



DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE, EQUALITY AND LAW REFORM
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Value for Money and Policy Review

of the

Community Service Scheme



October 2009

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

This report presents the results of a value for money and policy review of the Community Service Scheme (“the Scheme”) within the Probation Service and was carried out during late 2007 and 2008. The work was carried out on behalf of the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform (“the Department”) by Petrus Consulting. A steering group comprising senior staff of the Department along with representatives of the Probation Service and Judge David Riordan oversaw the production of the report in accordance with the terms of reference as set out in Appendix I.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology consisted of:

- Reviewing internal documentation along with previous reports including in particular a report on Community Service published in 1999;
- Meetings with and visits to Senior Probation Officers, regional managers and a selection of projects;
- Questionnaires were circulated to all Community Service Supervisors, Senior Probation Officers and Judges of the Circuit and District Courts;
- A high level review of the IT systems currently in place was carried out as part of this review by System Dynamics; and
- A visit to the Probation Board for Northern Ireland took place.

FINDINGS

In 2007, the Estimate for the Probation Service was €9.323 million comprising €2.458 million for current expenditure and €6.865 million for capital expenditure. The estimate for the Community Service Scheme within the overall estimate for the Probation Service was €2.295 million which all related to current expenditure. Thus, the Community Service Scheme represents 3.8% of total Probation Service voted expenditure. In addition to the funds specifically voted, further expenditure is incurred in connection with the allocation of time and indirect costs by Probation Service staff. It is estimated that the cost of the Community Service Scheme amounts to just over €6.5 million annually when these costs are included representing approximately 11% of Probation Service expenditure.

Strategy and Objectives

Community Service forms a key part of the overall strategic vision and goals for the Probation Service. This is reflected by the central emphasis placed on Community Service and the appointment of an Assistant Director with responsibility for the area. (3.5)

There is a clear link between the features and benefits associated with the Scheme as identified by the Senior Probation Officers and the objective of the Probation Service with regard to Community Service which is to provide an alternative to a sentence of imprisonment or detention and to enable offenders to make reparation in the Community. The Scheme was and remains consistent with the strategy of the Probation Service and the objectives remain valid. The Scheme is also consistent with the aims and objectives set out both in the Programme for Government and the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform's Strategy Statement which both highlight the ongoing and continuing importance of community based sanctions. (3.20)

Senior Probation Officers have identified multiple benefits arising from the Community Service Scheme. These include the ability of offenders to remain in work or education, to remain within the family unit and the community, to learn some basic skills and to deliver reparation for the offence. Benefits for the community include a measure of reparation for the offence and the performance of work that would otherwise not get done. (3.17)

There is a need for evidence based national research to assess the impact of the Scheme on the level of reparation and added value to the community, and how the Scheme may also have additional benefit in contributing to positive change in the behaviour of offenders and their integration in the community. (3.19)

Usage by the Courts

There are large areas of the country where the use of Community Service Orders (CSOs) by the Courts is very low. This may be because of the nature of the offences dealt with in these Courts, decisions by the presiding Judges, lack of a suitable community service project in the area, the unsuitability of the offenders or some other unspecified reason. (4.14)

Regional Differences

Across the Probation Service regions there are differences in the average length of CSO made which ranges from a high of 147 hours to a low of 124 hours and the average hours made for each month of alternative sentence (the equivalence rate) which ranges from 26 hours to 43 hours. (4.16)

The variations in the usage of CSOs across Court Areas, the average length of CSO made and the average hours per month of alternative sentence all have implications for the future development and operation of community service at a national and regional level. Greater consistency of usage and imposition of CSOs, within the discretion of the individual Judge, could be achieved by regularly providing Judges with information on the norms used by their colleagues in other regions regarding the use of community service as an alternative to imprisonment. (4.17)

The Probation Service should regularly circulate statistical data, on the imposition of Community Service Orders to the judiciary and other interested parties. This may need to be done in conjunction with the Courts Service. (4.22)

Use of Community Service Orders

Community Service is not being used to the extent that it has been in the past and is possibly being used for only a proportion of those offenders to whom it could apply. It is the desire of the Probation Service to increase considerably the usage of Community Service Orders and based on the levels shown in this review, it is reasonable to plan on the basis that significantly more offenders can be diverted from prison onto community service. (4.28)

The use of Community Service Orders is low both in percentage terms and by comparison to the absolute number of CSOs made during the early 1990s. While the presiding Judge will decide on the use of the appropriate sanction in the circumstances of the specific case and taking into account the gravity of the offence, there are several thousand cases decided each year in the District Court where a sentence of imprisonment is made and where a Community Service Order could possibly be used as an alternative depending on the

availability of community service project work and the suitability of the offenders. (4.30)

The Probation Service should adopt a strategic approach to developing Community Service on a region by region basis over a three to five year timeframe. Specific Courts that are known to utilise Community Service should be identified and a programme put in place to sustain and increase the number of offenders dealt with by means of Community Service. This approach will also need to plan for the likely pool of offenders, potential community service orders and the level of community options for Community Service on a region by region basis. In a later phase the Courts that do not make use of CSOs at present should be identified, the potential levels of CSOs and the availability of community service work identified and appropriate arrangements put in place. This approach would mean that different strategies and implementation plans appropriate to location and need would be considered to accommodate the differing demographic characteristics, the wider dispersal of offenders and Court practices. (4.30)

Completion Rate

The data available suggest that the successful completion rate for Community Service Orders is in a range of 80 – 85%. Given that dealing with non compliance is a time consuming task involving Senior Probation Officers, Probation Officers, the Gardaí and the Courts it would be of benefit to ensure that there is a rapid and effective process in place to deal with such issues when they occur. As part of the survey carried out, most Judges indicated that they were in favour of a rapid commencement of a Community Service Order and speedy return to Court for non compliance. (4.27)

Operation of Community Service – Views from the Judiciary

The responses to the survey of Circuit and District Court Judges indicate that responding Judges are positively inclined to use Community Service Orders. Information on the impact achieved by the Community Service Scheme both for offenders and for communities, at a national and local level, along with specific information on schemes operating locally should be made available to Judges by the Probation Service. (5.19)

OPERATION OF COMMUNITY SERVICE

Capacity Utilisation

The capacity utilisation of Community Service Supervisors nationwide, on an aggregate basis, is estimated to amount to 33%. This means that the existing supervisors, operating at full capacity, could provide supervision services to three times as many offenders. The utilisation level is very sensitive to the number of offenders supervised at any time. This highlights the importance of identifying and selecting sites and projects that will ensure maximum utilisation of supervisory capacity.

If it is not possible to increase the number of CSOs then the number of Community Service Supervisors needs to be reviewed. Comparing the location of supervisors and the number of CSOs arising on a county basis it is clear that there is a mismatch between the supervisory capacity available and the supervisory requirement at county level as well as nationally. Based on figures for 2007, it is estimated that the level of underutilisation of Community Service Supervisors has an associated cost amounting to approximately €1.6 million annually. Any consideration of reducing the number of supervisors should have regard to the following:

- Supervisors are distributed throughout the country and if their numbers were decreased it is unlikely that the offenders assigned to them on supervised sites at the time could be readily reassigned to other supervisors in other areas.
- New offenders in that area would likewise find it difficult to obtain work on a Community Service Scheme and be more likely to be imprisoned at a higher cost.
- Although supervisors may not be fully utilised it can still be more cost effective to use Community Service rather than to incur the high alternative cost of imprisonment. (5.63 – 5.65)

Capacity utilisation expressed in terms of filled places as a percentage of total places available should be a key management tool and performance indicator

for community service and reported at local, regional and national level on a regular basis. (5.31)

Cost of Supervision

Each Senior Probation Officer who responded to the questionnaire, reports spending, on average, 15% of his or her total time on matters to do with community service. Similarly, Probation Officers are estimated to spend 22% of their time on matters related to community service. (5.43-5.46)

Staffing	Total Cost €	Staffing
Regional Probation Management	73,379	.5
Senior Probation Officers	580,597	4.6
Probation Officers	3,150,454	32.6
Community Service Supervisors	2,717,600	55.0
Total Cost €/ FTEs	6,522,030	92.7
No of Community Service Orders 2007 ¹	1,519	
Cost Per Offender	4,295	

The table above is based on the returned questionnaires and salary data for Probation Service staff. The questionnaires provided an estimate of 4.6 full time equivalent Senior Probation Officers and 32.6 full time equivalent Probation Officers involved in community service. There are 75 part time Community Service Supervisors employed which are counted as 55 full time equivalent positions. (5.47)

The cost figures for community service are based on analysis and estimations derived from the returned questionnaires. It is not possible to obtain such cost information from the financial system in the Probation Service and, likewise, the level of Senior Probation Officer and Probation Officer time involved in managing the system is not otherwise readily available. The Probation Service needs a costing system that will allow it to track all the direct and indirect costs associated with Community Service. (5.49)

¹. Throughout this report unless otherwise stated the figures shown for Community Service Orders refer to cases. All offences committed by an individual that were dealt with together by the same judge on the same day in the one court are treated as collectively constituting just one case.

Cost of Community Service

As shown above the cost per community service order is estimated to amount to approximately €4,295 per offender. The alternative costs that would be incurred if those offenders went to prison are estimated to amount to approximately €27,478 per offender. Thus, community service costs approximately 15.6% of the alternative cost of imprisonment on a full cost basis. (5.57)

The favourable cost comparison is mitigated somewhat by the costs associated with those who do not comply with CSOs and those who may have a CSO made who might otherwise not be sentenced to a term of imprisonment. Allowing for these possible costs shows that CSOs are still more financially cost effective than the alternative costs associated with imprisonment. Sensitivity analysis on these costs suggests that the comparative cost of community service is unlikely to exceed 34% of the alternative cost of imprisonment. Thus community service is a very cost effective option in comparison to the direct costs associated with imprisonment. (5.58)

The analysis above does not attribute a value to the work carried out in the community. For 2007 the value associated with the work performed can be reasonably estimated to amount to over €1.48 million thus further increasing the relative attractiveness of Community Service compared to the alternative costs of imprisonment. (5.59)

The community service cost per offender is low in comparison to the alternative cost of imprisonment but is relatively high in absolute terms and there are opportunities to increase efficiency in several areas. Utilisation of Community Service Supervisors is particularly low. In addition, a large proportion of the cost of Community Service is associated with the time of Senior Probation Officers and Probation Officers and more effective use of these resources would increase the efficiency of the system. (5.60)

In financial terms, the Community Service Scheme represents approximately 11% of the total expenditure of the Probation Service. Given that a Community Service Order can only be made as an alternative to a sentence of

imprisonment, each individual on a Community Service Order would have otherwise been imprisoned at a higher cost to the State. (5.61)

Further evidence based research is needed to establish the impact that Community Service has on offenders and whether it achieves a positive change in behaviour. At present it is not possible to say whether community service is effective in this regard. The primary objective of community service is as an alternative to imprisonment for those who would otherwise be imprisoned and in this respect it is effective. On a financial basis, when compared to the alternative cost of imprisonment, it is also cost effective and the benefits associated with the scheme are highly consistent with the aims and objectives of the Probation Service. (5.62)

Management Information and Performance Indicators

The data currently available to manage the community service system is poor. As an example, the number of community service orders revoked is not readily available, the number of places available in any region at any time is not available and the balance of time to be served by offenders is not available at a national level. Some information is available at a local level but depends on manual systems and paper based record keeping. (6.3)

The Probation Service needs to build on the performance framework outlined in this review and implement a comprehensive management information system that will provide it with the information necessary to manage the community service scheme and evaluate its performance. This could be a relatively simple system based on manual collection of data at regular intervals and the calculation of cost information for planning and control purposes. (6.11)

Evaluation of Information Resources

A high level IT review was undertaken and specific upgrades to the IT infrastructure will be needed to accommodate a more robust data collection strategy for the CSO aspects of the Probation Service to underpin future administrative evaluation of outcomes/benefits, resource use (both at

Probation Service level and Community Service Supervisor level) and overall cost effectiveness and efficiency. (6.17)

- Lotus Notes Databases integrated with the current Case Tracking System (“CTS”) system should be created which will house the CSO data on projects and associated time-sheet information;
- The process of gathering of time-sheet data, should take the ‘Postal delivery of time-sheets’ solution approach, as it has the lowest impact on the CSO Supervisors and because it is cheapest solution to implement;
- A RDBMS (relational) Database system; e.g. Oracle or SQL should be implemented;
- There should be a mechanism for data transfer between systems (Lotus Notes and RDBMS) and
- A Reporting Tool (i.e. Business Intelligence infrastructure) should sit on top of the RDBMS Database.

These IT developments are desirable for the longer term development of a management reporting system for Community Service and could, in addition, support the development of the performance framework identified earlier. (6.24)

SUMMARISED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Ref	Finding	Recommendation	Target	Priority	Timing
1	Community service (CS) is a highly cost effective alternative to a sentence of imprisonment but the usage level had declined for some years up until 2007.	Encourage greater use of CS as an alternative to a sentence of imprisonment.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Analyse sentencing patterns to identify use of non-custodial sanctions, with particular reference to CSO's. In conjunction with the Court Service and the Judges, identify the locations where it is possible that suitable offenders can be identified CSOs. Promote greater use of CS by Judges through an information campaign coordinated through the Probation Service and the Courts Service 	High	Q4 2009
2	There are large areas of the country where the use of Community Service Orders (CSO) by the Courts is very low.	The Probation Service should develop Community Service in a targeted manner on a region by region basis concentrating initially on those areas where CS is more commonly made.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Review the location of supervisors to ensure they are best placed to provide services. Document steps taken to make CS a more attractive option for Courts Identify and establish alternative placement arrangements where necessary 	High	Q4 2009
3	Across the Probation Service regions there are relatively wide differences in the average length of CSOs made and the average hours of community service made per month of alternative sentence.	The Probation Service in conjunction with the Courts Service should circulate statistical data on the imposition of Community Service Orders to the judiciary and other interested parties.	Circulate Annual or Quarterly information to the judiciary with analysis of Community Service statistics.	Medium	Q1 2010
4	The successful completion rate for	Ensure that there is a speedy and	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Commence offenders within 14 days of date order 	High	Q4 2009

Ref	Finding	Recommendation	Target	Priority	Timing
	Community Service Orders is in a range of 80 – 85%.	effective process in place to deal with any non compliance that occur with a rapid return to Court. Also, implement standards for commencing a CSO as speedily as possible.	made. 2. Establish rapid revocation process to ensure compliance with Order 3. Monitor the completion rate on a quarterly basis		
5	Capacity utilisation on community service projects on an aggregate basis is approximately 33%.	Increase capacity utilisation on supervised community service projects and include capacity utilisation as a key performance indicator for community service reported at local, regional and national level on a regular basis.	1. Examine the location of supervisors compared to the originating CSOs. 2. Include capacity utilisation as a key performance indicator in all CS data. 3. Aim to achieve increase in capacity usage of sites from 33% to 45% by Q4 2009, 60% capacity utilisation by Q4 2010 and 70% capacity utilisation by Q4 2011. In the event that this is not achieved the PS in conjunction with DJELR will rationalise the Service so as to achieve increased value for money.	High	Q4 2011
6	Supervisors identified that site selection is key to improving efficiency and effectiveness.	Review all existing sites for suitability and effectiveness, and introduce a strategy for future site selection.	To have all sites reviewed and a strategy in place for each CS project by end 2009.	Medium	Q4 2009
7	The data currently available to manage the community service system is of limited value.	Upgraded IT infrastructure is needed to accommodate a more robust data reporting strategy for CS.	Implement the specific upgrades and practice enhancements needed during 2009/10 within budgetary constraints.	High	Q4 2010
8	Cost and management information	The Probation Service needs a costing	Systems in place that can provide management	High	Q4 2009

Ref	Finding	Recommendation	Target	Priority	Timing
	relating to Community Service is weak.	system that will allow it to track all the direct and indirect costs associated with Community Service and provide operational information on a site and regional basis.	information (including financial) required to manage Community Service.		
9	The management of Community Service involves a disproportionate amount of some Senior Probation Officers time.	Review the role and function of SPOs and other operational staff in the management of Community Service within the Probation Service. Propose the more effective use of these resources and consider a revised staffing structure for delivery of the scheme.	Complete review by Q4 2009.	High	Q4 2009
10	There is a need for evidence based national research to assess the impact of the community service scheme on the level of reparation and added value to the community, and how the scheme may also have additional benefit in contributing to positive change in the behaviour of offenders and their integration in the community.	The White Paper on Crime to have regard to this finding in its examination of the range of non-custodial options available to the Courts.	Consideration to commence by Q4 2009.	Medium	Q4 2011

Ref	Finding	Recommendation	Target	Priority	Timing
11	Key Performance metrics are not in place for the operation and management of CS.	The Probation Service needs to build on the performance framework outlined in this review and implement a comprehensive management information system that will provide it with the information necessary to manage the community service scheme and evaluate its performance.	KPIs identified and implemented.	Medium	Q4 2009

1. BACKGROUND TO THE VALUE FOR MONEY AND POLICY REVIEWS INITIATIVE

- 1.1 This section of the report sets out the background to the VFMPR Initiative and describes the structure of the programme. It sets out the terms of reference for this review and the methodology followed along with the membership of the steering group responsible for the report.
- 1.2 In 1994 the Strategic Management Initiative (SMI) was introduced to enhance the strategic capabilities of managers in the civil service. Arising from the SMI, the Government introduced Delivering Better Government in 1996². It identified the “need for a systematic analysis of what is actually being achieved by the Government resources being spent annually”.
- 1.3 The Expenditure Review Initiative (ERI) was introduced by the government in 1997 and had as its two main aims:
- to provide systematic analysis of what is actually being achieved by expenditure in each programme; and
 - to provide a basis on which more informed decisions can be made on priorities within and between expenditure programmes (Department of Finance, 1997).

STRUCTURE OF THE REVIEW PROGRAMME

- 1.4 The Expenditure Review Central Steering Committee (ERCSC) manages the overall ERI process and is chaired by the Secretary General of the Department of Finance. It also includes among its members Secretaries General of other departments and a senior academic economist. In each Department or Office the Management Advisory Committee (MAC) or a Departmental Steering Committee oversees the process. A working group or an individual conducts each review under the stewardship of a Steering Group with members drawn from both the spending department and the Department of Finance.
- 1.5 Before submission to the ERCSC review reports must be subjected to a quality assessment exercise performed by an independent external evaluation expert. This

² Co-ordinating Group of Secretaries (1996), *Delivering Better Government: A Programme of Change for the Irish Civil Service, Second Report to Government*, Government Publications, Dublin

is intended to improve the standard of reports and ensure that the evaluative process and methodologies employed are robust.

1.6 In June 2006 the Minister for Finance announced further changes to improve the Value for Money aspects of the original initiative including renaming the initiative as the Value for Money and Policy Reviews initiative and a requirement to have all formal reviews published and submitted to the Select Committees of the Oireachtas.

1.7 The Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform (“the Department”) engaged Petrus Consulting to assist in carrying out a value for money and policy review on the Community Service Scheme operated by the Probation Service. The work was carried out during late 2007 and 2008.

EXPENDITURE REVIEW STEERING GROUP

- 1.8 The review was overseen by a Steering Group with the following membership:
- Mary Burke, Principal Officer, Department of Justice Equality and Law Reform
 - Vivian Geiran, Deputy Director, Probation Service
 - Tim Maverley, Professional Accountant, Department of Justice Equality and Law Reform
 - Therese Molyneux, Assistant Principal, Department of Justice Equality and Law Reform (replaced Helen Casey, Assistant Principal, Department of Justice Equality and Law Reform)
 - Judge David Riordan, Judge of the District Court
 - Suzanne Vella, Deputy Director, Probation Service.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1.9 The terms of reference for the review were based on the standard template for all reviews with appropriate modifications specific to this review. The detailed terms of reference are provided in Appendix 1 and are summarised below as follows:

1. Identify the aims and objectives of the Community Service Scheme.
(Section 3)

2. Examine the continued validity of those objectives and their compatibility with the overall strategy of the Probation Service. (Section 3)
3. Identify the associated outputs of the scheme. (Section 4)
4. Establish the level of Probation Service staff time used in the supervision of the scheme. (Section 5)
5. Establish the effectiveness of the scheme. (Section 5)
6. Evaluation of the data and information resources. (Section 6)

METHODOLOGY

1.10 The methodology for the review included the following elements:

- Reviewing the Probation Service Strategy Statements and a review of literature;
- Visiting a selection of community service locations ;
- Examining the support functions such as HR, IT etc used to manage the Scheme;
- Visit to the Probation Board for Northern Ireland (PBNI);

1.11 As part of this review separate questionnaires were issued to all Community Service Supervisors and Senior Probation Officers involved in the Community Service Scheme. A further questionnaire was issued to members of the Judiciary in the District and Circuit Courts to obtain their views on the operation and development of the Scheme in the future.

Questionnaire to Judges

1.12 A questionnaire was circulated to all Judges of the District and Circuit Courts. In total 100 questionnaires were circulated with the agreement and assistance of the Presidents of the Circuit Court and the District Court. The overall response rate to the questionnaire was 29%. The analysis was carried out on the total responses and separately on the responses from the Judges of the District Court because Community Service Orders are more prevalent in the District Court. Seventeen responses were received from District Court Judges. Based on a total of 61 District Court Judges this represents a response rate of 28%. Ten responses were received from Circuit Court Judges out of a total of 31 judges representing a response rate of 32%. (The questionnaire was circulated on an anonymous basis

and in two cases the responses did not identify the Court involved and were excluded from the sub analysis at District Court Level.

Questionnaire to Senior Probation Officers

1.13 A separate questionnaire was sent to all Senior Probation Officers involved with Community Service. Some Senior Probation Officers do not have any involvement with Community Service and were excluded from the questionnaire. It was also decided not to circulate Probation Officers since this would lead to unavoidable duplication and render the analysis problematic. Senior Probation Officers were however requested to take the views of Probation Officers into account when completing the questionnaire. Questionnaires were circulated to 33 Senior Probation Officers and 29 responses were received representing a response rate of 88%.

Questionnaire to Community Service Supervisors

1.14 A further questionnaire was circulated to the 75 supervisors employed by the Probation Service who manage the sites operated as part of the Community Service Scheme to obtain information on the operational aspects of the sites. Forty two completed questionnaires were received representing a response rate of 56%.

1.15 Copies of the questionnaires are included in the Appendices.

1.16 Throughout this report the review is based predominantly on data for 2006 as this data was available for both the Probation Service and for Court statistics. Where data for 2007 was available this has been used where possible.

