Granted	Refused	Withdrawn /struck out
Maintenance applications (married)	1,557	1,029	50	478
Maintenance applications (unmarried)	2,831	1,981	56	794
Maintenance Act, 1994 applications	9	6	1	2
Maintenance Foreign Jurisdictions Act, 1974	51	39	3	9
Total	4,448	3,055	110	1,283

2006

	Applications dealt with	Granted	Refused	Withdrawn /struck out
Maintenance applications (married)	1,493	1,000	50	443
Maintenance applications (unmarried)	2,652	1,860	42	750
Maintenance Act, 1994 applications	26	18	0	8
Maintenance Foreign Jurisdictions Act, 1974	36	31	2	3
Total	4,207	2,909	94	1,204

CHILDCARE

Supervision and care orders granted	2007	2006
Supervision orders	556	520
Care orders	1,201	1,125

The court may also grant interim care orders.

Childcare cases involve applications by the Health Service Executive (HSE) in relation to care of children, mainly applications to have children placed in the care of or under the supervision of the HSE temporarily or permanently.

SECTION 5 LICENSING

CIRCUIT COURT

Liquor licences granted	2007	2006
Pub	267	322
Hotel	62	98
Special restaurant	64	51
Club	16	20
Total	409	491

DISTRICT COURT

Applications dealt with	2007	2006
Renewal of publican licences	1,432	1,111
Temporary transfer of licence	967	1,121
Annual dance licence	1,635	1,625
Temporary dance licence	274	388
Restaurant certificate	1,145	1,157
Special exemption orders	90,691	91,157
Lottery licence	1,245	1,265
Other	9,943	8,897
Total	107,332	106,721

SECTION 6

WAITING TIMES

SUPREME COURT

The waiting time is calculated on the basis of the time between the lodgement of the certificate of readiness and the hearing date.

- PRIORITY CASES:** Cases where hearings are sought on the grounds of urgency. Hearing dates are allocated depending on the degree of urgency and the availability of dates – the majority being listed within **6 months** of admission to the priority list and in certain cases (e.g. child abduction appeals) within weeks.
- SHORT APPEALS:** Cases where the appeal is short and straightforward enough to be heard on a Friday after the motion list (usually an appeal from an interlocutory order or a short personal injury assessment). The average waiting time for short appeals is 12 months.
- ORDINARY APPEALS:** These cases comprise the ordinary waiting list. The waiting time at the end of December 2007 was 26 months. The longer the waiting period in the ordinary list the more applications are made for priority hearings, which in turn lengthen the waiting time in the ordinary list.

The average waiting time for all appeals heard in 2007 was 12 months.

COURT OF CRIMINAL APPEAL

- CONVICTION CASES:** 8-10 months
- SENTENCE APPEALS:** 6-8 months

CENTRAL CRIMINAL COURT

MURDER AND RAPE TRIALS

8 months from the date of return for trial. The majority of cases in each category were concluded within **12 months** of return for trial

HIGH COURT

Section 150 Cos Act	4 weeks
Asylum pre-leave	26 months
Asylum post-leave	18 months
Bail	Date immediately available
Chancery: Monday motions list	4 weeks
Chancery: certified cases	9 months
Chancery: Special Summonses	4 weeks
Chancery: misc	8 months (cases taking less than 2 hours are dealt with sooner)
Common law	6 weeks
Commercial List	Date immediately available
Competition List	2 weeks
Criminal Assets Bureau	Date immediately available
Circuit Court appeals	4 weeks
Family law	Within 3 months
Garda Compensation	20 weeks
Hague Luxemburg Convention	Case must be dealt with within 6 weeks
Hep C Tribunal Appeals	Within 3 months
Jury List	7 months
Judicial Review	17 months (cases taking less than 2 hours are dealt with within 3-4 weeks)
Master's List	7 weeks (3 weeks for family law matters)
Non jury: misc	21 months (cases taking less than 2 hours will be dealt with sooner)
Non jury: Monday list	3 weeks
Non jury: certified	7 months
Personal injury: Cork	34 months
Personal injury: Dublin	3 weeks (max)
Personal injury: Dundalk	14 months
Personal injury: Galway	6 months
Personal injury: Kilkenny	11 months
Personal injury: Limerick	29 months
Personal injury: Sligo	15 months
Personal injury: Waterford	16 months
Rulings	1 week

