

Purpose

Working for a
democratic and
just society



1.1 The Ministry of Justice was established on 9 May 2007. It brought together the former responsibilities of the Department for Constitutional Affairs (DCA) with the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) from the Home Office and the trilateral Office for Criminal Justice Reform (OCJR). Lord Falconer of Thoroton was the Department's first Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice. The Rt Hon. Jack Straw MP succeeded Lord Falconer in June 2007. In December 2007 Sir Suma Chakrabarti KCB became Permanent Secretary in succession to Alex Allan.

1.2 The new Department is responsible for prisons and probation, the courts and tribunals and legal aid, along with important policy responsibilities, including constitutional reform and devolution, democracy and human rights.

1.3 Our purpose is to work for a democratic and just society.

1.4 Our core aims are: reducing re-offending and creating more efficient, effective offender management services in custody and the community, improving access to justice and the effective administration of the justice system, building an effective relationship with the judiciary and delivering constitutional reform and working for a just and democratic society. The changes underline our commitment to public protection, strengthening closer working between prisons and probation and making the most of public funds while creating the right conditions for the delivery of the whole of MoJ's wide agenda.

Strategic objectives

1.5 The Justice Secretary has set the Department four strategic objectives:

- **Democracy, Constitution and Law**
Strengthening democracy, rights and responsibilities

- **Access to Justice**

Delivering fair and simple routes to civil and family justice

- **National Offender Management Service**

Protecting the public and reducing re-offending

- **Criminal Justice**

A more effective, transparent and responsive criminal justice system for victims and the public

1.6 This report summarises our progress against these goals during 2007/08 and our programme of work for 2008/09.

Public Service Agreement Targets

1.7 The Department has previously agreed a set of challenging Public Service Agreement (PSA) targets for the period covered by the 2004 Spending Review. This report covers the performance on the final year of those targets and progress is covered in chapter 2.

How we are organised

Our responsibilities and functions

1.8 The Department has a wide ranging remit, with major delivery responsibilities for prisons and probation, the courts and tribunals, legal aid and more, as well as important policy responsibilities, ranging from constitutional reform and devolution, democracy and human rights, to the justice system.

1.9 Three sister departments - the Northern Ireland Court Service, the National Archives and HM Land Registry – report directly to the Justice Secretary. Also associated with MoJ are a number of organisations such as the Office of the Public Guardian, the office of the Public Trustee and Official Solicitor, the Legal Services Commission, the Law Commission,

the Office of the Legal Services Ombudsman, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Court Administration, the Judicial Studies Board and the Youth Justice Board.

1.10 The administrative functions of the Scotland Office (including the Office of the Advocate General for Scotland) and the Wales Office are part of MoJ. Responsibilities for the maintenance of the relationship between Westminster and the devolved administrations in Edinburgh and Cardiff remain with the Secretary of State for Scotland and the Secretary of State for Wales respectively.

1.11 When the Department was set up, the then Permanent Secretary commissioned a review to develop proposals for a new structure and ways of working to equip the Department to better deliver on its aims and priorities. In January 2008, the Justice Secretary announced to Parliament the outcome of that review, setting out the high level structure for the Department. The new top structure of the Department came into place on 1 April with the more detailed changes being implemented over the next few months to provide a coherent structure for managing the Department's key challenges - on public protection and reducing re-offending, constitutional reform, and access to justice. These changes will help the Department to implement Lord Carter's recommendations on offender management services, to take forward the new partnership relationship with the judiciary and to focus more clearly on its key policy and delivery challenges. We have taken a robust approach to removing duplication and improving efficiency.

Ministers and senior officials

1.12 The Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State is the Rt Hon Jack Straw MP.

The Justice Secretary was supported by a ministerial team and a Departmental Management Board, led by the Permanent Secretary during 2007/08. The ministerial team joined with the Permanent Secretary and senior officials from the Department and the Legal Services Commission (LSC) to form the Ministry of Justice Board (MoJB), chaired by the Justice Secretary. This oversaw both progress on the strategy and policy priorities set by the Justice Secretary for MoJ and its delivery arms and the operation of the Department. It identified actions to ensure that strategy and policies were delivered effectively and maintained an oversight of the Department's financial position. It also maintained high standards of propriety and corporate governance and oversaw relationships with key MoJ stakeholders.

1.13 The MoJB benefited from the experience and input of non-executive members:

- Sir Peter Bonfield (formerly chief executive of British Telecommunications Plc) until 31 January 2008
- Professor Georges Selim (chair, MoJ Corporate Audit Committee) until April 2008
- Rt Hon Lord Justice Leveson (Senior Presiding Judge of England and Wales) until 8 May 2007.

1.14 From 1 April 2008, the Departmental Management Board has been replaced by the Corporate Management Board (CMB), chaired by the Permanent Secretary and comprising of the senior executive team and three new non-executive members. The CMB will continue to meet the ministerial team regularly. We shall report on the operation of these arrangements in the MoJ Departmental Report 2008/09.

How we are organised (as at 31 March 2008)

Ministerial Team



Rt Hon Jack Straw MP



Rt Hon David Hanson MP



Lord Hunt of Kings Heath OBE



Michael Wills MP



Maria Eagle MP



Bridget Prentice MP

The Board



Sir Suma Chakrabarti KCB



Ursula Brennan



Peter Brook



Rod Clark



Rowena Collins-Rice



Helen Edwards



Yvonne Gallagher



Peter Handcock CBE



Marco Pierleoni



Carolyn Regan



Beverly Shears



Neil Ward



Phil Wheatley CB



David Wood