2. BACKGROUND: COMMUNITY SERVICE ORDERS AND THE PROBATION SERVICE

2.1 This section of the report presents a description of Community Service Orders (CSOs) and describes the work of the Probation Service in relation to CSOs. The history and recent development of the Probation Service as it relates to CSOs is provided and the funding for CSOs and the rationale for the selection of the topic for review are also presented.

WHAT ARE COMMUNITY SERVICE ORDERS?

2.2 Instead of a prison sentence, convicted offenders may be given a Community Service Order (CSO). The legislation³ for Community Service Orders allows the Judge to sentence a convicted offender to between 40 and 240 hours unpaid work in lieu of a specified term of imprisonment or detention.

2.3 The offender must be 16 years or over to be considered and any order made must be completed within a year. Community service is a direct alternative to a custodial sentence and should only be considered by the Judge if a custodial sentence has first been considered as appropriate.

2.4 The Judge will specify the sentence to be served if the offender fails to complete the CSO and ask the Probation Service to complete an assessment as to whether the offender is suitable or not to do community service, and to state whether there is work available to be completed and whether the offender consents.

2.5 A Probation Officer will interview the offender in preparing the report. The report is presented to the Court and if deemed suitable a community service order is made specifying the number of hours to be completed and the alternative custodial sentence that would otherwise have been imposed.

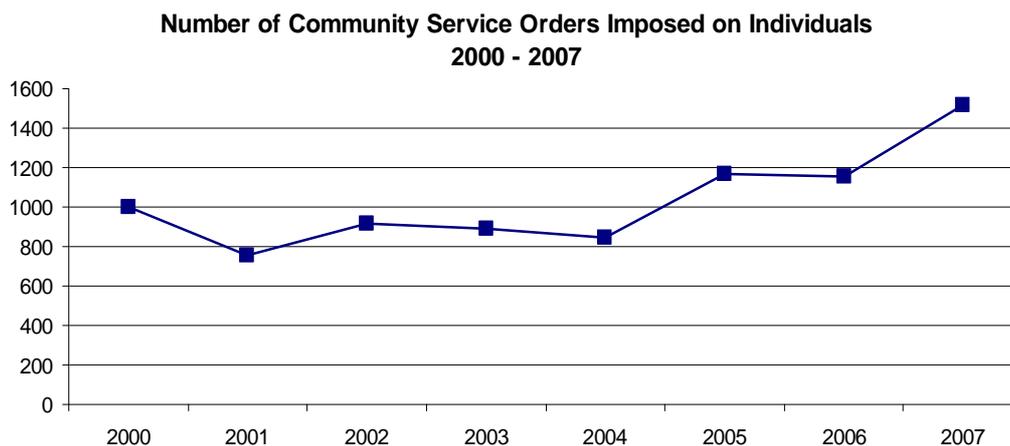
2.6 It is the responsibility of the offender to complete the community service ordered. The number of hours per week to be worked and the location is agreed with the Probation Officer as part of the Community Service contract. The Probation Service is responsible for confirming to the Court that the community

³ [Criminal Justice \(Community Service\) Act, 1983](#)

service order has been completed or bringing the case back to Court for any failure by the offender to complete the order.

2.7 The aim of community service is to get offenders to make reparation to the community in a positive way for the damage caused by offending. Every year thousands of unpaid hours of work are completed, benefiting many community and voluntary groups. Appendix IV lists local areas benefiting from the operation of the Community Service Scheme. Over 100 local schemes are assisted by activities such as gardening, cleaning, painting and decorating, often in community facilities such as school buildings, graveyards and church grounds.

2.8 In recent years the number of Community Service Orders has risen somewhat. In 2006, there were 1,158 individuals who had a CSO made. In 2007 this rose to 1,519 individuals having a CSO made.



Source: National Crime Council, Criminal Justice System Statistics.

2.9 Community Service Orders under the Criminal Justice (Community Service) Act 1983 provide a valued and important sanction for the Courts. They enable a positive contribution by offenders in recompense for the harm and damage of their offending and to the benefit and enhancement of their communities. Community service work adds value to local communities. The work includes landscaping, painting and decorating, repairs and renovation, work support to community centres, sports clubs and schools among many other innovative and challenging schemes in local communities.

2.10 In the initial phase following the enactment of the legislation, supervisors were engaged locally as required on a sessional basis. Over time and as needs arose supervisors were engaged on a more consistent basis. As legislative requirements developed, Community Service Supervisors were given contracts as Industrial Civil Servants in 2000.

BACKGROUND TO THE PROBATION SERVICE

2.11 The Probation Service is an agency within the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform and the Service is managed on a day to day basis by the Director of the Probation Service. Appendix II shows the Management Structure for the Service.

2.12 The role of the Service is to reduce the level of crime in the community and increase public safety by:

- The effective assessment and management of offenders
- Challenging offending behaviour
- Facilitating the integration of ex-offenders.

2.13 The Service provides probation supervision, community service, offending behaviour programmes and specialist support services, to both adult and young offenders, which aim to stop them committing further offences. The work involves:

- preparing pre-sanction assessments for the Courts;
- supervising offenders in the community who are referred by the Court;
- supervising offenders released conditionally from custody; and
- providing a counselling service to offenders and their families.

2.14 At any one time, the Probation Service is supervising and/or assessing up to 9,000 offenders in the community. Many of the activities are inter-agency, and key partners include the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, the Irish Youth Justice Service, the Court Service, the Irish Prison Service, An Garda Síochána and a range of other organisations in the statutory sector as well as in the voluntary and community sector. Services are delivered to individuals,

communities, Courts and prisons across the entire country. While services are organised nationally, they are managed and delivered locally.

2.15 There are almost 500 sanctioned posts⁴ within the Probation Service:

- Director (1)
- Deputy Directors (3)
- Assistant Directors (2)
- Assistant Principal Probation Officers (12)
- Senior Probation Officers (57)
- Probation Officers (266)
- Community Service Supervisors (75 part-time equivalent to 55 full time)
- Probation Service Assistants (10)
- Accountant (1)
- Administrative Staff (92.5)

HISTORY AND RECENT DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROBATION SERVICE

2.16 In 1907 the Probation of Offenders Act was signed into law. It ushered in the idea of structured supervision of offenders by new legal functionaries; probation officers. The focus has shifted significantly over the years, from simply assisting offenders to reducing re-offending and enhancing public protection by changing criminogenic behaviour patterns. Over the years the interventions have become more focused and the methods increasingly based on what works (evidence).

2.17 The ongoing development of the Service has been informed by a number of key reviews including:

- The Final Report of the Expert Group on the Probation and Welfare Service, 1999; and
- The Comptroller and Auditor General Report on Value for Money Examination, The Probation and Welfare Service, 2004.

2.18 To enable the Service to play a central role in the criminal justice system, the Minister and his Department have re-structured the Service and re-focussed its work:

⁴ The posts above represent sanctioned posts on foot of the Government Decision dated 18 April, 2007.

- A Director was appointed from open public competition;
- A new senior professional management structure at Deputy Director and Assistant Director level has been created. The restructuring started in 2005/2006 with the establishment of a new senior management team comprising a Director and three Deputy Directors with responsibility for Operations, Research, Training and Development and Corporate Services and Human Resources. In addition, two Assistant Directors with responsibility for Young Persons Probation and Community Service and Funded Projects have been appointed;
- The re-branded Service, with a new logo and a new website, was launched by the Minister on 26th June 2006;
- The Young Persons Probation Division of the Probation Service has been established;
- An audit has been undertaken of how the work of the Service is organised and delivered, which has also triggered an internal re-organisation to meet contemporary needs;
- An administrative review has been completed;
- A review of financial procedures has been completed and the recommendations are being implemented by the Accountant; and
- A new Strategy Statement for the Service for 2008 – 2010, along with a detailed work plan was developed and approved.

2.19 Steps have also been taken to improve internal functioning and to improve operating efficiency:

- Probation Service funding is provided for under the Department of Justice Vote since mid-2006, as opposed to the Prisons Vote, thus removing it from the financial ambit of the Irish Prison Service. An Accountant has been appointed, financial administration has been stream-lined and Service staff now utilise the Oracle financial system applied across the Department;
- The use of information technology has continued to expand, including the Service's own Case Tracking System. The services of an ICT Manager have been contracted in;
- A programme of refurbishing or replacing Service offices across the country is well under way;

- A new regional headquarters and main office for the Cork area was opened in late 2006;
- A two year Learning for Leadership programme was delivered, encompassing all grades from Senior Probation Officer upwards and which aims to translate insights gained into better management on the ground; and
- A Health and Safety audit of Community Service sites has been completed and Safety Statements are being prepared.

2.20 The work with offenders undertaken by Probation Service staff has been streamlined and consolidated:

- Discussions are ongoing with the Courts Service and Judiciary to agree new priorities, forms and systems of referral;
- A refocused role for Probation staff in prisons and places of detention is being developed in conjunction with the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform and the Irish Prison Service;
- The role of the Service was expanded in October 2006 when Courts were empowered under the Criminal Justice Act, 2006 to impose part-suspended sentences, with a period under supervision on release from custody;
- An internationally accepted assessment tool, the Level of Service Inventory – Revised (LSI-R), is now being applied by Service staff to all new referrals from Courts and potential releases from custody on Probation supervision. This identifies the level of risk of re-offending presented by the offender in question at that point in time. It also informs needs to be addressed in the supervision plan; and
- In 2006, the respective heads of the Probation Service and the Probation Board for Northern Ireland formally signed agreed protocols on the cross-Border management of sex offenders.

2.21 The Service recognises that it has an obligation to ensure that proper control mechanisms are in place to monitor how the money for which it is responsible is spent. It is also reviewing all aspects of operational service delivery and establishing clear strategic goals and responsibilities to ensure delivery of even more effective and efficient services. This review of Community Service is being carried out under the Value for Money and Policy Reviews initiative.

WORKING WITHIN THE COMMUNITY

2.22 Both the Department and the Probation Service are committed to the concept of partnership with local communities and voluntary bodies in the management of offenders.

FUNDING OF THE PROBATION SERVICE

2.23 All funding for the Probation Service comes from the Exchequer and is provided via the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, Vote 19. For 2007, the Probation Service was allocated funding of €9.323 million through Vote 19 for the period January to December 2007. This expenditure review is concerned with expenditure in relation to the Community Service Scheme which in 2007 had a revised estimate of €2.295 million.

Table 2.1 – Probation Service Revised Estimate 2007 - €000's

Revised Estimates for Public Services 2007		Budget Provision		
VOTE 19		Current	Capital	Total
H1	SALARIES, WAGES AND ALLOWANCES	21,772		21,272
H2	OPERATIONS (TRAVEL TELECOMS,	6,678		6,678
H3	SERVICES TO OFFENDERS	14,731	6,865	21,596
H4	JUVENILE OFFENDING INITIATIVES	6,982		6,982
H5	COMMUNITY SERVICE SCHEME	2,295		2,295
TOTALS		52,458	6,865	59,323

Source: Revised Estimates for the Public Services 2007, Department of Finance

Table 2.2 Community Service Voted Expenditure 2004 - 2007

Table 2.2 – Level of Funding Provided 2004 – 2007				
Year	No. of CSOs (Individuals)	Community Service Scheme (€000's)	Probation Service Gross Expenditure €m	% of Annual Expenditure Budget
2007	1,519	2,295	59.323	3.8%
2006	1,158	2,158	49.719	4.3%
2005	1,167	2,140	44.939	4.8%
2004	843	2,215	39.966	5.5%

Source: The Probation Service: Current and Capital Expenditure

2.24 The cost figures shown above for the Community Service Scheme represent the amounts included in the Estimate and do not take into account the additional costs incurred by Probation Officers in preparing assessments and managing the Scheme. These costs are examined later.

CONTEXT AND SELECTION OF TOPIC FOR REVIEW

2.25 The Department of Justice Equality and Law Reform selected the operation of the Community Service Scheme for review as part of the overall Value for Money and Policy Reviews initiative. The Community Service Scheme has been in operation for almost 25 years and the most recent comprehensive review took place in 1999. The topic was considered suitable for review in the light of the recent and ongoing development and change taking place overall in the Probation Service. In addition, it was considered important to assess the potential for the Community Service Scheme to be developed to a greater extent as it forms a significant part of the total expenditure of the Probation Service.

3. OBJECTIVES AND OPERATION OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICE SCHEME

INTRODUCTION

3.1 This section examines the objectives of the Community Service Scheme in the context of the Probation Service Strategy Statements and examines data on the operation of the Scheme. It also examines the views of stakeholders regarding the de-facto features and benefits of the scheme and examines the continued validity of those objectives and their compatibility with the overall strategy of the Probation Service and the Department.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

3.2 The Probation Service Strategy Statement 2008 – 2010, sets out the activities performed which include:

- Preparation for Courts of pre-sanction reports on offenders guilty of criminal offences, including structured risk assessments, community service reports and reports under the Children Act, 2001 as amended by the Criminal Justice Act, 2006, as well as victim impact reports.
- Supervision of offenders in the community on probation and probation type orders, community service orders, orders under the Misuse of Drugs Acts and community sanctions under the Children Act, 2001 as amended by the Criminal Justice Act, 2006.

3.3 The Strategy Statement also includes (emphasis added) the following core values/principles:

- Crime results in hurt and damage to victims and communities and must be met by an effective sanction.
- **Where appropriate, community sanctions are more fitting and effective than custody.**
- **By engaging effectively with communities, for example through a restorative justice model to address crime, we can enhance public safety and reduce offending patterns.**
- Each person has innate value, dignity and capacity for positive change and will be treated fairly, openly and with respect.
- As with all members of society, offenders must accept personal responsibility for their behaviour.

- We recognise the importance of accountability, efficiency, effectiveness and value for money in the provision of a quality public service.
- We will act with equality, fairness and integrity to enhance public trust in our Service.

3.4 The strategic goal set for community service is to **refocus and re-brand Community Service, to increase opportunities for reparation to communities as a credible alternative to custody**. This goal is elaborated further as set out below:

<i>Community Service</i>	
STRATEGIC GOAL	WE WILL REFOCUS & REBRAND COMMUNITY SERVICE, FOLLOWING THE NATIONAL REVIEW TO INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES FOR REPARATION TO COMMUNITIES AS A CREDIBLE ALTERNATIVE TO CUSTODY
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	
Community Service Review	Through the independent Community Service review we will refocus Community Service and implement the review findings in conjunction with the Department of Justice, Equality & Law Reform.
Information Management	We will develop database / IT systems to ensure efficient and accurate data gathering mechanisms.
Reparation	We will relaunch Community Service as an effective Court sanction adding value to communities and enriching reparation by offenders.
Environmental Impact	We will prioritise the development of innovative environmental projects and initiatives in communities through Community Service.

3.5 Community Service forms a key part of the overall strategic vision and goals for the Probation Service. This is reflected by the central emphasis placed on Community Service and the appointment of an Assistant Director with responsibility for the area.

3.6 It is clear from the strategies set out above that community service continues to form an important element of the overall strategy of the Probation Service. For example, the strategy statement for 2006 – 2007 set a strategic action to maximise the potential of community service. However, specific targets or objectives in terms of resource allocation, numbers of places to be made available on an ongoing basis or outcomes in terms of numbers of participants successfully completing community service were not established. Community service is now better positioned than before to become a key part of the overall work of the Probation Service.

Does Community Service meet the Objectives of the Probation Service?

3.7 Table 3.1 below compares, on a qualitative basis, the overall strategy and objectives of the Probation Service and the features and benefits associated with Community Service. The features and benefits are derived from the questionnaires issued⁵ and represent the highest ranking features identified.

Table 3.1 Comparison of Probation Service Strategy and Objectives and Community Service Features and Benefits						
Community Service - Identified Features and Benefits -						
Probation Service Strategy Statements 2006 – 2007 and 2008 - 2010	OBJECTIVES	Work Done that would not Otherwise get Done (9.83, n=12)	Reparation/ Restorative aspect (7.67, n=14)	Community Based Solution (6.07, n=12)	Alternative to Prison and Skills Development (3.67, n = 10)	Cost Effective Punishment (1.76, n=6)
	Reparation to the Community	Some degree of consistency between the benefits delivered and the strategic objective	High degree of consistency between the benefits delivered and the strategic objective	Some degree of consistency between the benefits delivered and the strategic objective	N/A	N/A
	Integration of Offenders in the Community	Some degree of consistency between the benefits delivered and the strategic objective	High degree of consistency between the benefits delivered and the strategic objective	High degree of consistency between the benefits delivered and the strategic objective	High degree of consistency between the benefits delivered and the strategic objective	N/A
	Alternative to Imprisonment	N/A	N/A	Some degree of consistency between the benefits delivered and the strategic objective	High degree of consistency between the benefits delivered and the strategic objective	High degree of consistency between the benefits delivered and the strategic objective

3.8 The objectives set out above are based on the strategy statements for the Probation Service as elaborated in the core values and principles and the strategic objectives for Community Service.

⁵ Questionnaires were issued to all Judges of the District and Circuit Courts, all Community Service Supervisors and all Senior Probation Officers involved with administering the Community Service Scheme – See Section 1 Methodology and Appendix VIII.

3.9 The features and benefits associated with community service were identified by the Senior Probation Officers in their responses to the questionnaire. This questionnaire was issued to 33 Senior Probation Officers dealing with Community Service and 29 responses were received representing a response rate of 88%. As part of that questionnaire, Senior Probation Officers were asked to identify the benefits associated with the Community Service Scheme. The full results are shown in the table below.

Table 3.2 Features and Benefits Associated with Community Service		
Features and Benefits	Score	Responses
Reparation/Restorative	7.67	14
Work Performed that would not otherwise get done	9.83	12
Community Deals with its own problems	2.08	4
Positive Contribution to Community	3.74	7
Improves the environment	0.25	1
Alternative to Prison	2.67	7
New Skills for Offenders	1.00	3
Pro Social Modelling	0.25	1
Reduce Risk of Re-offending	0.67	2
Cost Effective Option	0.59	2
Punishment	0.25	1
	29	54

Source: Questionnaire to Senior Probation Officers.

3.10 The responses to the questionnaire related to the features and benefits which were provided in narrative form. It was therefore necessary to assess each answer and to classify the responses under a set of common headings. This was done by assessing each response and analysing the responses into one or more categories. Overall, all respondents (29) answered the question and some provided more than one specific feature or benefit (54). Where this was the case a fractional score was given to reflect the multiple answers received. The number of answers received for this feature or benefit is also identified. The number of responses that referred to a particular feature or benefit therefore reflects the incidence of that feature or benefit. The overall score represents a measure of the significance that can be attached to the feature or benefit.

3.11 In addition to the views of Senior Probation Officers set out above further questions dealt with the benefit to Communities arising from Community Service Orders. When Senior Probation Officers and Community Service Supervisors were asked whether local communities benefited from CSOs the level of

agreement was 97% and 93% respectively. The level of agreement from Judges was lower at 52% for all Judges and 59% for Judges of the District Court.

3.12 The communities assisted are another key stakeholder group. Given that the work performed is unpaid, is at the request of the community in that the projects are instigated following interaction between the local community and the Probation Service and that many of the schemes have been up and running for several years, it can be assumed that the work is valued and welcomed by those communities.

Continued Validity of Scheme Objectives

3.13 Under the Programme for Government 2007 – 2012 the Government committed to introducing a Community Payback scheme which would “build on the community service order regime requiring offenders who are not subject to automatic long prison terms to provide real services for the communities they have damaged. These would include cleaning streets, painting over graffiti, repairing public facilities, etc.” This would also include giving victims and communities a greater say in what work offenders do as part of their community.

3.14 The Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform Strategy Statement for the period 2008 – 2010 sets out key objectives, actions, performance indicators and outcomes for the Probation Service as described in the table below: (Emphasis added)

Key Objective:	Key Action:	Performance Indicator:	Outcome:
We will provide policy direction to the Probation Service and monitor the performance of the Service in line with agreed objectives.	(i) Review the Community Service Scheme. (ii) Support the expansion and enhancement of Sex Offender Programmes. (iii) Develop the community-based Intensive Supervision Programmes as a response to high risk offenders.	Set of policy objectives agreed for the Probation Service and the level of progress achieved on their implementation.	(i) Enhanced Community Service Scheme. (ii) Enhanced and expanded Sex Offenders Programmes available. (iii) New community-based Intensive Supervision Programmes rolled out to key areas of need and reduction in recidivism.

Source: The Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform Strategy Statement 2008 – 2010

3.15 The table above shows this current review as one of the actions to be undertaken as part of the Strategy Statement and identifies an enhanced Community Service Scheme as one of the objectives / outcomes.

3.16 The Strategy Statement, when discussing the Irish Youth Justice Service, (See table below), states that “meeting the challenge of reducing offending behaviour, will be primarily on diversion and rehabilitation involving greater use of community-based interventions and the promotion of initiatives to deal with young people who offend.”: (Emphasis added)

Key Objective:	Key Action:	Performance Indicator:	Outcome:
We will (i) invest in the provision of safe and secure detention facilities for youth offenders, (ii) expand the number of Garda Youth Diversion Projects and other programmes and (iii) fund the implementation of a range of community sanctions as an alternative to detention and which will be operated by the Probation Service.	IYJS will (i) work with stakeholders to develop detention facilities for youth offenders, (ii) work with An Garda Síochána to increase the number of projects available nationwide in line with the Programme for Government and (iii) work with the Probation Service to ensure that the range of community sanctions is available to the Courts.	(i) Improvement in facilities for youth offenders and progression of development of new national centre for youth offenders. (ii) A phased rollout of additional projects in consultation with An Garda Síochána. (iii) Resources assigned by Probation Service and officers in place to provide support to the Courts as soon as possible.	(i) Improved accommodation for youth offenders which will facilitate their rehabilitation. (ii) Expansion of Garda Youth Diversion Projects to areas where there is need. (iii) Greater use of community-based sanctions by the Courts.

3.17 Senior Probation Officers have identified multiple benefits arising from the Community Service Scheme. These include the ability of offenders to remain in work or education, to remain within the family unit and the community, to learn some basic skills and to deliver reparation for the offence. Benefits for the community include a measure of reparation for the offence and the performance of work that would otherwise not get done.

3.18 The questionnaire based approach to assessing the achievement of objectives relies on potentially biased responses in that the views expressed are subjective and qualitative in nature. In addition there are further stakeholder groups, such as the Community itself, which could be surveyed. Ideally, the Probation Service would have clearly established objectives and performance measures for Community Service and a reporting system to monitor the achievement of those objectives on a regular basis. This issue is addressed in more detail in Section 6.