CIRCUIT COURT								
Average Waiting Times in months								
County	Criminal		Civil			Family Law		
	Cases	Appeals	Cases	Appeals	Judicial Separation	Divorce	Nullity	Appeals
Carlow	15	24	15	15	12	12	12	12
Cavan	6-9	6	12-18	6	9-12	9-12	9-12	9-12
Clare	3-6	3	3-6	3	3-6	3	3	3
Cork	Next Sittings	Next Sittings	9 -12	9-12	3-6	3-6	3-6	3-6
Donegal	12	6	9-12	6	3-6	3-6	3-6	3-6
Dublin	15	6-7	3-4	2	3	3	3.5	3
Galway	3-6	Next Sittings	Next Sittings	Next Sittings	Next Sittings	Next Sittings	Next Sittings	Next Sittings
Kerry	3-6	Next Sittings	3-6	3-6	3-4	3-4	3-4	6
Kildare	18	6	24	24	18	18	18	Next Sittings
Kilkenny	12	3-6	18	18	12	12	12	12
Laois	6	6	12-18	6-12	6-12	6-9	Next Sittings	3-6
Leitrim	6	3	9	3	6	6	6	3
Limerick	3-6	3-6	18	18	3	3	3	3
Longford	6-12	6-12	12-18	12-18	6-9	3-6	3-6	3-6
Louth	3-6	3-6	12-18	3	6	6	6	3
Mayo	6	6	6	3	3	3	3	3
Meath	9-12	6	12-18	12-18	12	12	12	12
Monaghan	3-6	3	9-12	6	12	12	12	6
Offaly	Next Sittings	Next Sittings	3-6	Next Sittings	3-6	3-6	3-6	Next Sittings
Roscommon	9	3	6	6	3	3	3	3
Sligo	6	Next Sittings	6	Next Sittings	6	6	6	Next Sittings
Tipperary	18-36	18	12-18	12-18	18-24	18-24	18-24	18-24
Waterford	18 -36	6-12	18	12-18	12-18	12-18	12-18	4
Westmeath	6-9	Next Sittings	6-9	6-9	Next Sittings	Next Sittings	Next Sittings	Next Sittings
Wexford	12	6	24	Next Sittings	18	18	Next Sittings	Next Sittings
Wicklow	12	3	9	6	7-9	7-9	3	3

DISTRICT COURT			
Average Waiting Times in months			
Office	Criminal Cases	Civil Cases	Family Law
Athlone	1	1	1
Ballina	2	2	No Delay
Ballinasloe	1	1	1
Bray	13	9	4
Carlow	1	1	No Delay
Carrick-on-Shannon	2	4	No Delay
Castlebar	No delay	1	1
Cavan	2	2	1.5
Clonakilty	1	1	No Delay
Clonmel	2	4	1.5 - 2
Cork	3 to 6	2 to 3	4
Derrynea	No Delay	No Delay	No Delay
Donegal	2 to 3	2	No Delay
Drogheda	No Delay	No Delay	No Delay
Dundalk	3	No Delay	No Delay
Ennis	6 weeks	2	1
Fermoy	2	2	1
Galway	2	6 weeks	1
Kilkenny	5	2	2
Killarney	No Delay	No Delay	No Delay
Letterkenny	4	3	6
Limerick	2 weeks	2	2
Listowel	1	1	1
Longford	3	1	1
Loughrea	No Delay	No Delay	No Delay
Mallow	1	2	1
Monaghan	3	3	1
Mullingar	1.5	Up to 2	Up to 1
Naas	4 to 5	3	Up to 2
Nenagh	1	1	1
Portlaoise	Up to 2	Up to 2	Up to 2
Roscommon	No Delay	No Delay	No Delay
Sligo	No delay	No Delay	No Delay
Thurles	1	1	No Delay
Tralee	No Delay	3	2
Trim	2	1.5	up to 1
Tuam	No Delay	No Delay	1
Tullamore	1	1	1
Waterford	5	3	4
Wexford	12	6	No Delay
Youghal	3	3	3
Dublin	2.5	2	4
Dun Laoghaire	1	7	2.5
Swords	7	No Delay	2

ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

EXPENDITURE AND INCOME

	2007 € '000	2006 € '000
Current Expenditure		
Salaries and Wages	54,137	49,744
Travel and Subsistence	4,345	3,818
Staff and judicial training	1,249	1,095
Stenography and other fees	4,895	4,410
Legal services	1,044	799
Postal services	1,334	1,057
Telecommunications	1,169	1,427
Office equipment and materials	1,374	1,310
Courthouse maintenance	11,777	11,135
Heat, light and fuel costs	2,312	2,041
Furniture and fittings	891	1,229
Leases	6,152	6,086
Consultancy (Non I.T related)	319	126
Incorporated Council of Law Reporting of Ireland	41	41
Incidental/ miscellaneous costs	3,410	3,116
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total Current Expenditure	94,449	87,434
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Telecommunications systems	28	36
ICT systems	9,231	8,362
Courthouses and other buildings	25,477	21,623
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total Capital Expenditure	34,736	30,021
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total Expenditure	129,185	117,455
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Income (Appropriations - in - Aid)		
Fees	29,191	32,688
Dormant Court Funds (Funds of Suitors)	-	-
Miscellaneous	1,041	878
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total Income	30,232	33,566
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Net Expenditure	98,953	83,889

