

Administrative Court User Group Meeting

Wednesday 28th January 2026

4:30pm In Person, Court 28

Approved Minutes

Present:

Chamberlain J, Monika Patel, Mark Hamilton, Geraint Evans, Vincent Lyddon, Kam Nagra, Ben Wood, Oludotun Onasanya, Lydia Watton, Natalie Stevens, Charles Bishop, Christina Parkinson, James Packer, Margaret McNally, Rebecca Hacker, Shu Shin Luh, Unkha Banda, David May, Amy Tschobotko, Angela Warwick

Apologies:

Georgina Surry, Katie Meredith, Elizabeth Mackie, Iwona Chuchla, Rakesh Singh, Nusrat Zar, Jyoti Gill, John Curtis, Philip Shearer

Meeting started 4:30pm Chamberlain J (CJ) thanked all for attending.

1. Minutes of last meeting/matters arising

The draft minutes of the last meeting were agreed without amendment.

2. ACO Performance

CJ noted that the total of new cases had increased by 15% on 2024 and 23% on 2023 which is a substantial increase in the volume of work but that there has been no increase in staff or judges.

CJ referred to the ACO stats and noted that the Paper Applications target was not being met, and that the Renewals target is unrealistic. The Final Hearings target **is** being met.

CJ noted that the Immediate applications mostly relate to the UK-France Treaty arrangements and that two judges are allocated for this.

3. a) Timely Decision at Permission Stage, b) E-Filing, c) Timescale to address a “non-urgent” email, d) minutes to be shared earlier – James Packer

James Packer (JP) **a)** advised of a claim lodged by Duncan Lewis in September last year where the Defendant had not filed an AOS and had no response to numerous emails relating to this, and asked that if there was no AOS, would these cases ever go to a judge?

Lydia Watton (LW) confirmed that cases **will** be sent to judge if there is no AOS, the Case Progression Team will sort the papers for the court lawyer, and the court lawyers have a list of all their cases.

JP b) raised concern about delays with applications being issued that are lodged via CE-File.

LW advised that there is no way of knowing how urgent a claim is if lodged via CE-Filing and that if a claim is urgent, it should be filed by email.

CJ noted that judges cannot see what cases are in the queue until they are accepted.

JP referred to **a)** concerning no acknowledgement of emails- **LW** advised this case will be looked at.

JP d) said that in previous meetings he was advised that the minutes of the meetings would be shared earlier.

CJ said this would be actioned

JP brought up an item not on the agenda regarding decision dates at Part 3.1 on the N461 claim form. He noted a claim lodged by his organisation, where the decision was ongoing, was rejected as the wording placed at 3.1 stated “maintained”. **JP** noted the JR Guide doesn’t address the wording that should be used.

Mark Hamilton (**MH**) advised that the word “ongoing” was generally to be used in these cases.

Charles Bishop (**CB**) said he had sent an email this morning this with four examples of situations where cases had been rejected for incorrect reasons.

CJ said that these were staff errors and advised that there had been a high turnover of staff in the Issues Office.

Oludotun Onasanya (**OO**) apologised for these errors and advised this matter had been taken up with the staff.

LW advised that staff in the Issues & Enquiry team were not legally trained but this was currently being looked into.

MH said that if a claimant is legally represented, the claim should be issued.

CJ said we need to devise a procedure to address this.

4. Listings Cases against Litigants in Person- Natalie Stevens

Natalie Stevens (**NS**) asked that, with an increasing amount of Litigant in Person cases, when cases are renewed, if it would be possible to have “dates to avoid” rather than “mutually agreed” dates. Monika Patel (**MK**) said that if there had been no response by the 3rd email, a date would be set but would email **NS** separately.

5. News and Notes, Q & A

CJ noted that Litigants in Person are now using AI and ChatGPT to lodge claims but typically don't understand law. This results in long documents with lots of law, but the claim still has to be read by an actual person. This is putting a strain on the Issue and Enquiries Office, the Case Progression Team, court lawyers and judges.

CJ advised that Parole referrals would be coming to the ACO soon and that these cases would take up more time. There also more UK – France Treaty claims (one-in-one-out).

CJ advised that there would be Broadcasting of ACO hearings in a similar way to the Court of Appeal and the Supreme Court. The ACO will not be broadcasting every case.

6. AOB/ Next Meeting

Shu Shin Luh (**SSL**) raised a suggestion on Renewal Applications that on the Renewal form there should be a box asking if 30 minutes was sufficient. She stated 30 minutes was unrealistic as default standard.

CJ said he would take this away

SSL raised a question relating to Expedited claims – where a claim is expedited without a specific timeframe.

CJ advised that if a judge gives direction for a case to go to a judge by a specific date, this will often go to the Immediate judge.

A question was asked how the court processes requests for anonymity.

LW advised that names are provisionally anonymised when the claim is issued but only a judge can order anonymity.

SSL raised a point on EOT Application cases causing delays and / or creating compressed timescales.

CJ advised that court lawyers can use EOT powers and considered there might be alternative ways of dealing with these quickly. **CJ** will take this away.

CJ thanked all for attending and advised that the next CUG meeting will be in April and will be on-line.

Meeting ended 5:50pm.