3.19 There is a need for evidence based national research to assess the impact of the community service scheme on the level of reparation to the community and how the scheme may also have additional benefit in contributing to positive change in the behaviour of offenders and their integration in the community.

3.20 There is a clear link between the features and benefits associated with the Community Service Scheme as identified by the Senior Probation Officers and the objective of the Probation Service with regard to Community Service which is to provide an alternative to a sentence of imprisonment and to achieve reparation in the Community. The Scheme was and remains consistent with the strategy of the Probation Service and the objectives remain valid. The Community Service Scheme is also consistent with the aims and objectives set out both in the Programme for Government and the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform's Strategy Statement which both highlight the ongoing and continuing importance of community based sanctions.

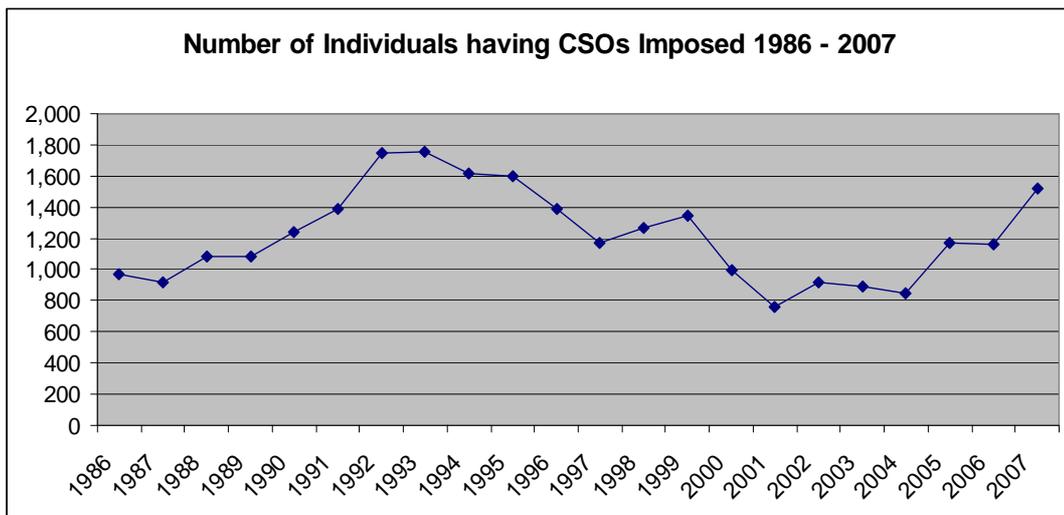
4. USAGE OF COMMUNITY SERVICE ORDERS

4.1 This section responds to elements within item 3 of the terms of reference and examines the historical level of CSOs made, the level and trend and / or variations across Court areas and the completion rate. It also presents an analysis of CSO orders by Probation Service region and examines the level of CSO usage.

NATIONAL TRENDS

4.2 Figure 4.1 below shows the number of community service orders made between 1986 and 2007. The number of CSOs peaked in 1993 at 1,759 and then declined over the following eight years to reach a level of 753 in 2001. There has been an overall increase in the number of cases each year since then, such that in 2007 the number had reached 1,519. However, the numbers reached in the early to mid – 1990s have not been matched or exceeded since that time.

Figure 4.1



USE OF COMMUNITY SERVICE ORDERS BY THE COURTS

4.3 The figures for Community Service in Table 4.1 below are based on the Annual Reports of the Courts Service. Community Service orders reported by the Courts Service on a per case basis are higher than Community Service Orders reported by the Probation Service. All offences committed by an individual that were dealt with together by the same Judge on the same day in the one Court are treated as collectively constituting just one referral by the Probation Service.

4.4 Of the indictable offences⁶ dealt with summarily in the District Court in 2007, 1,069 had a Community Service Order made whereas 9,960 had a term of imprisonment/detention imposed. Community service was used in 9.7% of indictable cases. For summary offences, CSOs were used on 1,431 occasions and 11,344 offences resulted in a term of imprisonment indicating a usage level of 11.2%. This was a reduction from the level of 15% in 2003. Overall, CSOs were used in 10.5% of District Court cases in 2007 compared to a high of 13.9% in the period 2003 – 2007. The figures are shown in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1 Community Service Orders - District Court 2003 – 2007						
District Court		Indictable				
Disposal of Cases - Extract		2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Imprisonment/Detention		7,448	7,755	8,493	9,556	9,960
Community Service		1,043	860	766	1,103	1069
Total		8,491	8,615	9,259	10,659	11,029
CSO/Total %		12.30%	10.00%	8.30%	10.30%	9.7%
District Court		Summary				
Disposal of Cases - Extract		2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Imprisonment/Detention		10,432	10,240	9,959	11,462	11,344
Community Service		1,840	1,166	1,244	1,389	1,431
Total		12,272	11,406	11,203	12,851	12,775
CSO/Total %		15.00%	10.20%	11.10%	10.80%	11.2%
District Court		Total				
Disposal of Cases - Extract		2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Imprisonment/Detention		17,880	17,995	18,452	21,018	21,304
Community Service		2,883	2,026	2,010	2,492	2,500
Total		20,763	20,021	20,462	23,510	23,804
CSO/Total %		13.90%	10.10%	9.80%	10.60%	10.5%

Source: Extracted from National Crime Council, Criminal Justice Statistics

4.5 It is recognised that a Community Service Order may not be an appropriate alternative to all sentences of imprisonment and that there may be different patterns of offence in different parts of the country leading to different usage levels on a regional basis.

The figures above are based on Court Service data and show the number of CSOs made calculated using the number of Court cases disposed of by way of a CSO.

⁶ Summary offences comprise all offences, contained in statute, for which there is no right to trial by jury. Summary offences tend to be relatively minor in nature, including such things as public order and road traffic offences as well as less serious violent and drug crimes. Indictable offences are those that carry the right to trial by jury.

4.6 As reported by the Comptroller and Auditor General in his 2004 report, “The ratio of offenders on community-based sanctions to offenders on custodial sanctions varies internationally. In England and Wales, Canada and New Zealand, there were around 3 offenders subject to orders for supervision in the community for each offender in custody in 2000. In Northern Ireland, the ratio was 2.7:1. The ratio in Finland (1.5:1) was similar to Ireland.” He concluded that the use of community-based sanctions had “remained low relative to the use of custodial sanctions, despite its increase having been recommended by an Expert Group.”

4.7 The most recent figures in the UK show that the ratio shown above for the UK remains the same. In 2006, almost three times as many individuals received a community sanction including a community service type order as were sentenced to imprisonment⁷.

Imposition of Community Service Orders by Court Areas

4.8 The number of CSOs across Court areas is presented in Table 4.3 below. The table shows that a very small number of Courts were responsible for the majority of CSOs made. The number of individuals having a CSO made by the Circuit Courts is presented as a single figure in Table 4.3.

⁷ Ministry of Justice, UK, “Sentencing Statistics 2006”

Table 4.3

Community Service Orders Imposed on Individuals by Court Venue 2006			
Court Venue	Community Service Orders	Court Venue	Community Service Orders
Chancery Street (Bridewell)	223	Millstreet	2
Cork District Court	129	Edenderry	2
		Drogheda	2
Swords	69	Baileboro	2
Kilmainham	64	Castlepollard	2
Tallaght	36	Clones	2
Limerick	35	Kilmacthomas	2
Waterford City	29	Killenaule	2
Juvenile (Smithfield)	28	Templemore	2
Dolphin House	23	Gorey	2
Richmond Hospital	54	Bannagher	2
Kilkenny	17	Birr	2
Tullamore	17	Portumna	2
Clonmel	16	Newport	2
Monaghan	14	Ennistymon	2
Cavan	12	Borrisokane	2
Balbriggan	11	Newcastlewest	2
Athenry	11	Falcarragh	2
Athlone	10	Buncrana	2
Mullingar	9	Boyle	2
Carlow	9	Spiddal	2
Portlaoise	9	Castlebar	2
Tipperary	8	Dolphin House	1
Ennis	8	Castletownbere (Tralee)	1
Dunlaoghaire	7	Schull (Tralee)	1
Wicklow District Court	7	Skibbereen	1
Thurles	7	Rathdrum	1
Letterkenny	7	Granard	1
Dundalk	6	Kildare	1
Longford	6	Navan	1
Wexford	6	Trim	1
Thomastown	6	Bray	1
Abbeyfeale	6	Cootehill	1
Mallow	5	Arva	1
Arklow	5	New Ross	1
Enniscorthy	5	Roscrea	1
Listowel	5	Castlecomer	1
Naas	4	Portarlinton	1
Carrick on Suir	4	Dungarvan	1
Kilcormac	4	Tallow	1
Cashel	4	Killaloe	1
Sligo	4	Shannon	1
Ballinasloe	4	Bruff	1
Youghal	3	Kilmallock	1
Michelstown District	3	Kilkee	1
Kanturk	3	Nenagh	1
Ballyconnell	3	Dungloe	1
Athy	3	Carndonagh	1
Cahir	3	Carrick-on-Shannon	1
Charleville	3	Ballinamore	1
Donegal	3	Gort	1
Midleton	2	Tuam	1
Cobh	2	Clifden	1
Macroom	2	Ballaghaderreen	1
Bantry (Tralee Office)	2	Circuit Court and Other	107
		Total CSO's 2006	1158

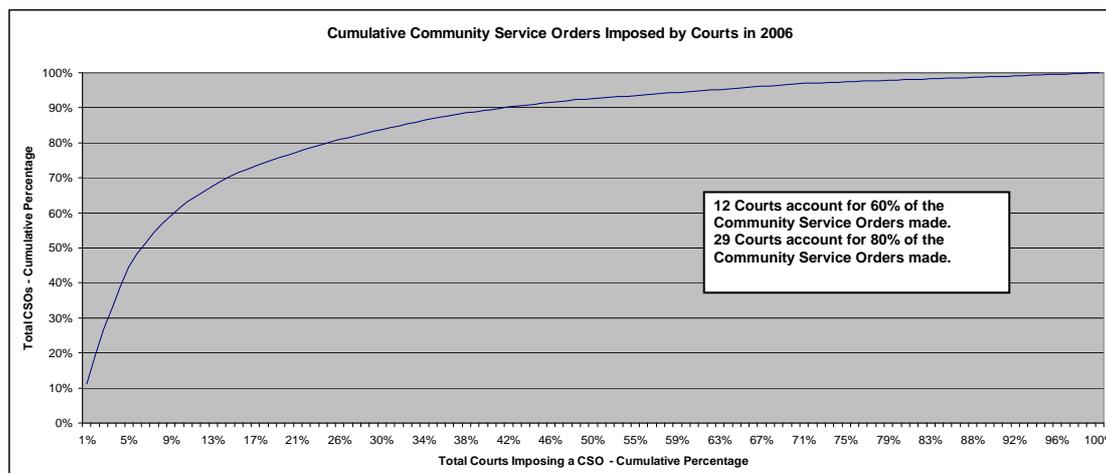
Source: Analysis of Probation Service Data

4.9 The figure of 107 shown above for Circuit Court and Other includes CSOs made in the Circuit Court (78), District Court appeals heard in the Circuit Court (19), and other non specified Court venues (10).

4.10 Figure 4.2 shows the information from Table 4.3 above presented in cumulative percentage terms. Overall, in 2006, 29 Courts accounted for 80% of

the total number of CSOs and just 12 Courts accounted for 60% of the total number of CSOs made during 2006.

Figure 4.2



Source: Analysis of Probation Service data.

4.11 The table below groups the CSOs made in the individual Courts into counties and ranks these alphabetically and in order of the number of CSOs made.

Table 4.4 Community Service Orders by County 2006 - Alphabetic		Community Service Orders by County 2006 – by Number of Orders	
Carlow	9	Dublin	516
Cavan	19	Cork	159
Clare	12	Circuit Court and Other	107
Cork	159	Tipperary	52
Donegal	16	Limerick	46
Dublin	516	Waterford	33
Galway	22	Offaly	27
Kerry	5	Kilkenny	25
Kildare	8	Galway	22
Kilkenny	25	West Meath	21
Laois	10	Cavan	19
Leitrim	2	Donegal	16
Limerick	46	Monaghan	16
Longford	7	Wicklow	14
Louth	8	Wexford	13
Mayo	2	Clare	12
Meath	2	Laois	10
Monaghan	16	Carlow	9
Offaly	27	Kildare	8
Roscommon	3	Louth	8
Sligo	4	Longford	7
Tipperary	52	Kerry	5
Waterford	33	Sligo	4
West Meath	21	Roscommon	3
Wexford	13	Leitrim	2
Wicklow	14	Mayo	2
Circuit Court and Other	107	Meath	2
Total	1,158	Total	1,158

Source: Analysis of Probation Service data.

4.13 There are large areas of the country where the use of CSOs by the Courts is very low. This may be because of the nature of the offences dealt with in these Courts, decisions by the presiding Judges, lack of a suitable community service project in the area, the unsuitability of the offenders or some other unspecified reason.

Figure 4.4 Counties in which 12 or more CSO cases were received in 2006



Source: Based on Google Maps and Analysis of Probation Service data.

Analysis of CSO Orders by Probation Service Region

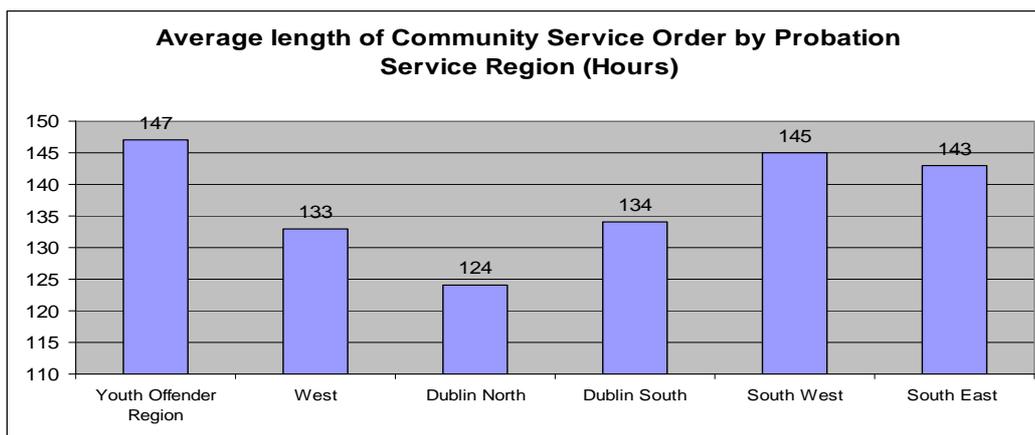
4.14 Table 4.5 below shows the variation in the use of CSOs across the regions of the Probation Service. The variations across the regions are shown more clearly when the average hours per order and the average hours per month in lieu are examined graphically and these are shown in the tables below.

Table 4.5 CSOs by Region within the Probation Service - 2006					
Region	CSO	CSO Hours	Time in Lieu months	Average Hours per Order	Average Hours per month in lieu
Youth Offender Region	22	3,225	75	147	43
West	94	12,530	454	133	28
Dublin North	280	34,840	1,298	124	27
Dublin South	309	41,550	1,585	134	26
South West	303	43,885	1,164	145	38
South East	150	21,460	595	143	36
	1,158	157,490	5,171	136	30

Source: Analysis of Probation Service data.

4.15 The average length of CSO was 136 hours for all CSOs during 2006. This is equivalent to approximately 20 days of full time attendance on Community Service for an offender. The earlier work by Walsh, (1999) found that the average length of CSO was 141 hours so there has been a slight decrease in the average length of CSO between 1999 and 2006. The average duration of CSOs made by region ranged from a high of 147 hours in the Youth Offender Region to a low of 124 hours in Dublin North. This is shown graphically in Figure 4.5 below. There is no apparent reason for this difference although it may be that the Courts in the two areas have a tendency to consider a CSO for different types of offence or that the mix of offences varies across the regions.

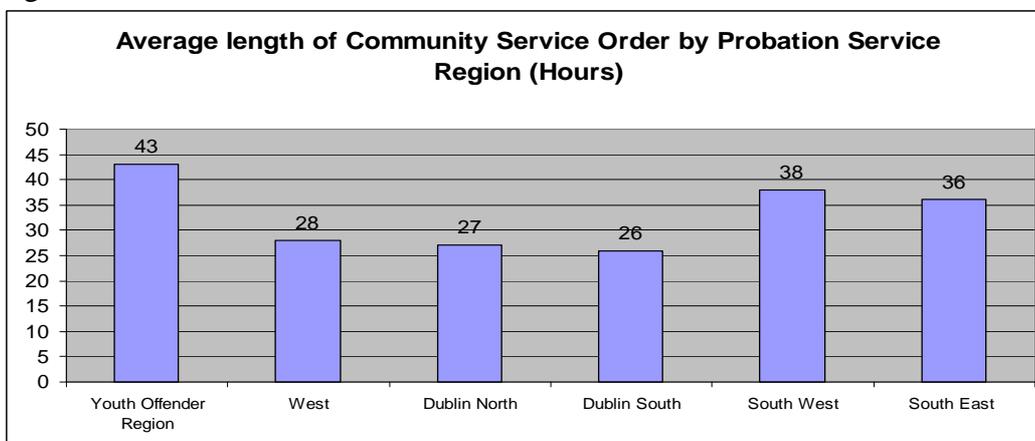
Figure 4.5



Source: Analysis of Probation Service data.

4.16 The equivalence rate, meaning the number of hours of Community Service divided by the number of months of the alternative sentence of imprisonment, averaged 30 hours during 2006. This is broadly in line with Walsh's earlier work which found the average equivalence rate at that time to be 27 hours. While it might be expected that this rate would be consistent across regions, the equivalence rate ranged widely from a high of 43 hours per month in the Youth Offender Region to 26 in Dublin South.

Figure 4.6



Source: Analysis of Probation Service data.

4.17 Across the Probation Service regions there are differences in the average length of CSO made made which ranges from a high of 147 hours to a low of 124 hours and the average hours imposed for each month of alternative sentence (the equivalence rate) which ranges from 26 hours to 43 hours.

4.18 The variation in the usage of CSOs across Court Areas, the average length of CSO made and the average hours per month of alternative sentence all have

implications for the future development and operation of community service at a national and regional level. Greater consistency of usage and imposition of CSOs, within the discretion of the individual Judge, could be achieved by regularly providing Judges with information on norms used by their colleagues in other regions regarding the use of community service as an alternative to prison

ANALYSIS BY CATEGORY OF OFFENCE

4.19 The table below shows the number of CSOs made during 2006.

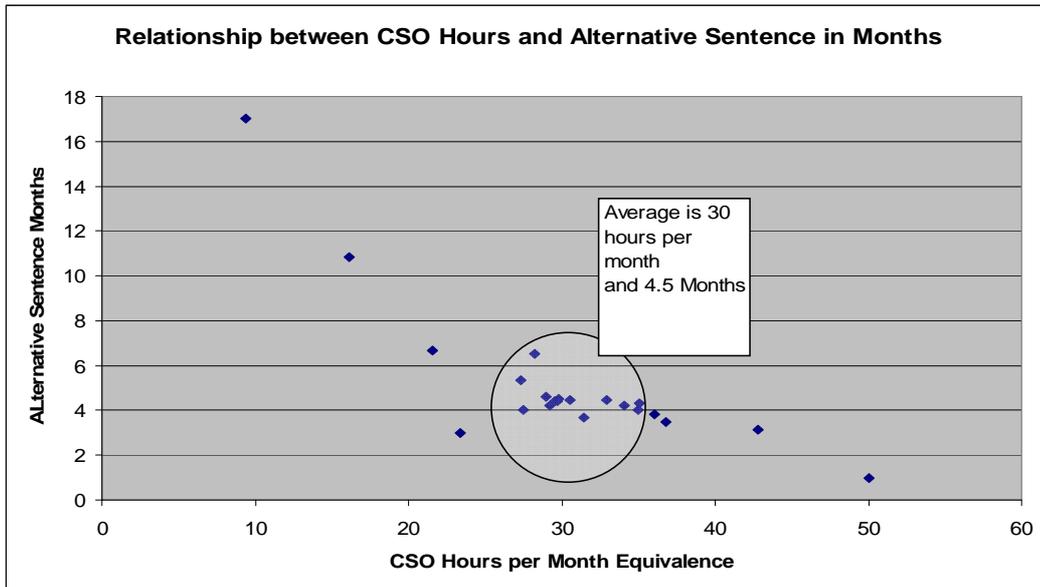
Table 4.6 Analysis by Category of Offence – Duration in Hours / Time in Lieu in Months						
Category	Hours Duration	Time in Lieu (months)	CSOs	Average CSO Hours	Average Alternative Sentence Months	Average Hours per Month in Lieu
Public Order	39,990	1088	312	128	3.5	37
RTA	24,985	734	174	144	4.2	34
Theft	21,335	719	162	132	4.4	30
Drugs	15,785	732	110	144	6.7	22
Assault	15,310	561	105	146	5.3	27
Criminal Damage	6,555	220	49	134	4.5	30
MPV	6,110	211	46	133	4.6	29
Bail	4,090	140	33	124	4.2	29
Handling	4,275	130	29	147	4.5	33
Burglary	3,660	120	27	136	4.4	31
Trespass	3,565	99	26	137	3.8	36
Weapons	2,750	93	21	131	4.4	30
Fraud	2,075	66	18	115	3.7	31
Obstruction	2,400	85	13	185	6.5	28
Miscellaneous	1,825	52	12	152	4.3	35
Assault On Garda	1,070	25	8	134	3.1	43
Firearms	1,050	65	6	175	10.8	16
Begging	100	2	2	50	1.0	50
Driving causing death	140	4	1	140	4.0	35
Endangerment	160	17	1	160	17.0	9
Harassment	110	4	1	110	4.0	28
Litter	80	1	1	80	1.0	80
Sexual Assault	70	3	1	70	3.0	23
Totals	157,490	5,171	1,158	136	4.5	30

Source: Analysis of Probation Service data.