Note : These figures are provisional and subject to audit by the Comptroller and Auditor General

STATEMENT ON INTERNAL FINANCIAL CONTROLS

As Accounting Officer the Chief Executive prepares a statement of internal financial controls to accompany the annual financial statements. This statement addresses the internal control environment within the Service with particular regard to the financial control environment, the framework of administration, management reporting and internal control.

The following statement by the Chief Executive was included with the 2007 Appropriation Account. The initiatives are consistent with best practice in the area of governance and also comply with the recommendations contained within the Report on the Accountability of Secretaries General and Accounting Officers (*the Mullarkey Report*)

RESPONSIBILITY FOR SYSTEM OF INTERNAL FINANCIAL CONTROL

As Accounting Officer I acknowledge my responsibility for ensuring that an effective system of internal financial control is maintained and operated by the Courts Service. This responsibility is exercised in the context of the resources available to me and my other obligations as Chief Executive Officer. Also, any system of internal financial control can provide only reasonable and not absolute assurance that assets are safeguarded, transactions authorised and properly recorded, and that material errors or irregularities are either prevented or would be detected in a timely manner. Maintaining the system of internal financial controls is a continuous process and the system and its effectiveness are kept under ongoing review.

The position in regard to the financial control environment, the framework of administrative proceedings, management reporting and internal audit is as follows:

FINANCIAL CONTROL ENVIRONMENT

I confirm that a control environment containing the following elements is in place:

- financial responsibilities have been assigned at management level with corresponding accountability
- reporting arrangements have been established at all levels where responsibility for financial management has been assigned
- formal procedures have been established for reporting significant control failures and ensuring appropriate corrective action
- there is an audit committee to advise me in discharging my responsibility for the internal financial control system.

ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROLS AND MANAGEMENT REPORTING

I confirm that a framework of administrative procedures and regular management reporting is in place including segregation of duties and a system of delegation and accountability and, in particular, that

- there is an appropriate budgeting system with an annual budget which is kept under review by senior management
- there are regular reviews by senior management of periodic and annual financial reports which indicate financial performance against forecasts
- a risk management system operates within the Courts Service
- there are systems aimed at ensuring the security of the ICT systems
- there are appropriate capital investment control guidelines and formal project management disciplines.

INTERNAL AUDIT

I confirm that the Office* has an internal audit function with appropriately trained personnel, which operates in accordance with a charter which I have approved. Its work is informed by analysis of the financial risks to which the Service is exposed and its annual internal plans, approved by me, are based on this analysis. These plans aim to cover the key controls on a rolling basis over a reasonable period. The internal audit function is reviewed periodically by me and the Audit Committee. I have put procedures in place to ensure that the reports of the internal audit function are followed up.



PJ Fitzpatrick

31st March 2008

* Office in this context means the Courts Service

COURT FEES & FINES

FEES

The Service collects a range of fees on behalf of the Property Registration Authority and the Revenue Commissioners. The Property Registration Authority fees relate to access to documents held locally in court offices. The fees collected on behalf of the Revenue Commissioners are excise duties due on certain applications to court and to the provision of copies of some of these documents. This is mainly in relation to licensing (for example, an application for a special licence).

	2007 (€ 000's)	2006 (€ 000's)
Revenue Commissioners	10,743	10,795
Retained by the Service	28,828	32,297
Property Registration Authority	51	70
Total	39,622	43,162

FINES

The Service collects fines imposed by the courts. In many cases, these fines are collected by the Service on behalf of other government agencies or public bodies (for example, fisheries fines are transferred to the Department of Communications, Marine & Natural Resources).