4.20 Figure 4.7 presents the data from the table above and shows the relationship between the number of hours ordered and the alternative custodial sentence in months. For each category of offence, the average number of hours and the average alternative sentence imposed are plotted. Each data point corresponds to a particular offence category as set out above. The average number of hours ordered for Community Service is 136 and the alternative average sentence of

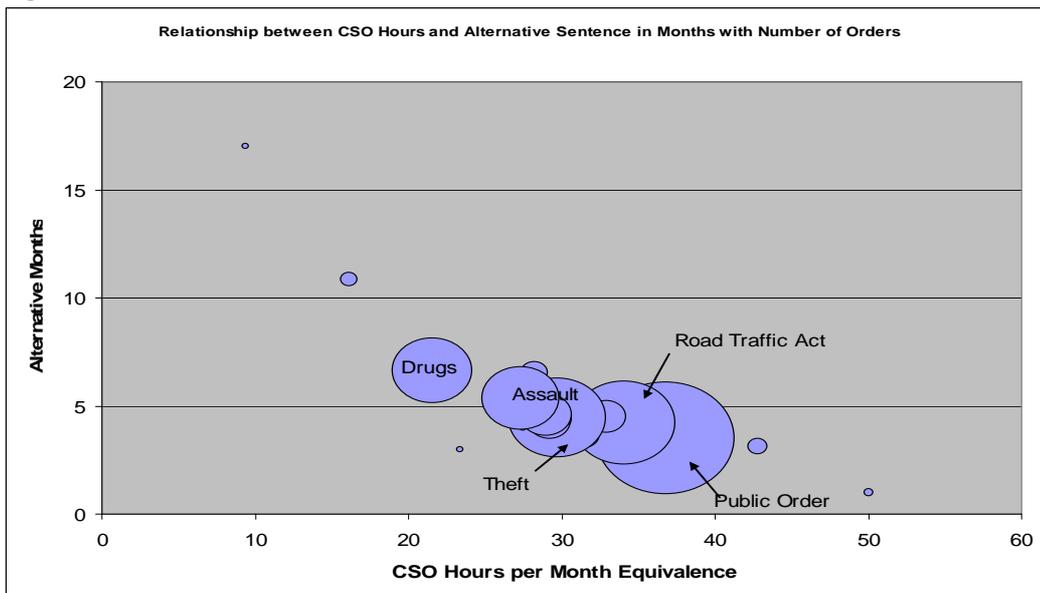
imprisonment is 4.5 months. Overall, the equivalence rate per month of imprisonment is 30 hours.

Figure 4.7



Source: Analysis of Probation Service data.

Figure 4.8



Source: Analysis of Probation Service data.

4.21 Figure 4.8 above is based on the same data as Figure 4.7 but in this case the size of the circle represents the number of individuals receiving a CSO. This makes it easier to see the relative importance of certain categories of offence.

4.22 Certain types of offence appear to attract a higher number of CSO hours. For example, Public Order type offences, for which 312 CSOs were made on

individuals in 2006, had an average alternative prison sentence of 3.5 months and attracted on average 128 hours community service with an average equivalence of 37 hours. On the other hand, CSOs made on individuals related to drug offences, of which there were 110 in 2006, resulted in an average alternative sentence of 6.7 months, 144 hours community service and an average equivalence of 27 hours per month. There is thus considerable variation in the application of Community Service Orders across the different offence types.

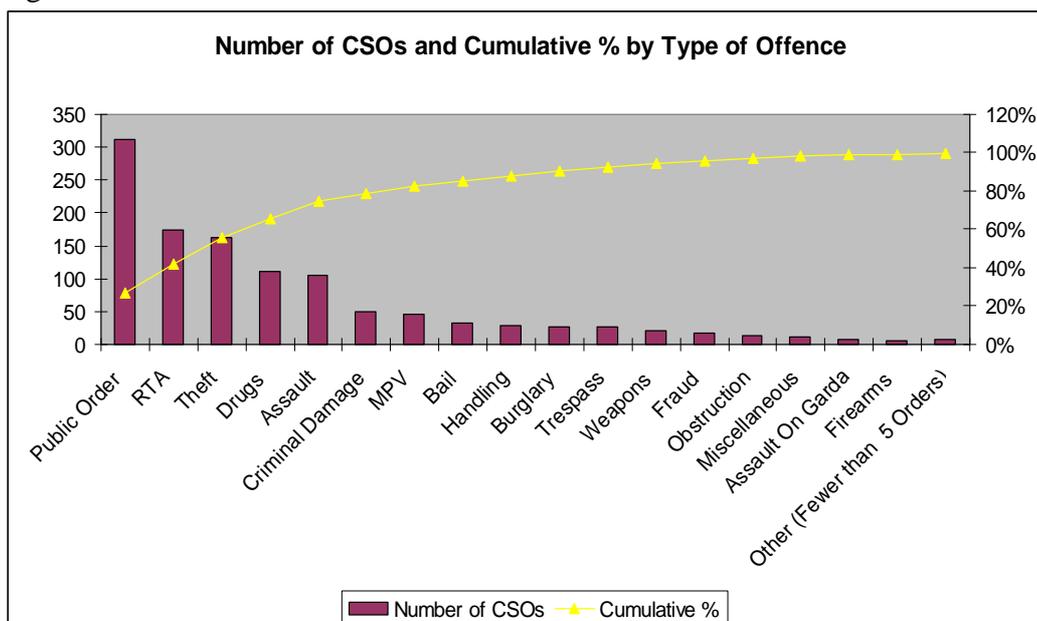
4.23 The Probation Service should regularly circulate statistical data on the imposition of Community Service Orders to the judiciary and other interested parties. This may need to be done in conjunction with the Courts Service.

Table 4.7 Number of CSOs by Category of Offence 2006			
Category	Number of Community Service Orders	%	Cumulative Percentage
Public Order	312	27%	27%
RTA	174	15%	42%
Theft	162	14%	56%
Drugs	110	9%	65%
Assault	105	9%	74%
Criminal Damage	49	4%	79%
MPV	46	4%	83%
Bail	33	3%	86%
Handling	29	3%	88%
Burglary	27	2%	90%
Trespass	26	2%	93%
Weapons	21	2%	94%
Fraud	18	2%	96%
Obstruction	13	1%	97%
Miscellaneous	12	1%	98%
Assault On Garda	8	1%	99%
Firearms	6	1%	99%
Other (Fewer than 5 Orders)	6	1%	100%
Total	1,158	100%	100%

Source: Analysis of Probation Service data.

4.24 The table above and the figure below show the number of individuals receiving a CSO by type of offence. It shows that Public Order, Road Traffic Offences, Drug, Theft, Assault and Criminal Damage type charges accounted for almost 80% of all CSOs in 2006.

Figure 4.9



Source: Analysis of Probation Service data.

COMPLETION RATE

4.25 The number of CSOs that are completed compared to the total number of CSOs made is referred to as the completion rate. Failure to complete a CSO is generally the result of not attending on site at the appointed times or failure to complete the required hours within the time period allowed. Where offenders do not comply with the terms of the CSO a series of warning letters are issued and if the offender still does not comply he/she will be returned to Court. The judge may give additional time to complete the CSO or may revoke the CSO and send the offender to prison.

4.26 From the questionnaires returned by Senior Probation Officers the completion rate for those successfully completing community service orders was indicated to be on average 85%. This ranges from a high of 100% to a low of 60% with most respondents indicating a rate of 80 – 90% completion. This qualitative assessment is similar to that found by the review carried out by the Comptroller and Auditor General in 2004 where the completion rate was found to be 83%.

4.27 The quantitative information to assess the rate of completion proved to be difficult to extract from the Case Tracking System in the Probation Service. A manual data gathering and review of Community Service revocations in 2006 was carried out by the Probation Service to establish a reliable and evidence-based

Community Service summonses and revocations report for a sample period. This manual data gathering and review of Community Service revocations identified a revocation and summons level of 18% of total referrals for the period. This is equivalent to a completion rate of c.82%.

4.28 The data available suggests that the successful completion rate for Community Service Orders is in a range of 80 – 85%. Given that dealing with non compliance and revocations is a time consuming task involving Senior Probation Officers, Probation Officers, the Gardaí and the Courts it would be of benefit to ensure that there is a rapid and effective process in place to deal with revocations when they occur. As part of the survey carried out, most Judges indicated that they were in favour of a rapid commencement of a Community Service Order and speedy return to Court for non compliance.

4.29 The number of CSOs when expressed as a percentage of sentenced committals shows a decline in recent years. Community Service is not being used to the extent that it has been in the past and is possibly being used for only a proportion of those offenders to whom it could apply. It is the desire of the Probation Service to increase considerably the usage of Community Service Orders

4.30 The use of Community Service Orders is low both in percentage terms and by comparison to the absolute number of CSOs made during the early 1990s. While the presiding Judge will decide on the use of the appropriate sanction in the circumstances of the specific case and taking into account the gravity of the offence, there are several thousand cases decided each year in the District Court where a sentence of imprisonment is imposed and where a Community Service Order could possibly be considered as an alternative depending on the availability of community service project work and the suitability of the offenders.

4.31 The Probation Service should adopt a strategic approach to developing Community Service on a region by region basis over a three to five year timeframe. Specific Courts that are known to utilise Community Service should be identified and a programme put in place to sustain and increase the number of offenders dealt with by means of Community Service. This approach will also need to plan for the likely pool of offenders, potential community service orders

and the level of community options for Community Service on a region by region basis. In a later phase the Courts that do not make use of CSOs at present should be identified, the potential levels of CSOs and the availability of community service work identified and appropriate arrangements put in place. This approach would mean that different strategies and implementation plans appropriate to location and need would be considered to accommodate the differing demographic characteristics, the wider dispersal of offenders and Court practices.

5. THE OPERATION OF COMMUNITY SERVICE ORDERS

5.1 This section presents the information gathered as part of the examination of the operation of Community Service including the responses to the questionnaires issued to the Judiciary, Senior Probation Officers and Community Service Supervisors. It also presents the cost of supervision of the scheme, outlines the costs associated with the alternative of imprisonment and provides suggestions to improve efficiency and effectiveness. It deals primarily with item 4 of the terms of reference.

VIEWS FROM THE JUDICIARY

5.2 As part of the methodology a questionnaire was circulated to all the Judges of the Circuit and District Courts to obtain their views on a range of issues associated with Community Service. In total 100 questionnaires were circulated with the agreement and assistance of the Presidents of the Circuit Court and the District Court. The overall response rate to the questionnaire was 29%. The analysis was carried out on the total responses and, separately, on the responses from the Judges of the District Court because Community Service Orders are more prevalent in the District Court. Seventeen responses were received from District Court Judges. Based on a total of 61 District Court Judges this represents a response rate of 28%. Ten responses were received from Circuit Court Judges out of a total of 31 judges representing a response rate of 32%. (The questionnaire was circulated on an anonymous basis and in two cases the responses did not identify the Court involved and were excluded from the sub analysis at District Court Level.

5.3 Given the relatively low level of response there is a risk that there may be an element of bias in the responses outlined below. This could arise because those Judges who are more supportive or positively inclined towards the use of Community Service may have been more likely to respond than those who are not so positively inclined. The responses below should be read with this possibility in mind.

5.4 Respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement or disagreement with a series of statements concerning Community Service. The results are set out in Figure 5.1 below.

5.5 Of those responding, there was a high level of support for community service with over 95% of the Judges stating that they were positively inclined to using Community Service Orders. There was also a relatively high level of support (65%) for using Community Service Orders more generally and not just as an alternative to a custodial sentence. Twenty two of the Judges (76%) strongly agreed or agreed that the upper limit of 240 hours should be increased to make a Community Service Order more useful as an instrument for more serious offences. There was a lower level of agreement in relation to reducing the lower limit of 40 hours for Community Service Orders with 48% in agreement and a similar percentage being unsure or disagreeing⁸.

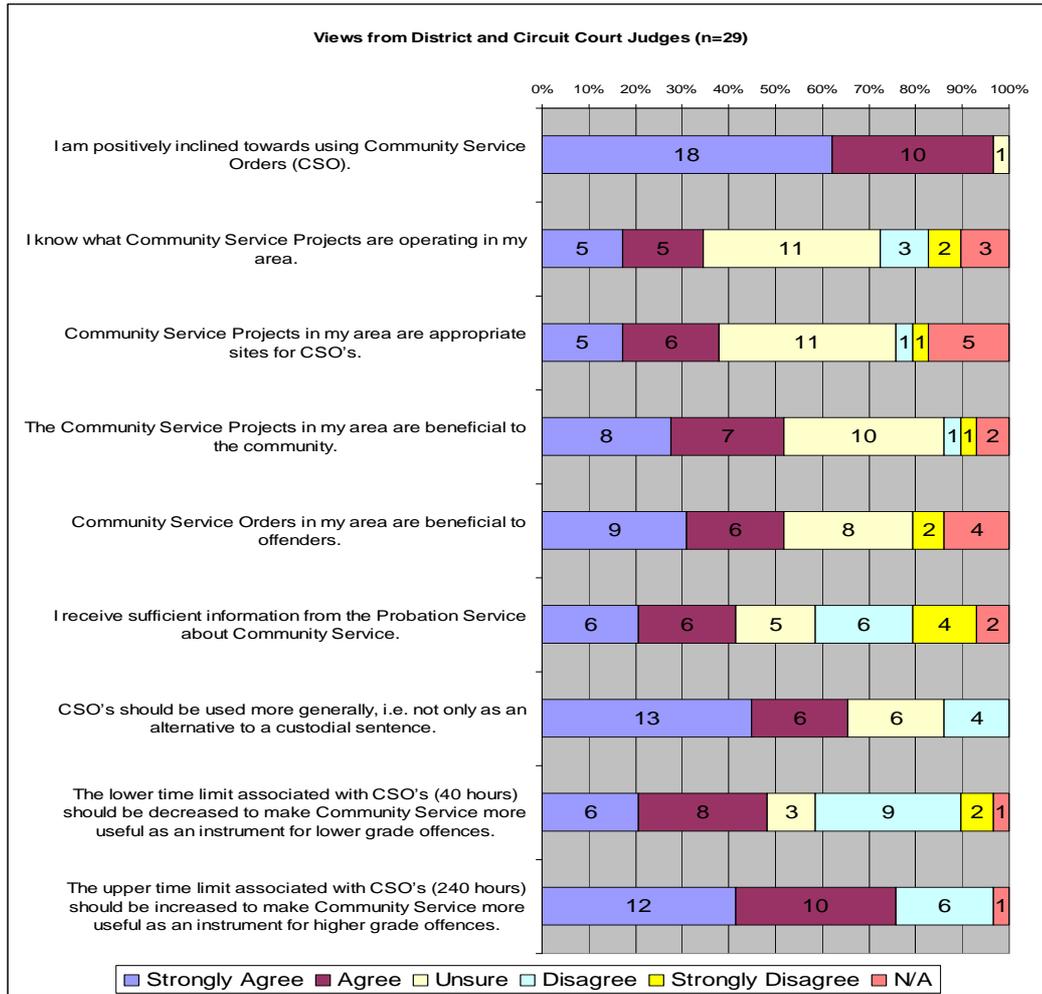
5.6 Overall, a small majority of Judges considered that Community Service Orders were beneficial to the community and to the offender (52% in each case) although a large number answered that they were unsure or did not know whether they were beneficial.

5.7 Eleven Judges stated that they did not know the Community Service projects operating in their area. Eleven Judges were also unsure about whether the projects were suitable sites for CSOs. Ten Judges were unsure if the projects were beneficial to the community and eight Judges were unsure if the projects were beneficial to the offender.

5.8 The response to the statement regarding the level of information provision by the Probation Service shows that some Judges are satisfied with the level of information provision but a majority were either unsure or did not agree that the information provided is sufficient.

⁸ This value for money and policy review of the Community Service Scheme is concerned with reviewing the scheme as currently operated within the terms of the 1983 legislation. Some of the issues raised fall outside the terms of the existing legislation and therefore do not come within the scope of this report and are included for separate consideration in Appendix X.

Figure 5.1



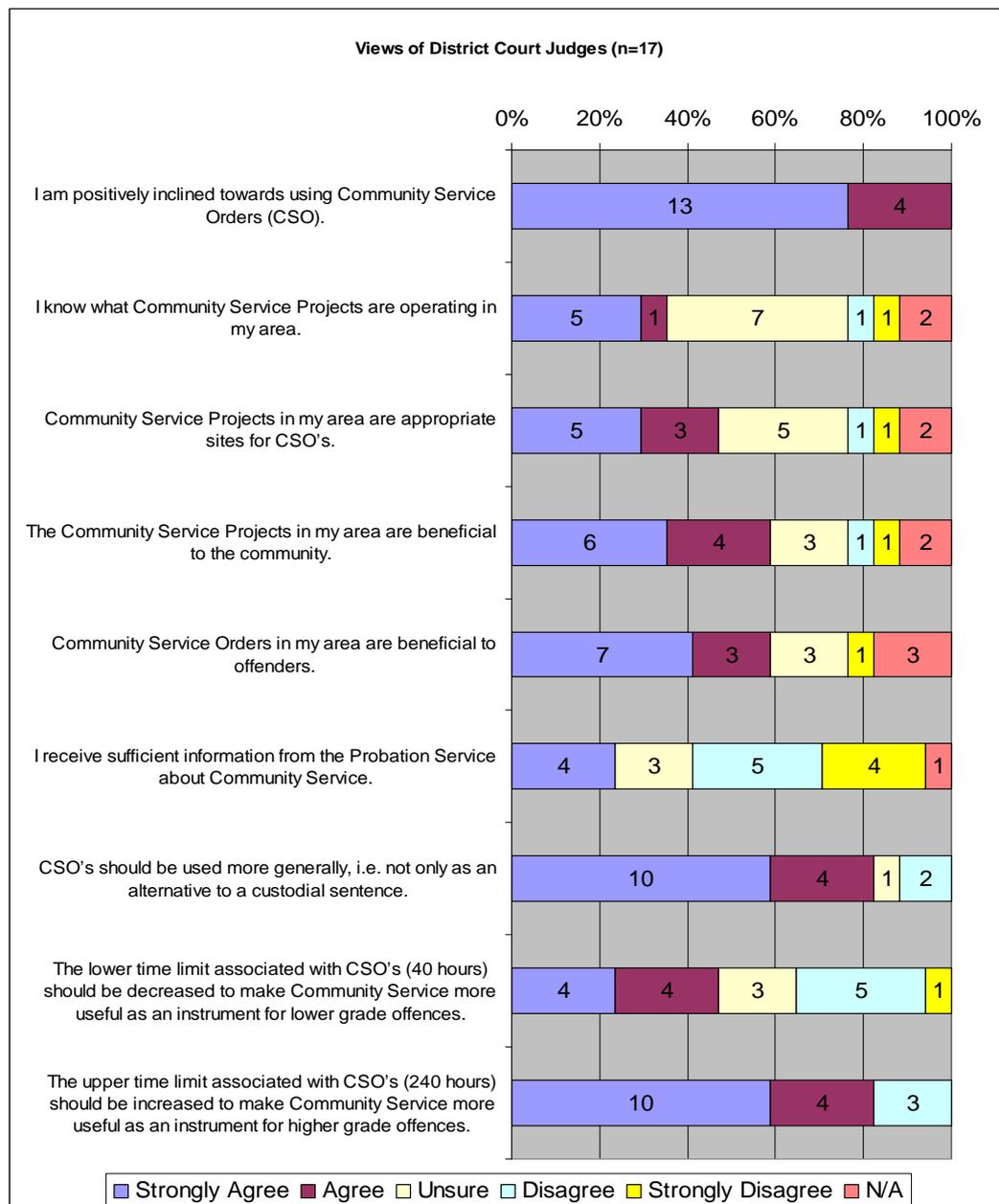
Source: Questionnaire to District and Circuit Court Judges

5.9 Views were also divided in relation to the question on whether projects in the Judge’s area were appropriate sites for community service where 38% were in agreement and 38% were unsure. The responses to the statement “I know what community service projects are operating in my area showed 34% in agreement and 38% unsure.

5.10 Some of these responses may be explained by the question related to the provision of information to Judges by the Probation Service regarding community service where only 41% agreed that they received sufficient information with the balance either unsure or disagreeing. Another explanatory factor may be that the responses included ten Judges of the Circuit Court where CSOs are used far less frequently.

5.11 Figure 5.2 below sets out the responses for the 17 Judges identified as responding from the District Court⁹. The key differences arising when the responses for District Court Judges only are extracted are that 82% were in favour of using CSOs more generally i.e. not just as an alternative to a custodial sentence, compared to 65% overall, and 82% were in favour of increasing the upper limit associated with CSOs, compared to 76% overall¹⁰.

Figure 5.2



Source: Responses by District Court Judges to Questionnaire

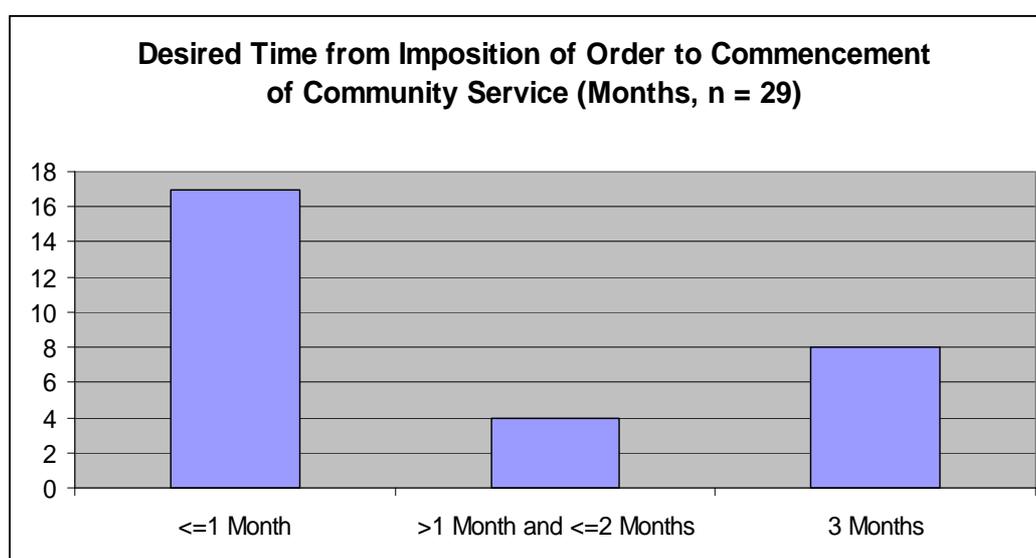
⁹ Two responses to the questionnaire received could not be identified with either Court and these responses were excluded from the analysis that differentiated between the District and Circuit Courts.

¹⁰ See footnote 10

5.12 It should be remembered that any extension in the use of Community Service for offences other than where a custodial sentence would be appropriate would have a range of additional financial and operational implications¹¹.

5.13 The Judges were also asked for their views on how long it should take from the time of imposition of a Community Service Order until the offender commences working on the project. The results are provided below and show that most Judges (17) considered that the Order should be commenced within 1 month.

Figure 5.3



Source: Responses by Judges to Questionnaire

5.14 Judges were also asked to rate on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being low and 10 being high, the following possible constraints to the use of Community Service Orders:

- Lack of Projects
- Lack of Suggestion by Solicitors or Barristers
- Lack of Suitable Offenders

5.15 The results are shown below on a weighted basis where the number of responses is weighted by the score. The highest score is seen to relate to a lack of

¹¹ For example, the Fines Bill, 2009 introduces a number of measures to provide non-custodial alternatives to the courts for dealing with persons who default on the payment of a fine. These include allowing the courts to impose a community service order rather than a custodial sentence for the non-payment of a fine. It is not proposed to use community service as an alternative to a fine.

suitable offenders which was seen as a medium sized constraint. However, in overall terms, the factors suggested were not considered to be significant barriers to the use of Community Service Orders.

5.16 The average scores, out of a maximum of 10, were:

- Lack of Projects 4.6
- Lack of Suggestion by Solicitors and Barristers 4.5
- Lack of Suitable Offenders 5.1.

Score (1 Low - 10 High)	Table 5.1 Constraints on the use of Community Service Orders (Number of Mentions)		
	Lack of Projects	Lack of Suggestion	Lack of Offenders
1	5	6	2
2	0	3	2
3	2	1	2
4	2	0	2
5	5	4	8
6	5	3	2
7	0	2	0
8	1	3	2
9	0	1	1
10	2	1	2
No Response	7	5	6
Responses	22	24	23
Total	29	29	29

Source: Responses by Judges to Questionnaire

Efficiency and Effectiveness.

5.17 The comments below were extracted from the responses by the Judges when asked how they considered that community service could be improved:

- Clear communication between the client, the Probation Service and the Court;
- Solicitors and barristers should be more au-fait with the details on the ground day to day and should suggest it more often;
- More probation officers, more community service and, if breach, harsher penalties;
- Should not only be used as an alternative to prison¹²;

¹² Footnote 10

- Worthy projects should be selected rather than just choosing one for the sake of the CSO;
- More expeditious assessment of suitability;
- More publicity of the availability of projects and acceptance by project providers of the fact that 'offenders' will be engaged on their projects. There is reluctance on providers at present to accept the 'risk';
- Reasonable projects or work;
- More and different schemes. Sometime the punishment should fit the crime;
- Speedier report once decision is made to canvass a CSO;
- CSO report should identify choice of projects;
- Immediate and readily available projects;
- It's simply there as an option to give a deserving offender a punishment other than prison;
- Not just as an alternative to custody and decreased lower limits and increased upper limits¹³; and
- The Probation Service needs more resources.

Dealing with non compliance by offenders

5.18 Judges were asked what would help to improve dealing with non compliance by offenders and most Judges favoured an early return to Court for any breach with just over 50% favouring this approach. Other suggestions included that a warrant should be issued for the offender, that the original sentence should be doubled, that the Garda and the Probation Officer should be in Court and that the CSO should be part or all of a suspended sentence with one Judge suggesting that the present system worked well.

Other Comments from Judges

- Generally I find the system a good one but could do with more manpower;
- Would greatly appreciate if there was a possibility that the Probation Service could provide a suitable charitable organisation or services to

¹³ Footnote 10

which the Court could refer defendants to do voluntary work instead of applying a conviction;

- I am in favour of CSO and would like to see more positive publicity about it. I would use CSO's more often if the alternative was not always a custodial penalty¹⁴;
- More information should be provided regarding the scope of Community Service and its availability;
- Apart from the fact that I receive CS reports and make CS orders, I receive no other information;
- Judges need more information on the type of work involved and how many places are available and other resources available so that they would be encouraged and enabled to use the scheme more as an effective alternative to prison;
- CSOs provide a great alternative to custodial sentences and should be used more often, if appropriate;
- I believe strongly in CSO. Well considered in my area; and
- CSO should be available as an alternative to a fine. It is too restrictive that CSO is only available as an alternative to gaol¹⁵.

5.19 The responses to the survey of Circuit and District Court Judges indicate that responding Judges are positively inclined to use Community Service Orders. Information on the impact achieved by the Community Service Scheme both for offenders and for communities, at a national and local level, along with specific information on schemes operating locally should be made available to Judges by the Probation Service.

VIEWS FROM THE COMMUNITY SERVICE SUPERVISORS

5.20 A further questionnaire was circulated to the 75 supervisors¹⁶ employed by the Probation Service who manage the sites operated as part of the Community Service Scheme in order to obtain information on the operational aspects of the

¹⁴ Footnote 10

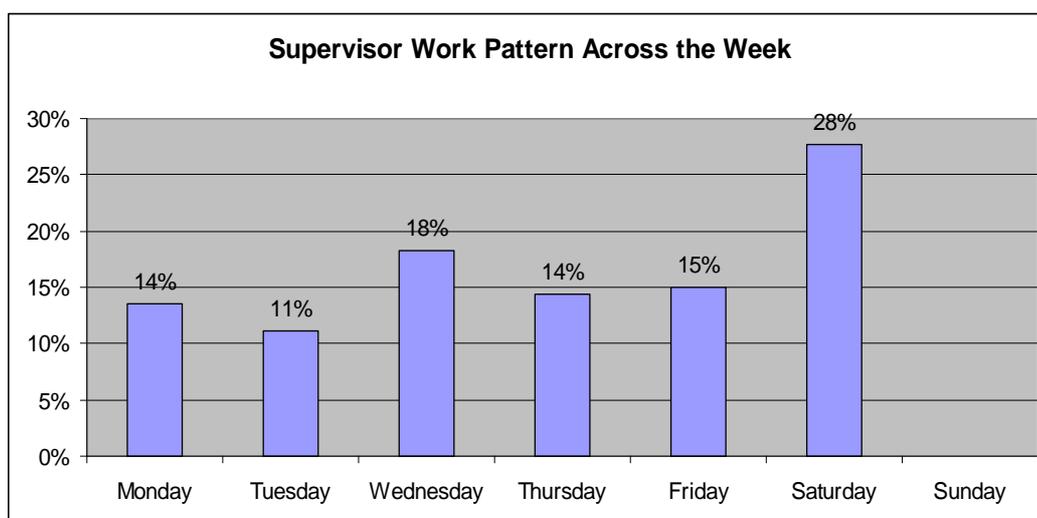
¹⁵ Footnote 10

¹⁶ While there are 75 supervisors engaged in total, most of these work on a part time basis. The average number of hours each supervisor works in a week is 24, equivalent to a three day week.

scheme. Forty two completed questionnaires were received representing a response rate of 56%.

5.21 Figure 5.2 below shows the pattern of work across the week for the supervisors responding to the survey. Most supervisors work on a contracted hours basis with contracted hours ranging from 8 to 40 hours per week. Saturday working is attractive for offenders who are in employment and the figure shows that 28% of all contracted hours for supervisors are scheduled for Saturday.

Figure 5.4



Source: Responses by Community Service Supervisors to Questionnaire

5.22 Overall, there were 1,040 hours per week reported in the survey for the 42 supervisors responding or an average of 25 hours per week each. The supervisors spend the majority of their time involved in direct supervision of offenders on site (84%) and administration tasks (8%), with a small amount of time spent on the induction of new offenders, travelling between sites and identifying new work opportunities along with other tasks such as collecting materials. The table below analyses the hours included in the returned questionnaires

Time spent on Activities	Hours	%
Administration e.g. keeping time records / meeting SPOs	87.25	8%
Traveling to and between Projects	22.75	2%
Direct Supervision of offenders on site	874	84%
Induction of new CS Offenders	36.75	4%
Identifying new work opportunities	20	2%
Total	1040.75	100%

Source: Responses by Community Service Supervisors to Questionnaire

5.23 Table 5.3 below shows the profile of utilisation of spaces available for all responding supervisors for a typical week. It can be seen that the utilisation profile closely approximates the supervisor contracted hours profile from Figure 5.3 above.

5.24 Supervisors were asked to provide the number of places filled and available across the week for each site they supervised. These numbers are shown in absolute numbers and in percentage terms across the week. For the supervisors responding, capacity utilisation on community service projects across the week amounts to 60% indicating that there is an additional capacity available of up to 40%. The level of capacity utilisation ranges from 55% on Tuesday and Friday to 70% on Saturday which as might be expected is the busiest day.

Capacity utilisation is calculated by assessing, for each project that was in operation during the week, the number of filled places and the number of additional places available as reported by the supervisors. The figures above and in the table below are based on this analysis¹⁷.

Table 5.3 Capacity Utilisation			
Day	Places Filled	Remaining Places Available	Capacity Utilisation as a % of Total
Monday	59	47	56%
Tuesday	46	38	55%
Wednesday	67	53	56%
Thursday	64	46	58%
Friday	54	45	55%
Saturday	134	57	70%
Total	424	286	60%

Source: Responses by Community Service Supervisors to Questionnaire

5.25 The aggregate level of capacity utilisation when all supervisors are taken into account is lower than the figures shown above. There are 75 full and part time supervisors equivalent to 55 full time supervisors. Each full time equivalent can

¹⁷ There is an agreement in place that the maximum number of offenders to be supervised per supervisor will not exceed 6 offenders. Where the supervisors reported an aggregate number of filled and unfilled places of fewer than 6, the questionnaires were further analysed. This analysis increased the number of unfilled places somewhat such that the level of capacity utilisation fell to 58%. Finally, supervisors were also asked to report the number of offenders on site on the last working day and this showed a level of capacity utilisation of 51%.

provide approximately 1,920 supervisory hours per annum and supervise a maximum of 6 offenders at any one time. Therefore, each full time equivalent can supervise up to 11,520 community service hours in a 12 month period. The number of individual receiving a CSO in 2007 was 1,519 and it is assumed that the average number of hours remained at 136 per order. The number of hours to be supervised in 2007 is therefore estimated to amount to 206,584. The 55 full time equivalent supervisors had capacity to supervise up to 633,600 community service hours. The overall level of utilisation is therefore estimated to amount to 33%.

5.26 While it is unlikely that all of the additional capacity can be utilised because of the difficulties associated with the regional dispersal of offenders and projects, non attendance, sickness etc. it should be possible to improve the capacity utilisation significantly. For example, assuming that there are 1,500 Community Service Orders in a year and using the higher level of capacity utilisation as shown above of 60%, the potential exists to increase the throughput of Community Service Orders up to a theoretical level of 2,500 per annum without using additional supervisors or projects or incurring additional costs. This could be achieved within existing supervisory agreements and would mean that supervisors were supervising the maximum number of offenders at all times. This indicates the potential to increase throughput within existing resources.

5.27 The above is an estimate based on certain assumptions, including, most critically, the number of offenders that can be supervised at any time and available locations. Certain sites may only be suitable for a smaller number of offenders or the work involved may only require a certain number of offenders. However, the figures indicate that, operating at full capacity, either three times as many offenders could be supervised or that one third of the existing number of full time equivalents could provide the necessary supervisory capacity. The figures also highlight the importance of identifying and selecting sites and projects that will ensure maximum utilisation of supervisory capacity.

5.28 There is a mismatch between the location of supervisors and the number of CSOs arising on a county basis meaning that there are areas where there is a high excess of supervisory capacity available compared to the supervisory requirement.

The table below sets out the estimated number of supervisory hours available by county. The table is illustrative only because some supervisors are based in one county but work in a number of counties. Therefore some county figures have been grouped together. In addition, the Circuit Court made CSOs have all been allocated to Dublin whereas some of these will be supervised in other counties.

5.29 Counties which have a small number of CSOs still have a significant supervisory capacity available. Such counties include Donegal, Kerry, Mayo, Sligo and Wexford.

Table 5.4 Supervisor Capacity Utilisation by County			
County	CSO Hours 2007 Estimated	Supervisory Capacity Available	Utilisation Level
Cavan/Monaghan/Leitrim/Roscommon	7,136	16,128	44.2%
Cork	28,365	50,688	56.0%
Donegal	2,854	23,040	12.4%
Dublin/Louth/Meath/Wicklow/Circuit Courts	115,423	263,808	43.8%
Galway	3,925	20,736	18.9%
Kerry	892	11,520	7.7%
Kildare/Carlow	3,033	13,824	21.9%
Kilkenny	4,460	16,128	27.7%
Laois/Offaly	6,601	20,736	31.8%
Limerick/Clare	10,347	66,816	15.5%
Mayo	357	13,824	2.6%
Sligo	714	4,608	15.5%
Tipperary	9,277	27,648	33.6%
Waterford	5,887	16,128	36.5%
West Meath/Longford	4,995	20,736	24.1%
Wexford	2,319	23,040	10.1%
Total	206,584	609,408	33.9%

5.30 Reducing supervisory capacity would achieve savings but would also have operational and financial implications:

- Supervisors are distributed throughout the country and if their numbers were to be reduced it is unlikely that the offenders assigned to them at the time could be readily reassigned to other supervisors in other areas.
- New offenders in that area would likewise find it difficult to obtain work on a Community Service Scheme and be more likely to be imprisoned at a higher cost.

5.31 Capacity utilisation expressed in terms of filled places as a percentage of total places available should be a key management tool and performance indicator for

community service and reported at local, regional and national level on a regular basis.

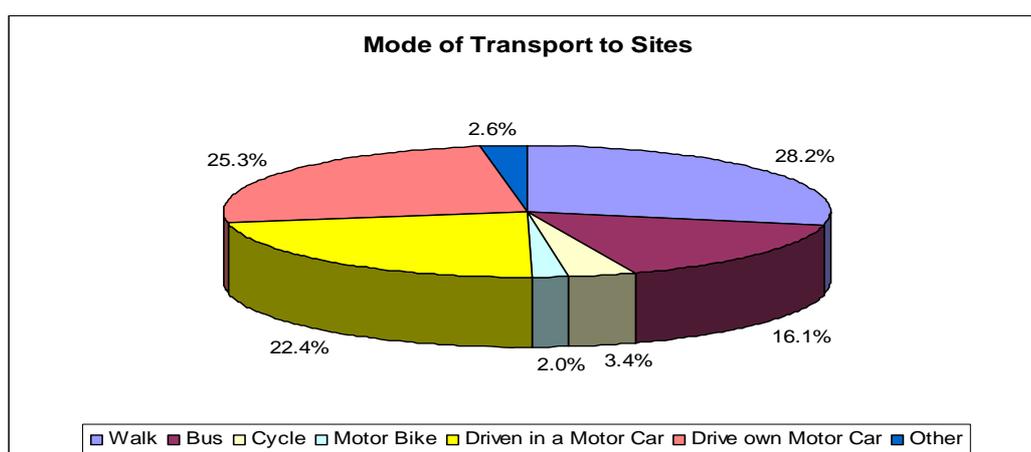
Transport to Sites.

5.32 The table below shows the mode of transport for offenders travelling to sites. The largest single category of offenders, 28%, walk to the site, 25% drive their own car while 22% are driven. Combined, these two latter categories amount to 47%, which, when combined with those who are in a position to walk and travel by motor cycle, account for 76% of all offenders. The remaining 24% mainly travel by public transport or cycle which could present a problem if alternative means of travel are not available particularly in rural areas or where sites are remote.

Table 5.5 Travel Mode to Sites		
Mode	Number	%
Walk	98	28.2%
Bus	56	16.1%
Cycle	12	3.4%
Motor Bike	7	2.0%
Driven in a Motor Car	78	22.4%
Drive own Motor Car	88	25.3%
Other	9	2.6%
Total	348	

Source: Responses by Community Service Supervisors to Questionnaire

Figure 5.5

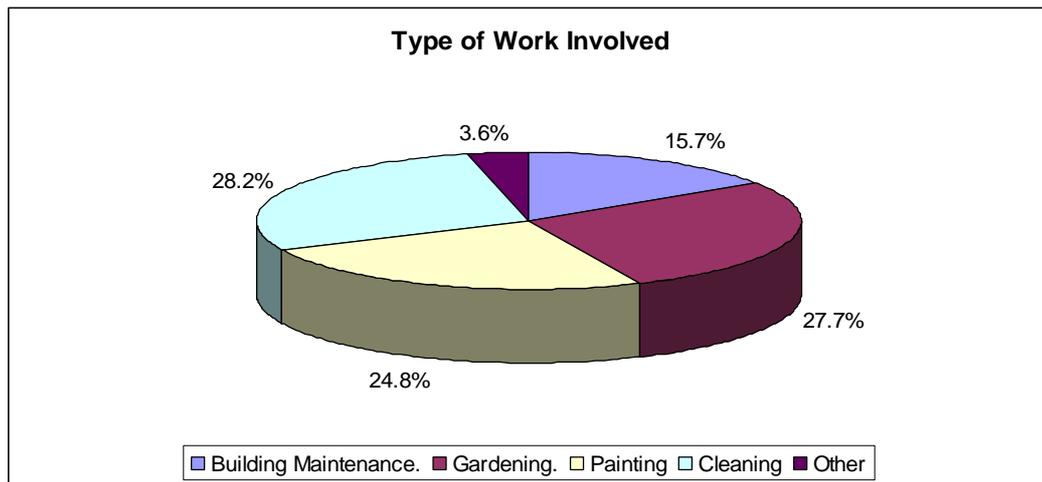


Source: Responses by Community Service Supervisors to Questionnaire

5.33 The type of work involved includes garden maintenance and cleaning of local community areas or public spaces, painting and graffiti removal. The chart and table below shows the number of offenders by type of work carried out included

in the questionnaire returns¹⁸. The category of “Other” includes some more skilled trades such as plumbing, tiling, and plastering. In general the work is low skilled work and performed outdoors with a minimum of equipment. The selection of suitable project types for community service is important both for the supervision of the projects and for the level of engagement by offenders.

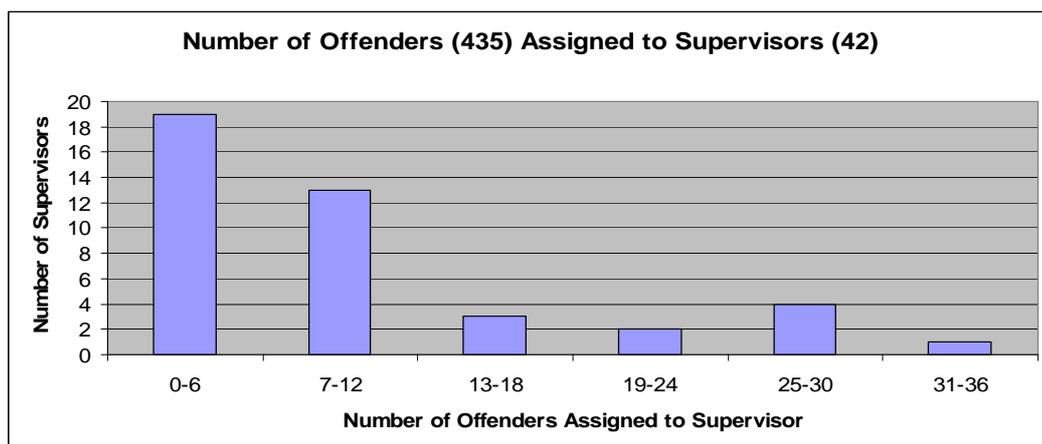
Figure 5.6



Building Maintenance.	Gardening.	Painting	Cleaning	Other
69	122	109	124	16
15.7%	27.7%	24.8%	28.2%	3.6%

Source: Responses by Community Service Supervisors to Questionnaire

Figure 5.7 Offenders per Supervisor



Source: Responses to Community Service Supervisor Questionnaire

¹⁸ 42 completed questionnaires were received which dealt with approximately 430 offenders with some minor inconsistencies between the number of offenders for which timesheets are maintained (435), the number of places filled (424) and the number of offenders analysed into work categories (440).

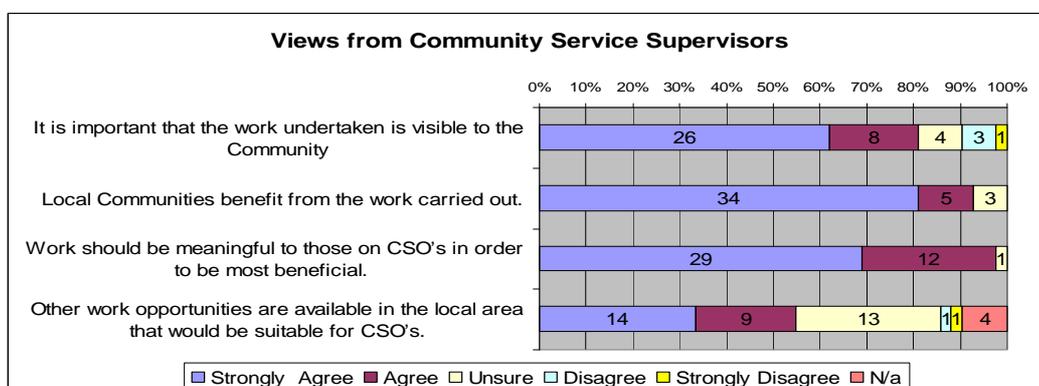
5.34 The supervisors responding were responsible for 435 offenders in total or approximately 10 each on average. This figure of ten offenders refers to the total number of offenders assigned to a supervisor of which a maximum of six are scheduled for supervision on any individual day. Nineteen of the forty two supervisors have six or fewer offenders in total to supervise. Of these nineteen, ten supervisors have fewer than five offenders assigned. This, when combined with the pattern of contracted hours for supervisors across the week shows the very low scale intensity of the work being carried out. As discussed earlier there is significant additional capacity available within existing resources to provide supervision for considerably more offenders.

5.35 Supervisors considered that it was important that the work undertaken should be visible to the community. This is not to suggest that the offenders themselves should be put “on display” but that the outcome of their work should be known and recognised as resulting from Community Service.

5.36 Supervisors also considered that the local communities benefited from the work carried out and that the work carried out should be meaningful to those on CSOs in order to be most beneficial.

5.37 There was a lower level of agreement in relation to the availability of other work opportunities in the local area that would be suitable for CSOs. Approximately 50% agreed that there were other opportunities available with the balance either undecided or not knowing.