	2007 (€ 000's)	2006 (€ 000's)
Exchequer (Motor Fines)	12,806	13,418
Revenue Commissioners	2,346	2,482
Department of Communications, Marine & Natural Resources	251	310
Exchequer	6,664	7,171
Total	22,067	23,381

OFFICE OF THE ACCOUNTANT OF THE COURTS OF JUSTICE
EXTRACT FROM THE AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AS AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2007

STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES
AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2007

	30/9/2007	30/9/2006
	€	€
INVESTMENT ASSETS		
Investments	1,002,626,140	937,168,487
CURRENT ASSETS		
Debtors	6,713,655	7,814,970
Bank	13,072,240	2,298,772
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	19,785,895	10,113,742
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Creditors	659,335	523,607
TOTAL LIABILITIES	659,335	523,607
NET CURRENT ASSETS	19,126,560	9,590,135
TOTAL NET ASSETS	1,021,752,700	946,758,622
Represented by:		
Funds held for beneficiaries at year end	1,021,752,700	946,758,622

OFFICE OF THE ACCOUNTANT OF THE COURTS OF JUSTICE
EXTRACT FROM THE AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AS AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2007

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2007

	30/9/2007 €	30/9/2006 €
NET REALISED AND UNREALISED GAINS		
Net realised gains on investments disposed of during the year	7,761,001	5,718,120
Net unrealised gains on investments	12,539,527	30,604,979
Gains realised on transfer out during the year	919,161	1,521,579
NET REALISED AND UNREALISED GAINS	21,219,689	37,844,678
Investment income	2,883,897	2,467,707
	24,103,586	40,312,385
Expenses	(1,146,260)	(1,246,794)
INCREASE IN NET ASSETS FROM OPERATIONS	22,957,326	39,065,591

OFFICE OF THE ACCOUNTANT OF THE COURTS OF JUSTICE
EXTRACT FROM THE AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AS AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2007

**STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN NET ASSETS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2007**

	30/9/2007	30/9/2006
	€	€
INCREASE IN NET ASSETS RESULTING FROM OPERATIONS		
Investment income less expenses	1,737,637	1,220,913
Net realised gains on investments	7,761,001	5,718,120
Net unrealised gains on investments	12,539,527	30,604,979
Gains realised on transfers from funds	919,161	1,521,579
	<hr/> 22,957,326	<hr/> 39,065,591
INCREASE IN NET ASSETS FROM OPERATIONS		
CAPITAL TRANSACTIONS		
Receipts	198,544,808	164,109,273
Disbursements	(146,508,056)	(115,762,284)
	<hr/> 52,036,752	<hr/> 48,346,989
INCREASE IN NET ASSETS FROM CAPITAL TRANSACTIONS		
Increase in net assets	74,994,078	87,412,580
Net assets at beginning of year	946,758,622	859,346,042
NET ASSETS AT END OF YEAR	<hr/> 1,021,752,700	<hr/> 946,758,622

This Report includes extracts from the Report and Financial Statements of the Office of the Accountant of the Courts of Justice for the year ended 30th September 2007. The full Report and Financial Statements are available from the Office of the Accountant of the Courts of Justice, Phoenix House, 15/24 Phoenix Street North, Dublin 7. Telephone: 01-8886211 and on the website of the Service at www.courts.ie.

POOR BOX RECEIPTS THROUGH COURT OFFICES 2007

	Opening Balance 01/01 €	Receipts €	Payments €	Balance on Hand 31/12 €
High Court	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Circuit Court	10,716.84	8,000	8,000	10,716.84
District Court	135,237.38	1,202,246.28	1,144,306.81	193,176.85
Total	145,954.22*	1,210,246.28	1,152,306.81	203,893.69

* The opening balance at 01/01/07 was €473.35 more than the closing balance in the Annual Report for 2006 due to revised details provided by court offices.

POOR BOX RECEIPTS THROUGH COURT OFFICES 2006

	Opening Balance 01/01 €	Receipts €	Payments €	Balance on Hand 31/12 €
High Court	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Circuit Court	12,157.18	359.66	1,800.00	10,716.84
District Court	66,272.54	1,316,728.04	1,248,236.55	134,764.03
Grand Total	78,429.72*	1,317,087.70	1,250,036.55	145,480.87

* The opening Balance at 01/01/06 was €9,660.27 less than the closing balance in the Annual Report for 2005 due to revised details provided by Court Offices.

PROMPT PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS ACT, 1997

The following information is provided in accordance with the Act within the guidelines issued by the Department of Enterprise, Trade & Employment.

The Service has procedures in place to ensure that all invoices are paid within the time limits identified on these invoices or, if no time limit is specified, within the statutory time limit. While the procedures have been designed to ensure compliance with the Act, they only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance against material non compliance with the Act.

These procedures operate in the financial period under review and, in the case of late payments, the relevant suppliers were notified and the interest due was paid to them.

In accordance with the Prompt Payment of Accounts Act, 1997 the following information is provided in respect of the financial period ending December 31st 2007:

(A) PAYMENT PRACTICES

The Service makes payment to suppliers in accordance with the terms specified on the respective invoices or the conditions specified in individual contracts, if appropriate. Since 2002, the standard terms are 30 days.