Figure 5.8



Source: Responses to Community Service Supervisors Questionnaire

How can Community Service be made more Efficient and Effective

5.38 The Community Service Supervisors were asked how community service could be made more efficient and effective. Listed below is a selection of the responses:

- More public awareness of projects in communities;
- Better training for Community Service;
- Dedicated management team for Community Service;
- Supervisors to contact offenders when they are not turning up;
- Make sure sites are suitable for all weathers so not sending people home;
- The use of mobile phones on site by offenders should be strictly controlled. Offenders should not be allowed mobile phones when on community service;
- The supervisors should have a better introduction and knowledge of offender;
- The service could be sold to the public in a more positive way if it could engage in commercial contracts;
- Include some element of education - numeracy / literacy;
- Support offenders after they have finished their community service;
- Community Service should have a supervisor to call to sites and talk to supervisors instead of a Probation Officer;
- Become more flexible and mobile to access work that is available in the country;
- Have designated centres for Community Service;
- Organised transport is a major problem in rural areas;
- Suitable accommodation provided on site with toilet and washing facilities as well as space for paperwork. Eliminate sites that are difficult to manage i.e. clients too scattered;
- Orders should be served on time so offenders begin their hours while they are still “fresh”; and
- Mechanism for consultation with Court Service creating a greater understanding by Judges of the whole concept of Community Service.

5.39 The most frequent suggestion made by Supervisors to improve efficiency and effectiveness related to issues to do with ensuring proper site selection so that

offenders could be managed more effectively. Suggestions were also made to provide training and education/numeracy content as part of the Community Service Order and create a regional community service supervisor role for site visits and management.

Table 5.6 Suggestions to Improve efficiency and Effectiveness	
Suggestions	Responses (n=25)
Rural Transport	1.5
Training and Education	2
Management Structures	2.5
Additional Resources	1
Site Suitability	9
Induction Process	1.5
Enforcement procedures	1
Other	4.5

Source: Responses by Community Service Supervisors to Questionnaire

How should Community Service be developed?

5.40 Responses by Community Service Supervisors in connection with developing the service are summarised in the table below. The most common matter raised in connection with developing Community Service was the need for different management systems in areas such as the role of the Community Service Supervisor compared to the role of the Probation Officer, part time supervisors to be made full time or to have a minimum of three days work for supervisors per week and more streamlined management. These initiatives would all have resource implications and would need to be considered in the overall context of the management of the Community Service Scheme and particularly in the light of the level of utilisation outlined above.

Table 5.7 Suggestions to Develop the Service	
Suggestions	Responses (n = 32)
Rural Transport	2
More Supervisor Hours	4
Training and Guidelines	1
Management Systems	6
Up-skilling for Offenders	3
Holiday Cover	1
Enforcement Procedures	3
More Projects	2
More Resources	3
Other	7

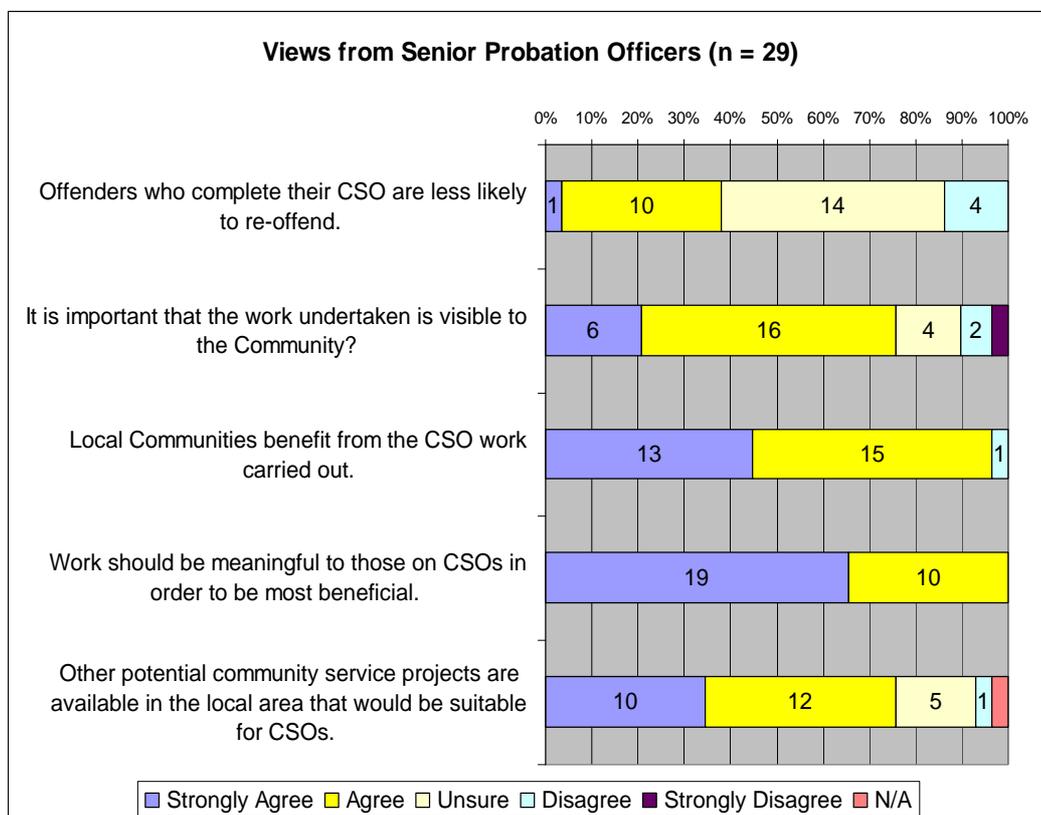
Source: Responses by Community Service Supervisors to Questionnaire

VIEWS FROM SENIOR PROBATION OFFICERS

5.41 A separate questionnaire was sent to all Senior Probation Officers involved with Community Service. Some Senior Probation Officers do not have any involvement with Community Service and were excluded from the questionnaire. It was also decided not to circulate Probation Officers since this would lead to unavoidable duplication and render the analysis problematic. Senior Probation Officers were however requested to take the views of Probation Officers into account when completing the questionnaire. Questionnaires were circulated to 33 Senior Probation Officers and 29 responses were received representing a response rate of 88%.

5.42 The figure below shows the responses by Senior Probation Officers. The highest level of agreement related to the need for work to be meaningful to offenders and that the work performed was of benefit to local communities. The lowest level of agreement related to the likelihood of offenders re-offending after a CSO. This response is at first sight surprising but needs to be considered in the light of the absence of research to establish reliable re-offending rates for those who have been subject to a Community Service Order.

Figure 5.9



COST OF SUPERVISION

5.43 On average, each Senior Probation Officer who responded to the questionnaire, reports spending 15% of his or her total time on matters to do with Community Service and that the Probation Officers on their team spend, on average, 22% of their time on matters related to community service¹⁹. Grossing up these figures to the total number of Senior Probation Officers and Probations Officers suggests that there are approximately 4.6 full time equivalent Senior Probation Officers dealing with community service and that there are 32.6 full time equivalent Probation Officers dealing with community service.

5.44 Using an estimate of 35 working hours per week, there are approximately 190 hours per week spent by Seniors and 1,170 spent each week by Probation Officers. This time is spent on a range of tasks as shown in the table below.

Table 5.8 Weekly Time Allocation (Hours) to Community Service Activities		
Community Service Related Time	Senior Probation Officer Time Allocation Hours per Week	Probation Officers Time Allocation Hours per Week
Preparing CSO Reports	14	230
Sourcing new CSO Projects	14	75
Travelling to/from Projects	30	121
Direct Contact with Offenders	11	238
Dealing with Revocations	21	169
Management/Admin re CSO	76	276
Other (CSO related)	24	61
Total	190	1170

Source: Responses by Senior Probation Officers to Questionnaire

5.45 The largest task in terms of hours spent is management and administration matters related to community service not otherwise specified. The next largest tasks are preparing community service reports and direct contact with offenders. Dealing with non compliance and revocations of community service orders is the next largest use of time.

5.46 The estimated cost for the staff and related administration costs associated with community service is calculated below by multiplying the estimated number of staff involved at each grade by a cost figure combining salary cost, PRSI

¹⁹ These figures are self reported and should be treated with caution but in the absence of better figures they are used in the analysis which follows.

related costs, pension related costs and an allowance for overheads. An estimated cost has also been included for the cost of a regional manager for Community Service based on a half time involvement. Cost includes Salary, PRSI, Pension and Overhead allowances but does not include travel and subsistence or equipment and materials related to the operation of the Community Service Scheme.

Table 5.9 Cost of Community Service		
Staffing	Cost €	FTEs
Regional Probation Management	73,379	.5
Senior Probation Officer	580,597	4.6
Probation Officer	3,150,454	32.6
Community Service Supervisor	2,717,600	55.0
Total Cost €/ FTEs	6,522,030	92.7
No of persons on Community Service Orders 2007	1,519	
Cost Per Offender €	4,295	

Source: Analysis based on Responses by Senior Probation Officers to Questionnaire

5.47 The table above is based on the returned questionnaires and salary data for Probation Service staff. The questionnaires provided an estimate of 4.6 full time equivalent Senior Probation Officers and 32.6 full time equivalent Probation Officers involved in community service. There are 75 part time Community Service Supervisors employed which are counted as 55 full time equivalent positions. An allowance of a half time equivalent Regional Probation Manager has also been made. These have been costed by adding PRSI costs and pension related costs (16.7%) and an allowance for overheads (47.0%) to all categories apart from the Community Service Supervisor category. Costs do not include travel and subsistence or equipment and materials related to the operation of the Community Service Scheme which are not considered to be material because supervisors are located in the areas where the work takes place. The cost for supervisors is estimated based on the number of full time equivalents and the average cost per supervisor. On this basis it is estimated that the cost per offender in 2007 amounts to €4,295.

5.48 The overhead allowance included above accounts for €1.28 million of the total cost of €6.5 million or approximately 20%. Excluding the overhead allowance would indicate a cost per offender of €3,436

5.49 The cost figures for Community Service are based on analysis and estimations derived from the returned questionnaires. It is not possible to obtain such cost information from the financial system in the Probation Service and, likewise, the level of Senior Probation Officer and Probation Officer time involved in managing the system is not otherwise readily available. The Probation Service needs a costing system that will allow it to track all the direct and indirect costs associated with Community Service.

ALTERNATIVE COSTS OF IMPRISONMENT

5.50 The comparative costs associated with imprisonment and the costs incurred by the Probation Service associated with Community Service are provided below.

5.51 The average cost of keeping a prisoner in custody during the calendar year 2007²⁰ was €7,700 (2006, €1,700). The breakdown by institution is shown in table 5.10 below.

Table 5.10 Cost of Keeping a Prisoner and Cost of a Prisoner Place by Institution in 2006 and 2007				
Institution	Cost of Keeping an Offender		Cost Per Prison Place	
	2006 (€)	2007 (€)	2006 (€)	2007 (€)
ARBOUR HILL	81,400	93,000	80,600	91,400
CASTLEREA	76,700	86,200	72,800	86,500
CORK	90,100	93,000	88,200	90,000
CLOVERHILL	81,600	84,700	76,100	81,600
LIMERICK	76,900	82,400	74,800	82,000
LOUGHAN HOUSE	70,000	82,200	52,800	66,000
MIDLANDS	81,900	88,600	79,300	81,800
MOUNTJOY (Male)	101,200	99,800	101,300	95,200
DOCHAS (Mountjoy Female)	87,600	102,000	91,300	109,500
PORTLAOISE	247,200	269,800	150,500	152,700
SHELTON ABBEY	95,200	107,800	81,400	100,600
ST PATRICKS	97,100	106,800	83,900	98,900
TRAINING UNIT	82,200	99,400	78,700	83,900
WHEATFIELD	84,000	88,600	81,400	89,700
Overall Average Cost per Prisoner	91,700	97,700	85,800	91,800

Source: Irish Prison Service

²⁰ It should be noted that the average cost of providing a prison space in 2008 was €2,717. The methodology used to calculate this cost was reviewed during 2008 and has changed from previous years as set out in the Annual Report of the Irish Prison Service for 2008 published on 14th August, 2009 and available on the website of the Irish Prison Service: www.irishprisons.ie

5.52 The cost per prisoner is based on the average daily number of offenders in custody in the year. The number of prisoner places is based on the number of places in each institution at end-December 2007. The operational cost of each institution is based on actual running costs, i.e. pay, overtime, food, light and heat, maintenance, etc. These costs include certain fixed costs that arise irrespective of the number of offenders in custody, e.g. staffing numbers, utilities, etc. All headquarters and central service costs are allocated over the prison establishments for the purpose of calculating the cost per prisoner at each institution. Capital expenditure is excluded from the calculation in the interest of facilitating comparison between individual institution costs.

5.53 As can be seen from the above, the average cost of keeping an offender in prison in 2007 ranged from €2,200 to over €69,000 with an average cost of €7,700 per annum excluding capital costs.

5.54 The prison cost avoided is calculated by examining the alternative sentences recorded at the time the community service order was made. In 2006, the total number of months of alternative imprisonment recorded was 5,171 months for 1,158 CSOs or an average of 4.5 months. Figures for the alternative imprisonment sentences are not available for 2007 and therefore the 2006 figure is used as the latest available. Using the figure for an annual cost of imprisonment of €7,700 in 2007 and an average sentence of 4.5 months with a remission of 25% indicates a cost of €27,478 for the likely cost of the alternative prison sentence

5.55 Comparing the estimated average CSO cost per individual of €4,295 to the 2007 alternative cost of imprisonment of €27,478 above suggests that Community Service costs approximately 15.6% of the alternative cost of imprisonment²¹.

²¹ This comparison is based on the prison costs indicated in table 5.10 above. In that table, and as routinely reported, the cost per prison place is based on a full allocation of costs including staff costs. The Irish Prison Service also provided information on the marginal cost of a prison place which indicates that the annual marginal cost of a prison place is approximately €3,600. Using a marginal cost approach has technical merit if the numbers on community service were relatively few in number and could be readily accommodated within existing facilities without the need for additional staff or resources. However the prisons in 2007 were almost fully occupied and therefore additional prison places would have had to be made available at significant capital cost if Community Service offenders were placed in prison. For this reason, a full cost approach has been used in the analysis presented in this review.

5.56 This approach can be refined in several ways by estimating the impact of other variables on the relative cost comparison. These variables include the effect of the costs associated with those who breach CSOs and the application of CSOs to those who might otherwise, for example, have a fine made instead of a CSO.

Table 5.11 Sensitivity Analysis	
Effect	Impact/Sensitivity
<p>Baseline Comparison - Community Service compared to the alternative cost of imprisonment.</p>	<p>15.6% of the comparative cost of imprisonment</p>
<p>Include the cost of those who fail to comply with a CSO and are sentenced to imprisonment. Elsewhere in this review the non compliance ratio is shown to be approximately 15%. This 15% represents a cost saving that does not in the event materialise and thus can be added back to the comparison. (However, it is not automatic that non compliance with a CSO will result in imprisonment as the deciding Judge may decide to vary the original terms of the CSO or to impose other sanctions.</p>	<p>For each 1% increase in the revocation rate where the offenders who do not comply are sentenced to imprisonment the comparative cost of Community Service increases by 1% also. If all revocations, assumed to represent 15% of all CSOs, resulted in imprisonment this would add 15% to the relative cost of CSOs raising the comparative cost to 30.6% of the comparative cost of imprisonment.</p>
<p>Allow for the impact of using a Community Service Order in some cases where a sentence of imprisonment might not have been imposed. This effect is known as net-widening. The impact is that some individuals on CSOs might, for example, have had a fine imposed and would not have gone to prison with</p>	<p>If the level and extent of net widening amounted to, for example, 10% this would add approximately 3% to the relative cost of CSOs. Taken in addition to the costs associated with revocations of CSOs, this would increase the cost of Community Service to 34% of the comparative cost of</p>

the result that the comparative cost of imprisonment should be reduced. The extent of this cannot be quantified.	imprisonment.
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5.57 The cost per community service order is estimated to amount to approximately €4,295 per offender. The alternative costs that would be incurred if those offenders went to prison are estimated to amount to approximately €27,478 per offender. Thus, community service costs approximately 15.6% of the alternative cost of imprisonment on a full cost basis.

5.58 The favourable cost comparison is mitigated somewhat by the costs associated with those who do not comply with CSOs and those who may receive a CSO who might otherwise not be sentenced to a term of imprisonment. Allowing for these possible costs shows that CSOs are still more financially cost effective than the alternative costs associated with imprisonment. Sensitivity analysis on these costs suggests that the comparative cost of community service is unlikely to exceed 34% of the alternative cost of imprisonment. Thus community service is a very cost effective option in comparison to the direct costs associated with imprisonment.

5.59 The analysis above does not attribute a value to the work carried out in the community. In 2007, 1,519 offenders received a CSO and, assuming the average number of hours made per individual was 136, this indicates that the total number of hours made amounted to 206,448. Deducting in full the assumed 15% unsuccessful completion ratio implies that the number of hours of community service performed amounted to 175,480. The national minimum wage was set at €8.65 for an adult worker with effect from 1st July 2007 and was previously €8.30. The value associated with the work performed can therefore be reasonably estimated to amount to over €1.48 million thus further increasing the relative attractiveness of Community Service compared to the alternative costs of imprisonment.

5.60 The Community Service cost per offender is low in comparison to the alternative cost of imprisonment but is relatively high in absolute terms and there are opportunities to increase efficiency in several areas. Utilisation of Community

Service Supervisors is particularly low. In addition, a large proportion of the cost of Community Service is associated with the time of Senior Probation Officers and Probation Officers and more effective use of these resources would increase the efficiency of the system.

5.61 In financial terms, the Community Service Scheme represents approximately 11% of the total expenditure of the Probation Service. Given that a Community Service Order should only be made as an alternative to a sentence of imprisonment, each individual on a Community Service Order would have otherwise been imprisoned at a higher cost to the State.

5.62 The questionnaire to Senior Probation Officers highlighted that a majority (62%) were unsure or disagreed that offenders who complete their CSO are less likely to re-offend. This response needs to be considered in light of the fact that research is needed to assess how the scheme may also have additional benefit in contributing to positive change in the behaviour of offenders and their integration in the community. Consequently it is not possible to say whether community service is effective in this regard. However, the primary objective of community service is to represent an alternative to imprisonment for those who would otherwise be imprisoned and in this respect it is effective. On a financial basis it is also cost effective and the benefits associated with the scheme are highly consistent with the aims and objectives of the Probation Service.

5.63 The capacity utilisation of Community Service Supervisors nationwide, on an aggregate basis, is estimated to amount to 33%. This means that the existing supervisors, operating at full capacity, could provide supervision services to three times as many offenders. The utilisation level is very sensitive to the number of offenders supervised at any time. This highlights the importance of identifying and selecting sites and projects that will ensure maximum utilisation of supervisory capacity.

5.64 If it is not possible to increase the number of CSOs then the number and location of Community Service Supervisors needs to be reviewed. Comparing the location of supervisors and the number of CSOs arising on a county basis it is clear that there is a mismatch between the supervisory capacity available and the supervisory requirement at county level as well as nationally.

5.65 Based on figures for 2007, it is estimated that the level of underutilisation of Community Service Supervisors has an associated cost amounting to approximately €1.6 million annually. However, any consideration of reducing the number of supervisors should have regard to the following:

- Supervisors are distributed throughout the country and if their numbers were decreased it is unlikely that the offenders assigned to them on supervised sites at the time could be readily reassigned to other supervisors in other areas. An alternative arrangement would have to be put in place;
- New offenders in that area might likewise find it difficult to obtain work on a Community Service Scheme and possibly be more likely to be imprisoned at a higher cost; and
- Although supervisors may not be fully utilised it can still be more cost effective to use Community Service rather than to incur the high alternative cost of imprisonment.

5.66 There is a mismatch between the location of supervisors and the number of CSOs arising on a county basis meaning that there are areas where there is a high excess of supervisory capacity available compared to the supervisory requirement.

6. EVALUATION OF DATA/ INFORMATION RESOURCES AND PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

INTRODUCTION

6.1 This section addresses Section 6 of the Terms of Reference and comprises a high level I.C.T. review, sets out an overall framework for the development of performance indicators and specifies suitable measures that can be used directly or with minor modification for the development of Community Service as a key element of the Probation Service.

PERFORMANCE MONITORING AND EVALUATION

6.2 A performance framework for Community Service is necessary to ensure that the management task of processing offenders is carried out in the most efficient manner possible while making best use of the resources available. This requires the underlying systems to be robust and provide up- to- date information on the places available and used in the system and the progress of individual offenders. Similar information is needed at a project, county, regional and national level.

6.3 The data currently available to manage the Community Service system is poor. As an example, the number of Community Service Orders revoked is not readily available, the number of places available in any region at any time is not available and the balance of time to be served by offenders is not available at a national level. Some information is available at a local level but depends on manual systems and paper based record keeping.

6.4 A performance indicator framework should distinguish between monitoring and evaluation indicators. Monitoring indicators should be captured as part of the routine management reporting cycle to the Probation Service. Evaluation type indicators are more likely to be used for senior management reports and serve as a basis for deciding on corrective actions, strategy development and reports to external stakeholders.

Monitoring and Evaluation Indicators

Monitoring indicators	
<i>Performance Indicator</i>	<i>What the indicator aims to reflect:</i>
Input / Resource indicators	The financial, human, and administrative inputs to the project(s)
Activity Indicators	The actual activities supported
Output indicators	The outputs achieved
Outcome / Impact indicators	The effect of the outputs on the clients/offenders and benefit to communities

Evaluation Indicators	
Economy indicators	Indicators to show the cost of inputs consumed including direct costs and indirect costs such as Probation Service staff costs.
Efficiency indicators	Indicators of volume, timeliness and the unit cost of output
Effectiveness indicators	Indicators of the extent of the achievement of project/ programme targets/objectives (including impact indicators).

PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

6.5 The figure below sets out a general framework for developing performance indicators to support the mission of the Probation Service in the context of Community Service. It is based on identifying the key elements of the management task i.e. the inputs, activities, outputs and outcomes associated with the function. Indicators for each aspect are identified and in turn measures are specified. The nature of the indicator such as cost control, management control, operational control and strategic management is also highlighted. These are related to the value for money attributes of Economy, Efficiency and Effectiveness.

6.6 The measures and indicators suggested below need to be further developed in terms of the exact definitions to be used and also need to be integrated with the existing financial management information system and IT resources.