(B) LATE PAYMENTS

Invoice Amount	No. of Invoices	Amount of Interest paid in €
Under €100	178	3,825
Over €100	32	16,097
Total	210	19,922

COURT RULES COMMITTEES REPORTS

SUPERIOR COURTS RULES COMMITTEE

The Superior Courts Rules Committee was established by section 67 of the Courts of Justice 1936, Act and reconstituted by section 15 of the Courts of Justice Act, 1953. Under Section 68 of the 1936 Act the power to make, annul or alter rules of court is exercisable by the Committee with the concurrence of the Minister for Justice Equality & Law Reform.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE AT YEAR ENDING 31ST DECEMBER 2007

- The Chief Justice, the Hon. Mr. Justice John L. Murray (Chairperson)
- The President of the High Court, the Hon. Mr. Justice Richard Johnson (Vice Chairperson)
- The Hon. Mr. Justice Adrian Hardiman, judge of the Supreme Court
- The Hon. Mr. Justice Joseph Finnegan, judge of the Supreme Court
- The Hon. Mr. Justice Liam McKechnie, judge of the High Court
- The Hon. Miss Justice Elizabeth Dunne, judge of the High Court
- The Master of the High Court, Mr. Edmund W. Honohan SC
- Mr. Lyndon MacCann SC, nominated by the Council of the Bar of Ireland
- Mr. Paul McGarry BL, nominated by the Council of the Bar of Ireland
- Mr. Patrick Groarke, solicitor, nominated by the Council of the Law Society of Ireland
- Mr. Patrick O'Connor, solicitor, nominated by the Council of the Law Society of Ireland
- Mr. Noel Rubotham, Director of Reform and Development, Courts Service, to whom membership has been delegated by the Chief Executive Officer of the Courts Service under section 30(2) of the Courts Service Act, 1998
- Ms. Mary Cummins, Office of the Chief State Solicitor– appointed to act in place of the Attorney General under section 36(4) of the Courts and Court Officers Act, 2002.

Secretary: Ms. Maeve Kane, Registrar of the Supreme Court

Drafting services: Mr. Sean Barton, solicitor, McCann FitzGerald Solicitors.

The committee met on five occasions during 2007 and signed the following rules:-.

Title	Date signed by Committee	S.I. number	Operative date
RSC (Criminal Law (Insanity) Act 2006), 2007	18th January 2007	597 of 2007	26th September 2007
RSC (Jurisdiction, Recognition, Enforcement and Service of proceedings), 2007	26th April 2007		RSC (Charging Orders), 2007
Remitted to Committee on 21st June 2007	26th April 2007	416 of 2007	1st August 2007
RSC (Transfer of Sentenced Persons), 2007	21st June 2007	417 of 2007	1st August 2007
RSC (Jurisdiction, Recognition, Enforcement and Service of Proceedings), 2007	21st June 2007	407 of 2007	29th June 2007
RSC (Costs), 2007	21st June 2007		awaited
RSC (Criminal Justice Acts 2006 and 2007), 2007	18th October 2007		awaited
RSC (Cape Town Convention), 2007	29th November 2007		awaited

During the year the committee also considered representations in relation to the list of parties qualified to tender under Order 22 Rule 14, the procedure for applications under the Garda Síochána Compensation Acts and the months of the Long Vacation.

At year end, draft rules in respect of Courts-Martial appeals, a Law Society Report on discovery and a proposal regarding Section 10 of the Civil Liability and Courts Act, 2004 were under consideration by the Committee.

Maeve Kane

Secretary

CIRCUIT COURT RULES COMMITTEE

THE TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE COMMITTEE ARE:

- to consider legislative changes at domestic and EU level and to amend Circuit Court Rules on Practice and Procedure to take account of such changes, where appropriate
- to review and update as necessary, the consolidated Circuit Court Rules, 2001
- to consider issues relevant to the Rules raised by members of the Committee and other parties having an interest in the practice and procedure of the Circuit Court.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE AT YEAR ENDING 31ST DECEMBER, 2007:

- The Hon. Mr. Justice Matthew Deery President of the Circuit Court (Chairman)
- Her Honour Judge Alison Lindsay, judge of the Circuit Court
- His Honour Judge Tony Hunt, judge of the Circuit Court
- Mr. Patrick Hunt SC, nominated by the Council of the Bar of Ireland
- Mr. Fergal Foley BL, nominated by the Council of the Bar of Ireland
- Mr. Gerard J. Doherty, solicitor, nominated by the Law Society of Ireland
- Mr. Joseph T. Deane, solicitor, nominated by the Law Society of Ireland
- Ms. Ann Spaine, nominated by the Attorney General

- Mr. Noel Rubotham BL, to whom membership has been delegated by the Chief Executive Officer under section 30(2) of the Courts Service Act, 1998.

Secretary: Ms. Susan Ryan, County Registrar, Dublin

Drafting services: Mr. Sean Barton solicitor, McCann FitzGerald Solicitors

The Committee met on six occasions in 2007.

During 2007 the following matters were given due consideration by the Committee with a view to amending or introducing new rules on practice and procedure in the Circuit Court:

- Criminal Justice Act, 2006
- Criminal Justice Act, 2007
- Criminal Law Insanity Act, 2006
- Health (Repayment Scheme) Act, 2006
- Family Law Case Progression.

The Committee continued its review of amendments to be made to the Circuit Court Rules, 2001 culminating in the implementation of a composite amendment to these Rules by statutory instrument number SI 312 of 2007.

The Committee devoted a considerable amount of time during the course of 2007 to the consideration of draft rules relating to the introduction of case progression hearings in family law proceedings. Given the novelty of the procedures and the considerable impact which they would have on the progress of family law cases through the Court, it was considered advisable to circulate the draft rules to the Bar Council and the Family Law Committee of the Law Society for observation. Written submissions were received on behalf of both the Bar Council and Law Society in September 2007. The Committee greatly appreciated their most helpful and constructive observations on the draft rules.

In April 2007 the Chairman and Members welcomed Her Honour Judge Alison Lindsay to the Committee.

Her Honour Judge Katherine Delahunt stepped down as a member of the Committee in October 2007. The Chairman and Members acknowledged Judge Delahunt's invaluable contribution to the Committee from 2005 to 2007 which included acting as Chairperson in April, May 2005 and June 2005. The Chairman advised that Judge Tony Hunt had been nominated to take the place of Judge Delahunt.

Rules relating to the following were implemented in 2007:

- S.I. No.10 of 2007: Circuit Court Rules (Social Welfare Appeals), 2007
- S.I. No. 11 of 2007: Circuit Court Rules (Mental Health), 2007
- S.I. No. 12 of 2007: Circuit Court Rules (Industrial Relations Acts), 2007
- S.I. No. 169 of 2007: Circuit Court Rules (Criminal Justice Act 2006), 2007
- S.I. No. 312 of 2007: Circuit Court Rules (General), 2007
- S.I. No. 446 of 2007: Circuit Court Rules (Health (Repayment Scheme) Act, 2006), 2007
- S.I. No. 588 of 2007: Circuit Court Rules (Pensions Ombudsman), 2006
- S.I. No. 596 of 2007: Circuit Court Rules (Criminal Law (Insanity) Act, 2006), 2007.

Susan Ryan

Secretary

DISTRICT COURT RULES COMMITTEE

The rule making authority for the District Court is the District Court Rules Committee established under section 71 of the Courts of Justice Act, 1936. The Committee may annul or alter rules and make new rules with the concurrence of the Minister for Justice, Equality & Law Reform.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE AT YEAR ENDING 31ST DECEMBER, 2007

- The President of the District Court, Her Honour Judge Miriam Malone (Chairperson)
- Judge Uinsin MacGruairc, Judge of the District Court
- Judge Mary Devins, Judge of the District Court
- Judge Thomas E. O'Donnell, Judge of the District Court
- Judge Brian Sheridan, Judge of the District Court
- Ms. Fiona Twomey, Solicitor, nominated by the Law Society of Ireland
- Mr. Joe Jeffers, B.L., nominated by the Council of the Bar of Ireland
- Mr. Roy Pearson, Chief State Solicitor's Office, appointed to act in place of the Attorney General under section 36(4) of the Courts and Court Officers Act, 2002
- Mr. Noel A. Doherty, Directorate of Reform and Development, Courts Service, to whom membership has been delegated by the Chief Executive Officer under Section 30(2) of the Courts Service Act, 1998
- A nomination by the Law Society of Ireland was awaited to replace Mr. Hugh O'Neill, Solicitor, who was a member of the Committee until the 10th December 2007.

Secretary: Ms. Liz Hughes, Deputy Chief Clerk, Dublin Metropolitan District Court

Drafting Services: Mr. Sean Barton, solicitor, McCann FitzGerald Solicitors.

The District Court Rules Committee met on 9 occasions during 2007. The Committee considered and passed a number of Rules. The following Rules of the District Court were signed by the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform between the 1st January 2007 and the 31st December 2007, (*see page 137*).