Probation Service – Community Service Orders Scheme Performance Framework			
Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes
Resources devoted to or consumed by Community Service.	Activities Performed.	The physical outputs achieved.	Long Term Benefits Achieved.
Indicators PS Staff Costs Direct and Indirect Operating Costs Capital Funding	Indicators Suitable Work Opportunities Identified CSO Reports CSO Placements CSO Supervision	Indicators CSO Hours Performed Completion / Revocation Rate Health and Safety	Indicators Community Satisfaction Strategic Work Partners Positive Reparation Judicial Support
Measures Direct and Indirect cost compared to budget Capital Cost compared to budget Cost per CSO Placement	Measures CSOs commenced within 1 month % Capacity Utilisation % Time and Cost per CSO Report CSO's Supervised	Measures Total CSO Hours managed Completion/Revocation Rate CSOs completed within 12 months Projects Completed Health and Safety Compliance	Measures Long term partners in place Community Support Surveys Usage of CSO's nationally and regionally
Cost Control	Management Control	Operational	Strategic

6.7 The Input indicators shown above are the resources consumed in connection with community service. These resources are the costs associated with Supervisors, Probation Officers, Senior Probation Officers and the operational costs incurred such as equipment and consumables. Work needs to be done to ensure these costs are readily available from a financial system and be managed, reported and controlled on the basis of a budgetary control system.

6.8 The Activity indicators show what is carried out with the expenditure such as identifying projects, completing CSO reports for Court, inducting offenders onto projects and supervising those offenders once inducted. Here, there needs to be a greater emphasis on management information in order to rapidly complete CSO reports, locate suitable projects with available capacity and to schedule offenders to commence their community service within a reasonable period. One of the key management tasks here would be to ensure that available capacity, both in terms of supervisors and projects, is used to the fullest extent possible. This is also dependent on Courts making referrals, reports finding offenders suitable and offenders consenting.

6.9 The Output indicators can be thought of as the services which are enabled by the expenditure such that the number of offenders in the system at any time and completing their CSO in defined time periods are readily identifiable. Thus, the stock of offenders and the outstanding balance of their hours to complete their CSO need to be accessible. The throughput of offenders also needs to be measured and reported. Key performance criteria here would include the revocation rate and reviews thereof so that over time a better prognosis can be made of the likelihood of failure to complete. For statistical reporting purposes there is a need to monitor the number of CSOs made relative to the number of sentenced committals to prison, the total number of CSOs managed and completed, the alternative sentences that would otherwise be imposed and the timeliness with which offenders complete their CSO as well as the number of projects completed.

6.10 The Outcome indicators link back to the strategic goals and objectives of the Probation Service. These are the critical indicators since they measure how well community service is delivering on the overall objectives of the Probation Service. Research is necessary on the effectiveness of Community Service with regard to the level of reparation and added value to the community.

6.11 The Probation Service needs to build on the performance framework outlined in this review and implement a comprehensive management information system that will provide it with the information necessary to manage the community service scheme and evaluate its performance. This could be a relatively simple system based on manual collection of data at regular intervals and the calculation of cost information for planning and control purposes.

REVIEW OF IT SYSTEMS

6.12 In order to assess the likely approach towards capturing and automating the data gathering task System Dynamics was asked, as part of this review, to perform a brief high level I.C.T. review on the Probation Service (PS) Community Service Order (CSO) process and to make recommendations on how best (elements of) this process may be automated for efficiency purposes. The purpose of the review was to assess the current systems used to gather data on the

operation of the Community Service scheme and to assess alternative mechanisms that would provide data in a cost effective manner.

6.13 System Dynamics attended a meeting with the Probation Service about the existing Probation Service technologies to discuss suitable technologies for addressing the new requirements. During the review meeting a consensus was reached that these automation processes could be achieved by enhancing the current Probation Service Case Tracking System (CTS) which is a Lotus Notes system.

6.14 The following areas of the CSO process were considered as part of that meeting and are covered by this document:

- Management of CSO Projects;
- Incorporating of CSO time-sheet entries; and
- Flexible 'real-time' Reporting.

6.15 The inclusion of both the 'Management of CSO Projects' and 'Incorporating of CSO time-sheet entries' elements is primarily driven by the desire to have these pieces of information included in centrally produced reports.

6.16 Given that any proposed changes to the system should have as little impact as possible on the existing case tracking system the recommendation is that new Notes Databases should be integrated with the current CTS system, thus having the desired minimum impact on the CTS Database.

Management of C.S.O. Projects - Current situation

6.17 The Probation Service currently has no means of capturing data on CSO projects or individual Community Service time-sheet entries in their CTS system. The Probation Service would like to capture this and additional data within the CTS, so as to determine what community service projects were available for CSO, the locations of these projects, when they would be available to start, how many CSO participants are engaged per project, and to be able to incorporate all this into management reports if so desired.

Recommendations

Specific upgrades to the IT infrastructure will be needed to accommodate a more robust data collection strategy for the CSO aspects of the Probation Service to underpin future administrative evaluation of outcomes/benefits, resource use (both at Probation Service level and Community Service Supervisor level) and overall cost effectiveness and efficiency.

Incorporating CSO time-sheet entries

6.18 Currently, CSO Supervisors manually record the times when offenders on CSO projects attend their designated projects. They do so both in a diary and also on an offender's designated time-sheet form. The designated timesheet is the official record of attendance whereas the diary is used as a back-up. The Probation Service would like to incorporate this time-sheet data into their IT systems for inclusion in reports.

6.19 The following three solutions were considered:

- **Swipe Cards for those on Community Service.** This solution would require that offenders be issued with a photo id swipe card upon their agreement to participate in a community service project. They would essentially clock-in and clock-off at their designated times using the swipe cards. This information would then be 'automatically' transferred to the Probation Service system;
- **Direct on-line entry of time-sheet data from source by CSO Supervisors.** This solution would require that the CSO Supervisors themselves insert the time-sheet entries on-line, either remotely on their own PCs or at designated centres; and
- **Postal delivery of time-sheets.** This solution would require that the CSO Supervisors post the time-sheets to administrative centres on a periodic basis and have administration people at these centres insert the time-sheet data into the Probation Service CTS system.

6.20 The 'Postal delivery of time-sheets' is the recommended solution for implementation, as it has the lowest impact on the CSO Supervisors and because it

is cheapest solution to implement. The consensus is that these factors outweigh the corresponding disadvantages listed above.

Flexible ‘real-time’ Reporting

6.21 The current method of report extraction from the CTS system is performed by means of Notes Views. If new statistical or information reports are required, then this requires the creation of new Notes Views customised for the desired report metrics etc.

Disadvantages of continued use of Notes Views for report extraction:

- Requires a skilled knowledge of how to design a Notes View in order for it to produce the desired report content;
- Limits on complexity of reports which can be extracted using Notes Views;
- It currently takes a protracted period of time for the creation of new Notes Report Views;
- Difficulties associated with managing ‘once-off’ report using Notes Views;
- A build up of numerous Notes Views within a large Notes Database can have detrimental performance issues for users of that database; and
- The term ‘real-time’ used in the title of this section refers to the scheduling period between data transfers. This period should be configurable by administrators of the system.

6.22 This review recommends the following reporting infrastructure for the Case Tracking System and for Community Service systems within the Probation Service:

- Creation of a relational database management system (RDBMS) system; e.g. Oracle or SQL etc.;
- Reporting Tool (i.e. Business Intelligence infrastructure) to sit on top of the RDBMS Database; and
- Mechanism for data transfer between systems (Lotus Notes and RDBMS).

6.23 A brief description of the functional elements of the reporting infrastructure is provided in Appendix IX.

6.24 These IT developments are desirable for the longer term development of a management reporting system for Community Service and could, in addition, support the development of the performance framework identified earlier.

APPENDIX I TERMS OF REFERENCE - REVIEW OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICE SCHEME

1. Identify the aims and objectives of the Community Service Scheme:

Examine the operation of the Criminal Justice (Community Service) Act, 1983 to provide comprehensive data on its use by the Courts having regard to previous research.

2 Examine the continued validity of those objectives and their compatibility with the overall strategy of the Department and the Probation Service

3. Identify the associated outputs of the scheme including:

- the levels and trends and/or variations in the imposition of CS across Court areas;
- the completion rate;
- the benefits to communities from the CS scheme.

4 Establish the level of Probation Service staff time used in the supervision of the scheme:

- Grade and time spent on supervision;
- Examine the consistency of approach to supervision
- Associated costs to the Probation Service of this task.

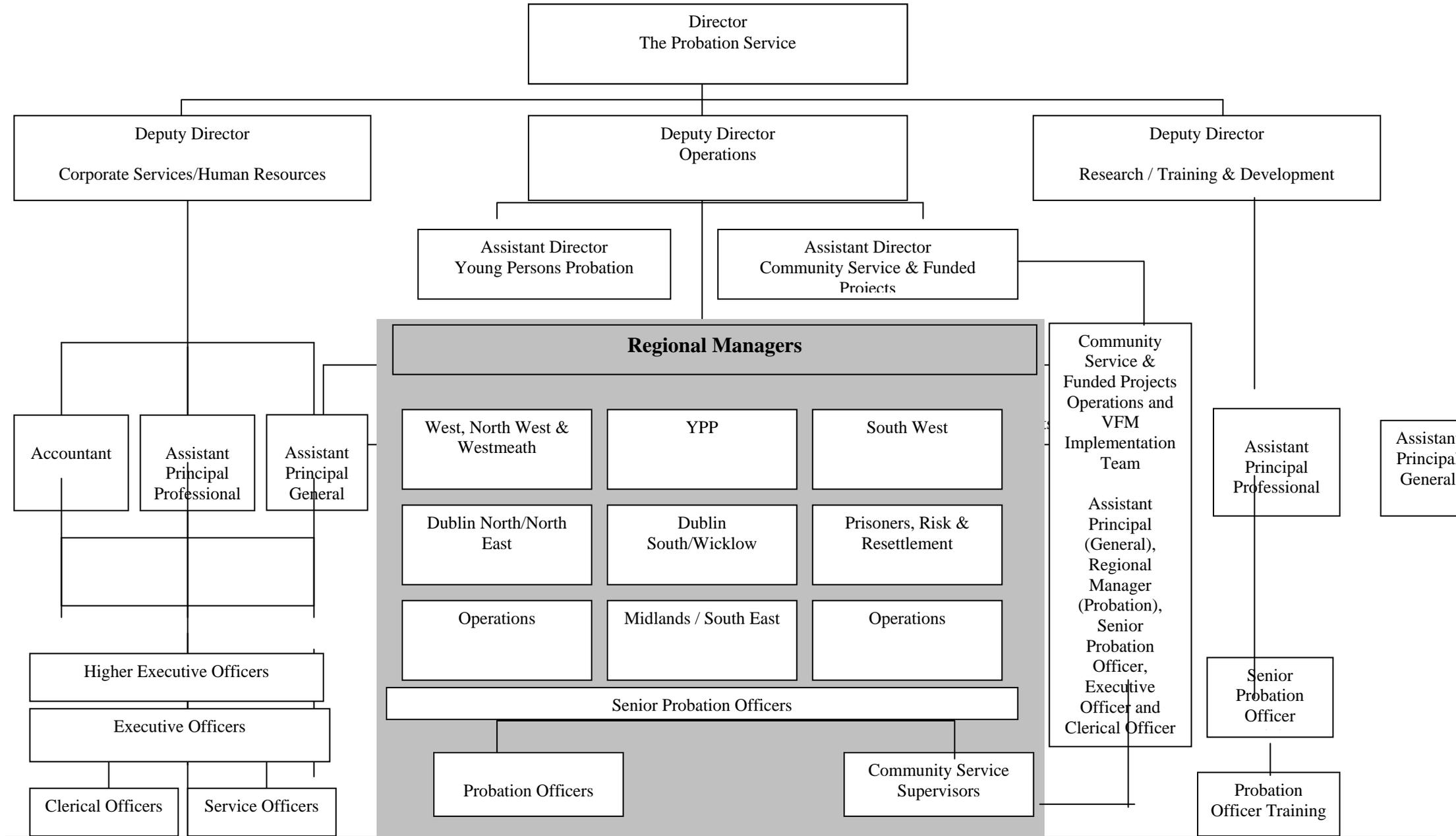
5 Effectiveness:

- How effective is the scheme?
- Investigate actual or possible alternative systems of operation and management for Community Service
- What benchmarks should be used?
- Does the administration of the scheme warrant the allocation of public resources?
- Is the Probation Service getting value for money, or are the resources associated with the supervision of the scheme best directed elsewhere?
- Are Community Service Supervisor's currently assigned to appropriate geographical locations to facilitate the speedy implementation of Court Orders

6. Evaluation of Data/Information resources

- Does the current data lend itself to measurement of the use and effectiveness of CS?
- What shortcomings have been identified in the data collected, or in the method of collection?
- How can we overcome these shortcomings?
- Identify future potential key performance indicators
- What steps do we need to take in terms of collating information gathered either by the Courts or the Probation Service for future reviews?

APPENDIX II MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE PROBATION SERVICE – NOVEMBER 2008



APPENDIX III SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

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APPENDIX IV COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECTS SEPTEMBER 2007

Probation Area and Team	Name & Location of Project	Days Operating	Description of work on the Project
Cavan Leitrim Monaghan, North West Region	Tidy Town	Mon, Fri & Sat	Grounds maintenance
Cavan Monaghan Leitrim, North West Region	Ballinamore Tidy Towns	Mon	Litter Picking, grounds maintenance
Cavan Monaghan Leitrim, North West Region	Cavan Rugby Club	Fri	General grounds work, painting
Cavan Monaghan Leitrim, North West Region	The Royal School, Cavan	Sat	General grounds work, painting
Cork	Varied	Mon, Tues, Wed, Fri & Sat	Grass cutting, Painting, Construction, Landscaping
Cork	Knocknaheny Youth Project	Mon, Tues & Wed	Painting (Supervisor is professional painter)
Cork	Orthopedic Hosp Grounds	Mon, Tues & Wed	Landscaping
Cork	Orthopedic Hosp Grounds	Thurs & Sat	Landscaping
Cork	Heritage Park	Thur & Sat	Construction, Landscaping
Donegal Team, North West Region	NTDI, Lifford, Co. Donegal	Tues, Fri & Sat	Maintenance of building & grounds
Donegal Team, North West Region	Ballintra National School, Ballintra, Co. Donegal	Wed & Sat	Maintenance and upkeep of school
Donegal Team, North West Region	Derrybeg Chapel, Derrybeg, Co. Donegal	Tues & Wed	Maintain grounds
Donegal Team, North West Region	Youthreach Gartaharh, Co. Donegal	Sat	Maintain grounds and village
Dublin North Central Region	St. Kevins School Barry Ave, Finglas, Dublin 11	Tues, Wed, Thurs, Fri & Sat	Extensive painting project and gardening
Dublin North Central Region	St. Canice's BNS, Glasanaon Rd. Finglas East, Dublin 11	Tues, Wed, Thurs & Fri	Creation of a school garden with raised beds, new pathways, trees etc. for education purposes for children

APPENDIX IV COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECTS SEPTEMBER 2007

Dublin North Central Region	St. Pappins Church Of Ire, Church Lane, Santry, Dublin 9	Sat	Clearing & upkeep
Dublin North Region/Dublin North-East Team	Swords Celtic, Balheary Rd., Swords, Co. Dublin	Thurs & Sat	Mowing pitches, painting & upkeep of changing rooms
Dublin North Region/Dublin North-East Team	St. John's Church, Tonlegee Rd. Dublin 13	Tues	Gardening, painting
Dublin North Region/Dublin North-East Team	St. Ann's Park, Raheny, Edenmore Shopping Centre, Coolock Underpass	Mon, Tues & Thurs	Painting
Dublin South	Crosscare, St. Brigid's Food Centre, Holles Row, Dublin 2	Mon - Sat inclusive	Cleaning Kitchen utensils, and painting, gardening etc. Transportation of materials to night shelter if necessary
Dublin South	St. Andrews Community Centre, 468 South Circular Rd., Rialto, Dublin 8	Mon - Fri inclusive	General maintenance and upkeep
Dublin South	Ferrinni Youth Club	Mon - Sat inclusive	Carpentry, painting, fittings, gardening etc.
Dublin South	St Damiens N.S., Walkinstown, Dublin 12	Tues & Wed	Painting, decorating, graffiti removal, ongoing maintenance of gym
Dublin South	Our Lady of The Wayside, N.S., Bluebell Drive, Bluebell, Dublin 12	Mon, Wed & Sat	Developing a children's garden on the school grounds
Dublin South	Scoil Iosagain, Crumlin, Dublin 12	Mon - Sat inclusive	Maintenance and upkeep of school
Dublin South Central, Ballyfermot Office	Bidone Court, Ballyfermot, Dublin 10	Tues, Wed, Thurs, Fri & Sat	Maintenance and Clearing grounds, painting etc.
Dublin South Central, Ballyfermot Office	Lionsvilla Hostel, Chapelizod, Dublin 20	Tues, Wed, Thurs, Fri & Sat	Maintenance and Clearing grounds, painting etc.
Dublin South Central, Ballyfermot Office	Bawnogue Area	Sat	Pick up papers & painting
Dublin South Central, Ballyfermot Office	Knockmitten Community Centre	Tues & Fri	Ext/Int maintenance of grounds
Dublin South Central, Ballyfermot Office	Collinstown Community School, Neilstown, Clondalkin, Dublin 22	Tue - Fri	Painting, gardening, cleaning

APPENDIX IV COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECTS SEPTEMBER 2007

Dublin South Central, Ballyfermot Office	Clonburris National School, Dunawley, Clondalkin, Dublin 22	Sat	Painting, gardening, cleaning
Dublin West (Dublin North)	Buzzardstown Hse., Dublin 15.	Mon-Sat inclusive	Gardening, painting, working in kitchen/charity shop
Dublin West (Dublin North)	St. Finbarr's National School, Cabra, Dublin 7	Mon-Sat inclusive	Gardening, painting, working in kitchen/charity shop
Dublin West (Dublin North)	Bro Kevin's, Church Street, Dublin 7	Mon-Sat inclusive	Gardening, painting, working in kitchen/charity shop
Dublin West (Dublin North)	Oxfam Shop, Phibsboro, Dublin 7	Mon-Sat inclusive	Gardening, painting, working in kitchen/charity shop
Dublin West (Dublin North)	St. Philip's School, Mountview, Dublin 15	Mon-Sat inclusive	Gardening, painting, working in kitchen/charity shop
Dun Laoghaire / Bray	Holy Family School, Monkstown, Dun Laoghaire	Thurs, Fri & Sat	Painting/Decorating
Dun Laoghaire / Bray	Church of Ireland, Graveyard Bray	Tues & Wed	General maintenance of graveyard
Dun Laoghaire / Bray	St. Anne's primary school, Dun Laoghaire	Thurs & Fri	General maintenance of school
Kilkenny	St. John's Graveyard, Kilkenny	Tues, Wed, Thurs & Sat	Cemetery maintenance, grass cutting, strimming, weeding, litter collection
Letterkenny	(Donegal) Letterkenny Hospice, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal	Wed & Thurs	Outdoor Maintenance: Grass Cutting, Painting, Kerbing
Letterkenny	Old Firestation, Cockhill Rd., Buncrana, Co. Donegal	Mon & Sat	Cleaning up shore front, painting & maintenance
Limerick Co. Kerry	Abbeyfeale-Glanfyrd (Also Bantry)	Tues, Fri & Sat	Ground Maintenance
Limerick Co. Kerry	Listowel Town Park	Fri & Sat	Ground Maintenance
Limerick Co. Kerry	Newcastlewest (Churchtown) Graveyard	Fri & Sat	Ground Maintenance
Louth/North Dublin Region	Redeemer Resource Centre, Cox's Demesne, Dundalk	Sat	Environmental/Cleaning and general maintenance

APPENDIX IV COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECTS SEPTEMBER 2007

Louth/North Dublin Region	Community Gardens, Muirhevna Mor, Dundalk	Thurs	Environmental/Cleaning and general maintenance
Louth/North Dublin Region	Blackrock Tidy Towns	Wed	Environmental/Cleaning and general maintenance
Louth/North Dublin Region	St. Mary's Residential Home, Drogheda	Sat	Environmental/Cleaning and general maintenance
Louth/North Dublin Region	The Glen, Drogheda	Fri	Environmental/Cleaning and general maintenance
Midlands/South East Region -Waterford Team	Henrietta Street Workshop, Coffee House Lane, Waterford	Tues, Wed, Thurs, Fri & Sat	Woodwork, gardening, landscaping, computer work, small building projects & maintenance
Navan Team, North East	Beaufort College	Sat	General groundwork, painting
Navan Team, North East	Navan Rugby Club	Fri	General groundwork, painting
North Dublin Region/ Dublin North-East Team	St. David's School	Sat	Maintenance & Gardening
North Dublin Region/ Dublin North-East Team	St. Peter & Paul's N.S.	Wed, Fri & Sat	Re-decorating & Gardening
North West - Galway	Youth Federation, Tuam	Mon, Tues & Sat	Maintenance of grounds and structures, gardening, painting and general maintenance as the need arises
North West - Galway	County Council, Tuam	Mon, Tues & Sat	Maintenance of grounds and structures, gardening, painting and general maintenance as the need arises
North West - Galway	GAA Tuam Stars	Mon, Tues & Sat	Maintenance of grounds and structures, gardening, painting and general maintenance as the need arises
North West - Galway	St. Francis Home, Newcastle, Galway City	Wed, Thurs, Fri & Sat	Maintenance of grounds and structures, gardening, painting and general maintenance as the need arises
North West - Galway	Brigids Gardens, Roscahill, Moycullen, Co. Galway	Wed, Thurs, Fri & Sat	Maintenance of grounds and structures, gardening, painting and general maintenance as the need arises
North West - Galway	Sunshine Holiday Home, Inverin, Co. Galway	Wed, Thurs, Fri & Sat	Maintenance of grounds and structures, gardening, painting and general maintenance as the need arises
S-E & Midlands	Ross Celtic F.C., New Ross, Co. Wexford	Wed, Fri & Sat	General maintenance of football grounds
S-E & Midlands	Northend F.C. Wexford	Tues, Thurs & Sat	General maintenance

APPENDIX IV COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECTS SEPTEMBER 2007

S-E & Midlands	Gorey Celtic F.C., Gorey, Co. Wexford	Fri & Sat alternatively	General maintenance of club house and grounds, prep of pitches; painting
S-E & Midlands	Enniscorthy Cathedral, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford	Mon, Fri & Sat alternating	Gardening/general maintenance and repairs in cathedral and grounds
South East - Portlaoise	The Ridge Cemetery & St. Peter's Cemetery - Portlaoise	Tues, Wed & Sat	Ground Maintenance
South East - Portlaoise (Covered by Kildare Team from 01/10/07)	Various locations in Athy, Co. Kildare	Wed, Thurs & Sat	General outdoor maintenance & litter control work
South East - Portlaoise(Laois/Offaly)	Edenderry Parish Church	Mon, Thurs & Sat	Helping to maintain the grounds of the Parish Church & Presbytery
South East - Portlaoise(Laois/Offaly)	Town Park, Newbridge	Thurs, Fri & Sat	Maintaining the Town Park in Newbridge - strimming, weeding etc
South East - Portlaoise(Laois/Offaly)	Tullamore Rugby Club	Thurs, Fri & Sat	Maintaining the clubhouse and grounds of Tullamore RFC - painting, cleaning etc.
South East Region / Tipperary Team	Camphill Community, Castle St. Carrick-on-Suir, Co. Tipperary	Thurs, Fri & Sat	Preparation for paths, building stone walls, maintenance of same gardens, moving top soil etc
South East Region / Tipperary Team	Camphill Community, The Farm, Carrick-on-Suir, Co. Tipperary	Thurs, Fri & Sat	Preparation for paths, building stone walls, maintenance of same gardens, moving top soil etc
South East Region / Tipperary Team	Knockanrawley Resource Centre, Knockanrawley, Co. Tipperary	Wed & Sat	Specific building projects/erecting garden walls/horticulture (resource centre has an extensive organic garden)/Indoors - painting and maintenance
South East Region / Tipperary Team	Leahy Park GAA Pitch, Fethard Road, Cashel, Co. Tipperary	Tues	General maintenance/painting(indoor&outdoor)/fence repair/groundwork
South East Region / Tipperary Team	Durlas Og GAA, Thurles	Wed & Every 2nd Sat	General maintenance of grounds - cutting grass, upkeep of changing rooms
South East Region / Tipperary Team	Presentation School, Dungarvan Road, Clonmel	Sat	Outdoor + Indoor carpentry/gardening/sweeping/hedge cutting/painting etc
South East Region, Limerick City Supervision Team	Church of Ireland, Binden Street, Ennis Co. Clare	Mon, Wed, Thurs, Fri & Sat	Maintenance
South East Region, Limerick City Supervision Team	Moyross project(Development Company), Unit 7, Knocklasheen Road, Moyross	Tues, Wed & Sat	Take in old pallets and break them down into bundles of fire kindling

APPENDIX IV COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECTS SEPTEMBER 2007

South East Region/Tipperary Team	Eire Og GAA Club	Mon, Wed & Sat	Painting external wall, weeding & general maintenance
South West Region, Limerick Supervision Team	Newcastlewest (Churchtown) Graveyard	Mon, Tues, Wed, Thurs, Fri & Sat	Maintenance
Tallaght- Dublin 24/ Dublin South West	Rossfield Parish Church	Sat	Painting and upkeep
Tallaght- Dublin 24/ Dublin South West	Boxing Club Brookfield Comm Centre	Tuesday	Painting and upkeep
Tallaght- Dublin 24/ Dublin South West	Johnstown Village Creche	Thurs	Painting and upkeep
West -Northwest and Westmeath, Sligo/Mayo Team	The Scout Den, Teeling Street, Ballina, Co. Mayo	Sat	General Maintenance, painting, hanging doors, installing lights, gardening
West -Northwest and Westmeath, Sligo/Mayo Team	McHale Park, GAA Grounds, McHale Rd., Castlebar, Co. Mayo	Wed & Thurs	Maintenance of the grounds, stands & dressing rooms etc. A very plentiful supply of work available
West -Northwest and Westmeath, Sligo/Mayo Team	Tidy Towns, Kiltimagh, Co. Mayo	Fri	Planting and maintenance of all seasonal planting arrangements in and around Kiltimagh town. Maintenance of hedgerows and town parks and picnic areas
West -Northwest and Westmeath, Sligo/Mayo Team	Harristown Hse, Harristown, Castlerea, Co. Roscommon	Sat	Seasonal painting and maintenance of all the grounds and hedgerows. Indoor general maintenance
West -Northwest and Westmeath, Sligo/Mayo Team	St. Michael's Family Life Centre, Church Hill, Sligo	Tues & Wed	Grounds maintenance, grass cutting
West -Northwest and Westmeath, Sligo/Mayo Team	Maic Coach Rd. Community Centre, Sligo	Tues & Wed	General maintenance
West -Northwest and Westmeath, Sligo/Mayo Team	Sligo Presb Church, Church Street, Sligo	Tues & Wed	Maintenance of grounds at Manse, Church and hall
West -Northwest and Westmeath, Sligo/Mayo Team	Caltragh Community Centre, Caltragh, Sligo		Maintenance work; painting, carpentry, repairs, gardening
Westmeath, Longford Roscommon	Mullingar Shamrocks Grounds, Dalton Park, Cathedral grounds	Tues, Wed & every alternate Sat	General maintenance of football grounds and cathedral

APPENDIX IV COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECTS SEPTEMBER 2007

Westmeath, Longford Roscommon	Tidy Towns, St. Mary Hall Scouts Hall	Thurs & every alternate Sat	Maintenance of grounds of local football club and complete work with local Tidy Towns committee & maintain local scout hall
Westmeath, Longford Roscommon	Tidy Towns, GAA Club	Fri & Sat	Ground maintenance, strimming, painting etc. Residents groups- tidying residential areas
Westmeath, Longford Roscommon	Tidy Towns	Monday	Ground maintenance & residents groups
Westmeath, Longford Roscommon	Kiltormer Soccer Club, Kiltormer	Thurs & Sat	Grounds maintenance
Westmeath, Longford Roscommon	Tidy Towns - Longford	Wed & Sat	Maintenance of town
Wicklow	The graveyard, Emoclew Rd. Arklow	Mon & Wed	Maintenance of grounds
Wicklow	Nunns Cros Chapel, Ashford, Co. Wicklow	Sat	Maintenance of grounds

APPENDIX V CIRCUIT COURT AND DISTRICT COURT DISPOSALS – 2007

Dublin Circuit Criminal Court 2007

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 Courts Provincial 2007

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

District Court 2007

Summary cases disposed of	Indictable cases disposed of
Public Order/Assault	Public Order/Assault
33,896	2,068
Drugs	Drugs
548	9,322
Road Traffic Offences	Larceny
279,654	22,931
Sexual Offences	Road Traffic Offences
161	1,987
Larceny	Sexual Offences
6	356
Other*	Other*
74,080	11,608
Total	Total
388,345	48,272

Outcomes of summary cases disposed of	Outcome of indictable cases disposed of
Imprisonment/Detention	Imprisonment/Detention
11,344	9,960
Fines	Fines
106,965	7,018
Community Service	Community Service
1,431	1,069
Probation	Probation
17,183	6,393
Struck Out	Struck Out
164,541	10,844
Dismiss	Dismiss
14,646	1,754
Taken into consideration**	Taken into consideration**
65,882	9,273
Adjourn generally and other	Adjourn generally and other
5,187	1,289
Peace Bond	Peace Bond
1,166	672
Total	Total
388,345	48,272

APPENDIX VI THE PROBATION BOARD FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

The Probation Board for Northern Ireland (PBNI) is a non-departmental public body funded by the Northern Ireland Office and was set up in 1982. The PBNI's purpose is to "protect the public by working with the Courts, other Agencies and Partners to reduce re-offending and integrate offenders successfully back into the community."²²

The PBNI employ more than 300 people and just under half of these are Probation Officers based in more than 30 area offices all over Northern Ireland, and they currently manage over 3,000 clients. They have a number of functions which are laid down in legislation:

- to carry out professional risk assessments and provide reports to Courts.;
- to supervise offenders in the community;
- to have staff who work in prisons providing a range of services in the supervision and assistance of offenders towards the prevention of crime;and
- to provide reports for Life Sentence Review Commissioners.

The PBNI provides programmes for offenders sentenced to community supervision, including community service, in order to reduce re-offending and to protect the public. The other stated aim of the Board is to reduce recidivism²³. The Board will also contribute to the public service agreement target of reducing reconviction rates by 5% by 2008.

As part of community supervision, managed by PBNI, other agencies are engaged to provide specialist services. PBNI has a pivotal role in the assessment and management of offenders within the criminal justice system²⁴. The PBNI prioritise the funding which has been allocated by the Community Development fund to support and purchase services that protect the public, which includes the reduction of reoffending, the reintegration of offenders back into the community and the recognition and promotion of victims as central in the criminal justice process.

²² www.cjsni.gov.uk/

²³ http://www.pbni.org.uk/business_plan.pdf page 5

²⁴ Community Development, Funding Strategy and Policy, November 2006

APPENDIX VII COMMUNITY SERVICE STRATEGIC GOALS WITHIN THE PROBATION SERVICE

Community Service - STRATEGIC GOAL
We will refocus & rebrand Community Service, following the national review, to increase opportunities for reparation to communities as a credible alternative to custody

	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE PERSON	TIMEFRAME
1	Through the independent Community Service review we will refocus Community Service and implement the review findings in conjunction with the Department of Justice, Equality & Law Reform	1. Facilitate the independent review examination of Community Service	Assistant Director Community Service & Funded Projects	June 08
		2. In conjunction with the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform and stakeholders evaluate the review report		Sept 08
		3. Devise implementation scheme based on the report with all stakeholders		Dec 08
		4. Complete first stage of Health and Safety Site Audit for Community Service and include in the revised Probation Service Health and Safety Statement		May 08
2	We will develop systems to ensure efficient and accurate data gathering mechanisms	1. Based on the outcome of the review establish a working group to devise and plan for implementation of efficient and accurate data gathering mechanisms for Community Service	Assistant Director Community Service & Funded Projects and ICT Manager	Sept 08
		2. Prepare proposal for consideration by the Service and other stakeholders		Dec 08

	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE PERSON	
3	We will relaunch Community Service as an effective Court sanction adding value to communities and enriching reparation by offenders.	Begin draft refocused strategic plan for Community Service implementation scheme based on the review report.	Assistant Director YPP & Director, Research, Training & Development	Dec 08
4	We will prioritise the development of innovative environmental projects and initiatives in communities through Community Service.	1. Establish a pilot Graffiti Removal Project in Dublin	Assistant Director	April 08
		2. Evaluate the pilot Graffiti Removal Project and make decisions on options for replication in other areas	Community Service & Funded Projects and Senior Probation Officer	Nov 08
		3. Complete scoping and evaluation of potential Public Service recycling project	Assistant Director Community Service & Funded Projects	Sept 08
		4. Investigate additional innovative environmental projects with a target of at least one new initiative in development by the end of 2008.	Assistant Director Community Service & Funded Projects	Ongoing

Source: The Probation Service Strategy Statement 2008 - 2010

APPENDIX VIII QUESTIONNAIRES

Questionnaire to Judges of the District and Circuit Courts.

Name of person responding ²⁵ _____

Please provide answers below by circling the relevant box.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
1. I am positively inclined towards using Community Service Orders (CSO).	5	4	3	2	1	0
2. I know what Community Service Projects are operating in my area.	5	4	3	2	1	0
3. Community Service Projects in my area are appropriate sites for CSO's.	5	4	3	2	1	0
4. The Community Service Projects in my area are beneficial to the community.	5	4	3	2	1	0
5. Community Service Orders in my area are beneficial to offenders.	5	4	3	2	1	0
6. I receive sufficient information from the Probation Service about Community Service.	5	4	3	2	1	0
7. CSO's should be used more generally, i.e. not only as an alternative to a custodial sentence.	5	4	3	2	1	0
8. The lower time limit associated with CSO's (40 hours) should be decreased to make Community Service more useful as an instrument for lower grade offences.	5	4	3	2	1	0
9. The upper time limit associated with CSO's (240 hours) should be increased to make Community Service more useful as an instrument for higher grade offences.	5	4	3	2	1	0

10. Please rate the following barriers and constraints to using Community Service Orders. (1 low – 10 high)

	Rating (1 Low, 10 High)
Lack of availability of suitable projects	
Lack of suggestion by solicitors/ barristers	
Lack of suitable offenders	

11. How long do you consider to be reasonable between the decision to impose a CSO and commencement on a project? _____ Months

12. What improvements could be made to dealing with breaches of CSOs?

13. Please describe any facilities or infrastructure necessary to promote CSO's in your area

14. What changes would you like to see in order to make CSOs more effective or efficient?

15. Please provide any other comments you wish to make below.

²⁵ The questionnaire can be returned anonymously. If you wish to do so, please let us know that you have returned a questionnaire by sending an e mail to info@petrusconsult.com.

Questionnaire for Community Service Supervisors

1. **Name of person responding** _____

Details - Phone No _____
 Senior Probation Officer/ Office _____
 Probation Office _____

2. **How many hours are you contracted during each week?**

Day	Number of Hours You are Contracted	Hours of Operation
Example	4	14:00 – 17:00
Monday		
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		
Saturday		
Sunday		
Total		

3. **How many work hours each week do you spend on the activities below? Please provide your estimate.**

	Hours
Administration e.g. keeping time records / meeting SPOs	
Travelling to and between Projects during work time	
Direct Supervision	
Induction of new CS Offenders	
Identifying new work opportunities	
Other - Describe	
Total	

4. **Type of Project(s) E.g. if you are working on two schools in your area please put 2 in the box underneath school. If "Other", please describe. (Please complete for Current projects only.)**

Name	School	Sports Ground	Church, Graveyard	Tidy-town	Hospital	Other (Describe)
No. of sites						
Days Site Open (eg Mon, Wed, Fri)						
Maximum Number of Offenders on site at any one time						
Number of Offenders on site the last working day.						
Years in Operation						
Number of Weeks Closed during the year						

5. **In your view which of your project types adds most to the community?** _____

6. **In your view which of your project types works best for offenders?** _____

7. **In your view which of your project types is the easiest for you to manage?** _____

8. **What equipment do you currently use for the projects?**

	Yes/No
Hand Tools, eg paint brushes	
Personal Protective Equipment	
Lawnmowers, Strimmers etc.	
Consumables (e.g. paint)	
Other (Describe)	

9. **How many offenders are you currently keeping time cards for?** Number _____

10. **In a typical week, how many places are filled and available on your projects?**

Day	Places Filled	Unfilled Places Available

Monday		
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		
Saturday		
Total		

11. How do the offenders arrive at the location of the project?

	Number
Walk	
Bus	
Cycle	
Motor Bike	
Driven in a Motor Car	
Drive own Motor Car	
Other	

12. What work do the offenders do on your projects? Please provide the number in each category below.

Building Maintenance.	Gardening.	Painting	Cleaning	Other Describe

13. Please respond to the statements below by circling the relevant number.

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
A	It is important that the work undertaken is visible to the Community	5	4	3	2	1	0
B	Local Communities benefit from the work carried out.	5	4	3	2	1	0
C	Work should be meaningful to those on CSO's in order to be most beneficial.	5	4	3	2	1	0
D	Other work opportunities are available in the local area that would be suitable for CSO's.	5	4	3	2	1	0

14. If there is more work available in your local area that would be suitable for the Community Service Scheme please describe below:

15. How could community service projects be made more efficient or effective?

16. How would you like to see Community Service develop in the future and what should change?

Questionnaire to Senior Probation Officers

1. **Name** _____
2. **Position/title** _____
Details - **Phone No** _____
 Email _____
 Office _____
3. **Number and List of Community Service Projects in your area for which you are responsible.** **NUMBER** _____

4. **How many Probation Officers are on your team?** **NUMBER** _____
5. **How many Community Service Supervisors?** **NUMBER** _____
6. **In a typical week what percentage of your time do you estimate is spent dealing with Community Service issues.** **PERCENTAGE** _____%
7. **On average, what percentage of the total time of the Probation Officers on your team is spent dealing with Community Service issues.** _____%

8. In connection **Community Service only**, how many hours in a typical week are spent on the activities below by you and by each of your directly reporting staff? Please provide your best estimates. For example if each of your Probation Officers spends 2 hours on Direct Contact enter 2 hours against Direct Contact under Probation Officer hours.

Community Service Related Time	Your Time Hours	Your Directly Reporting Probation Officers. Hours
Preparing CSO Reports		
Sourcing new CSO work opportunities		
Travelling to and between CSO Projects		
Direct Contact with CSO Offenders		
Dealing with Revocations of CSO's.		
General Management, Admin, Statistics, Time records, Reporting and Queries to do with CSO (other than listed above)		
Other (CSO related)		
Total		

9. **Currently, how many CSO offenders are you and your team responsible for?**
 Community Service Projects **NUMBER** _____
 Individual Placements **NUMBER** _____

10. **What do you consider to be the benefits to the Community arising from the Community Service Scheme?**

11. What do you consider to be the benefits to offenders arising from the Community Service Scheme?

12. Please respond to the statements below by circling the relevant number.

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
A	Offenders who complete their CSO are less likely to re-offend.	5	4	3	2	1	0
B	It is important that the work undertaken is visible to the Community?	5	4	3	2	1	0
C	Local Communities benefit from the CSO work carried out.	5	4	3	2	1	0
D	Work should be meaningful to those on CSO's in order to be most beneficial.	5	4	3	2	1	0
E	Other potential community service projects are available in the local area that would be suitable for CSO's. (See 13 below)	5	4	3	2	1	0

13. If there is more work available in your local area that would be suitable for the Community Service Scheme please describe

14. What type of community service project works best in your opinion?

15. In relation to CS activities in your area during 2007 please provide details or your best estimates as follows:

	Numbers
A Number of CSO reports submitted to Court	
B Number of Offenders Assigned to your CSO projects or on individual placements	
C Average time (estimated) from hearing to receipt of Order (Weeks)	
D Average time (estimated) from receipt of order to commencement on CSO project or placement (Weeks)	
E Average number waiting to join CSO projects	
F Please estimate the Average length of time to complete CSO orders once commenced (Weeks)	
G. Percentage completing the Order successfully - Estimate	

16. What are the barriers and constraints that you have found (1 low – 10 high)

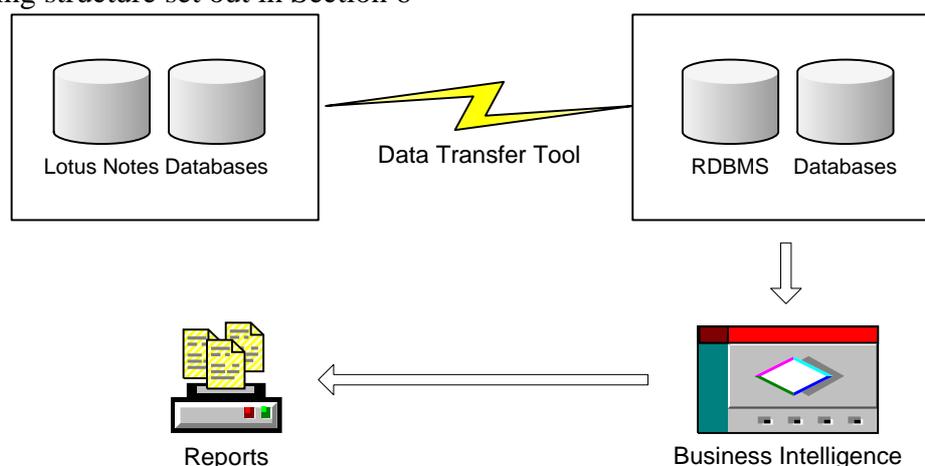
	Rating (1 Low, 10 High)
Lack of availability of suitable projects	
Lack of suitable places on Saturdays	
Low number of CS Orders by the Courts	
Delays in receipt of CS Orders from Courts	
Non Attendance by Offenders	
Non suitability of offenders by reason of Addiction	
Non suitability of offenders because of incompatibility with others	
Lack of supervised places or individual places for female offenders	
Other (Describe)	

17. How could Community Service be made more efficient and / or effective?

18. How would you like to see Community Service develop in the future and what should change?

APPENDIX IX IT REPORTING STRUCTURE

This appendix provides a brief description of the functional elements of the IT reporting structure set out in Section 6



Data would be transferred from the various Lotus Notes Databases into the RDBMS Database on a scheduled basis as governed by the Data Transfer Tool. The data in the RDBMS Database(s) can then be readily accessed by the Business Intelligence application in order to produce the desired report(s) for the business user.

Creation of a RDBMS Database

The RDBMS Databases are better suited for the return of cross referenced data than are Notes Databases. Each Database type has its own advantages and disadvantages, but in this case the RDBMS is better suited for the raw processing of report data and for integration with Reporting tools (i.e. Business Intelligence).

Reporting Tool (i.e. Business Intelligence)

The reporting tool would extrapolate the report data from the RDBMS Database for presentation to end users. It would be the conduit through which the reports would be configured and displayed. An example of a reporting tool type is 'Business Objects' which provides a solution that can enable business users to be more self-sufficient in generating their own reports and conducting their own analysis. It can also allow for high quality dash-boarding / visualisations of reports.

Mechanism for data transfer between systems

To ensure that the most up-to-date information can be extracted into reports, it is essential that there is a mechanism for data transfer from the Notes to the RDBMS systems. The ideal properties for the transfer mechanism are as follows:

- The transfer process should be configurable to allow for the transfer of data between the two systems automatically on a predefined periodic basis;
- Management of the transfer process should be intuitive enough to enable it to be re-configured easily by suitably skilled people with a moderate amount of training; and
- Re-configuration of the transfer mechanism should support a quick turn-around time; i.e. changes implemented ‘almost’ immediately (depending on the scheduled transfer period as indicated in a previous point).

APPENDIX X MATTERS RAISED BY JUDGES OUTSIDE THE SCOPE OF THE REVIEW

This value for money and policy review of the Community Service Scheme is concerned with reviewing the scheme as currently operated within the terms of the 1983 legislation. Some of the issues raised fall outside the terms of the existing legislation and are included here for separate consideration.

A majority of Circuit and District Court Judges considered that community service should be used more generally and not just as an alternative to a custodial sentence and that the upper limit of 240 hours should be increased so that Community Service could be used as an option for more serious offences

Among District Court Judges only, 82% were in favour of using CSOs more generally i.e. not just as an alternative to a custodial sentence, compared to 65% overall, and 82% were in favour of increasing the upper limit associated with CSOs, compared to 76% overall.

There was a lower level of agreement in relation to reducing the lower limit of 40 hours for Community Service Orders with 48% in agreement and a similar percentage being unsure or disagreeing

Specific comments received included:

- (Community Service) Should not only be used as an alternative to prison;
- Not just as an alternative to custody and decreased lower limits and increased upper limits
- I am in favour of CS and would like to see more positive publicity about it. I would use CSO's more often if the alternative was not always a custodial penalty;
- CS should be available as an alternative to a fine. It is too restrictive that CS is only available as an alternative to gaol.