S.I. NO.	Title	Date signed by Committee	Date effective from
S.I. 19 of 2007	District Court (Mental Health Appeals) Rules, 2007	27/11/06	21/2/07
S.I. 73 of 2007	District Court (Bench Warrants) Rules, 2007	15/1/07	22/3/07
S.I. 82 of 2007	District Court (Small Claims) Rules, 2007	15/1/07	27/3/07
S.I. 97 of 2007	District Court (Mental Health) Rules, 2007	12/2/07	2/4/07
S.I. 152 of 2007	District Court (Children Summonses) Rules, 2007	5/3/07	26/4/07
S.I. 203 of 2007	District Court (Criminal Justice Act 2006) Rules, 2007	15/1/07	31/5/07
S.I. 313 of 2007	District Court (Community Service) Rules, 2007	14/5/07	20/7/07
S.I. 314 of 2007	District Court (Criminal Justice Act 2006, Part 11) Rules, 2007	14/5/07	20/7/07
S.I. 408 of 2007	District Court (Children) Rules, 2007	14/5/07	27/7/07
S.I. 418 of 2007	District Court (Summons) Rules, 2007	18/6/07	1/8/07
S.I. 564 of 2007	District Court (Road Traffic) Rules, 2007	18/6/07	24/8/07
S.I. 727 of 2007	District Court (Insanity) Rules, 2007	5/3/07	22/11/07

The Committee extended its thanks and appreciation for their active participation during their membership to Judge John P. Brophy who was a member for 15 years from January 1992 to January 2007, to Mr. David Kelly, Advisory Counsel and Mr. Hugh O'Neill, nominee of the Law Society of Ireland all of whom retired from the Committee during the year.

At year end the following Rules signed by the Committee are awaiting the concurrence of the Minister:-

- ◉ District Court (Criminal Justice Act, 2007), Rules
- ◉ District Court (Criminal Justice Act, 2006) (No 2), Rules.

Rules relating to the following were under consideration by the Committee at year end:

- ◉ Search Warrant Rules
- ◉ Child Care (Amendment) Act 2007, Rules.

Liz Hughes

Secretary

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

CHAPTER 9

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Affidavit - a written statement made on oath

Appeal - a proceeding taken by a party to a case dissatisfied with a decision made, to a court having authority to review or set aside that decision

Appearance - a document which indicates that a defendant, after being served with a summons to a Circuit or High Court action, intends to defend the action

Barring Order - an order preventing a spouse from entering the family home or using or threatening violence against the other spouse or family members

Bill of Sale - a document transferring or mortgaging of an interest in movable property

Care Order - an order placing a child in the care of the health board until he or she reaches the age of eighteen or a shorter period as determined by the court

Caveat - a written notice to the court requesting that nothing be done regarding the estate of a deceased person without notice to the party who entered the caveat or his/her solicitor

Certified List - a list of cases which have been certified by counsel as being ready for hearing

Civil Bill - a document used to start a case in the Circuit Court. It gives details of the parties to the case and details of the claim that is being made

Claim - the assertion of a right. Taking a case against someone is a way of making a claim

Commissioner for Oaths - a person entitled to administer oaths and take affidavits

Courts-Martial Appeal Court - the name applied to the Court of Criminal Appeal when hearing appeals from courts martial (military tribunals for the trial of members of the defence forces on active service)

Deed Poll - a deed completed by one party only, often used to declare an intention to change a name

Defence - a document delivered by the defendant to the plaintiff in response to a civil bill or a plenary summons

Defendant - a person against whom an action is brought; a person charged with a criminal offence

Deponent - the person who swears an affidavit

Emergency care order - an order placing a child under the care of the health board for a maximum period of eight days if the court is of the opinion that there is a serious risk to the health or welfare of a child

Enduring Power of Attorney - a document providing for the management of a person's affairs in the event of their becoming mentally incapacitated

Ex officio - by virtue of his/her office

Ex parte - without notice to the other side of an action

In camera - a court hearing to which the public is not admitted

Indictment - a formal document setting out certain kinds of charges against an accused person or the process by which those charges are presented against the accused

Indictable offence - an offence which, if committed by an adult, is triable on indictment

Injunction - an order of the court directing a party to an action to do, or to refrain from doing, something

Interim barring order - an immediate order requiring a violent person to leave the family home, pending the hearing of an application for a barring order

Interim care order - an order, granted when an application for a care order has been or is about to be made, requiring that the child named in the order be placed in the care of the health board

Intestate - dying without making a valid will

Judicial Review - a legal remedy available in situations where a body or tribunal has acted in excess of legal authority or contrary to its duty

Judicial separation - a decree granted by the court relieving spouses to a marriage of the obligation to cohabit

Jurisdiction - (a) the power of a court or judge to hear an action, petition or other proceeding, or (b) the geographical area within which such power may be exercised

Lis Pendens – *Action pending* – the registration of an action against an owner of land

Mortgage suit - a form of proceeding to recover a debt owed to the holder of security on property - by forcing the

sale of the property (usually on foot of a judgment mortgage or an equitable mortgage)

Nolle Prosequi - the entering by the prosecution of a stay on criminal proceedings (not to be confused with an acquittal)

Notary Public - a legal practitioner, usually a solicitor, who witnesses the signing of documents or makes copies of them in order to verify their authenticity, especially for use abroad

Oath - a form of words by which a person calls his/her God to witness that what he says is the truth, or that what he/she promises to do he will do

Original actions - actions commenced in the court of hearing (as opposed to cases appealed from a lower court)

Plaintiff - a person who brings a legal action against another

Plenary Summons - document used to begin certain civil proceedings (e.g. claims for non-specific damages, libel, nuisance) in the High Court where pleadings and oral evidence are required

Power of Attorney - a deed by which one person allows another to represent him, or act in his place either generally or for specified purposes

Protection Order - an interim order, granted when an application for a safety/barring order has been made, prohibiting a person from committing further acts of violence or threatening of violence

Revenue Summons - a form of summary summons heard on affidavit, used by the Revenue Commissioners to commence civil proceedings in the High Court to recover sums due (e.g. unpaid taxes)

Safety Order - an order prohibiting a person from committing further acts of violence or threatening to do so. It does not prevent the person from entering the family home

Seat Office - part of the Probate Office in Dublin where applications by solicitors for grants of probate and administration are processed

Setting down for trial - a request that an action be allocated a date for hearing

Special Exemption Order - an order allowing a licensee to sell alcohol outside the normal licensing hours subject to certain conditions

Special Summons - document used to begin certain civil proceedings (e.g. equity claims, mortgage enforcement, administration of trusts) in the High Court to be heard on affidavit (that is, not oral evidence)

Subpoena - an order issued in an action requiring a person to be present at a specified place and time for a specified purpose under penalty

Subpoena ad testificandum - an order to attend and give evidence

Subpoena duces tecum - an order to attend and produce certain specified documents

Summary Judgment - judgment for a claim in respect of a debt or specific monetary demand. The judgment is given to the plaintiff against the defendant in a court office without the need to bring the claim to court

Summary Summons - document used to commence certain civil proceedings (e.g. claims for a specific amount of money, recovery of possession by a landlord) in the High Court, to be heard on affidavit

Supervision order - an order authorising a health board to visit a child periodically to satisfy itself as to the child's welfare and enabling the health board to give advice regarding the child's welfare

Waiting time - the time between the court offices being notified that a case is ready to proceed to hearing/trial and the actual date for hearing/trial

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

CONTACTING OFFICES OF THE SERVICE

Contact details for the main offices of the Service are published on the website. Details may also be obtained from the Information Office, Courts Service, Phoenix House, 15/24 Phoenix Street North, Smithfield, Dublin 7. Telephone: 01-8886000.

EIRCOM TELEPHONE DIRECTORIES

Telephone numbers for the main offices of the Service are contained in the green pages section of the current eircom telephone directories.

OTHER INFORMATION

Details of court cases at hearing in the High Court in Dublin and Cork are displayed on electronic boards in the Four Courts in Dublin and in the courthouses in Washington Street, Cork and Ennis.

The *Legal Diary* providing details of cases for hearing in the Supreme Court, the Court of Criminal Appeal, the High Court (including the Central Criminal Court) and the Circuit Court is published on the website.

The Annual Reports of the Service together with the Strategic Plans, Customer Service Action Plan, Customer Charter and other publications including those referred to on page 44 of this Report are published on the website.

Copies of all publications are available from the Information Office.

WEBSITE

The website can be accessed at www.courts.ie

SOLICITORS

A & L Goodbody,
Solicitors,
International Financial Services Centre,
North Wall Quay,
Dublin 1.

McCann FitzGerald,
Solicitors,
Riverside One,
Sir John Rogerson's Quay,
Dublin 2.

AUDITORS

The Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General,
Treasury Block,
Lower Yard,
Dublin Castle,
Dublin 2.
(Appropriation Accounts)

Deloitte & Touche
Chartered Accountants
Deloitte & Touche House
Earlsfort Terrace
Dublin 2.
(Financial Statements of the Office of the Accountant of the Courts of Justice)