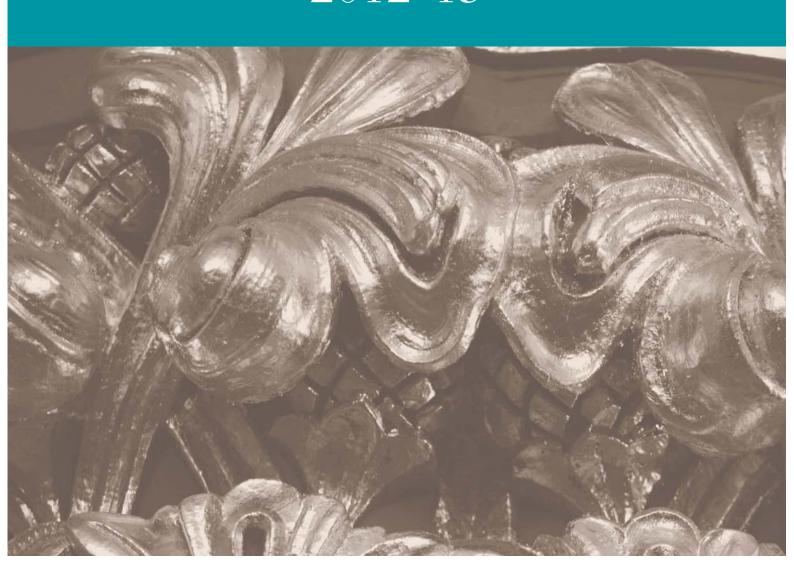


The Judicial Office

Business Plan 2012-13



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Foreword

By the Lord Chief Justice and Senior President of Tribunals

An independent, efficient and effective judiciary is central to ensuring the fair and impartial delivery of justice. The support provided by the Judicial Office enables the judiciary, in courts and tribunals, to contribute successfully in the ever-changing environment in which we operate.

We welcome the 2012-13 Business Plan for the Judicial Office and congratulate Anne Sharp and her

staff on the manner in which they have handled complex changes over the last year and their effective planning for the year ahead which, in turn, will not be without its own demands and challenges.

The contribution made by staff across the Judicial Office is recognised and valued by us and our colleagues and we look forward to working together with the Judicial Office in the coming year.

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Lord Judge Lord Chief Justice Rt Hon Sir Robert Carnwath Senior President of Tribunals

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Introduction

By the Chief Executive, Anne Sharp

2011/12 was certainly a year of change – a year ago the Judicial Office looked very different. We put in place changes across the board, while continuing to deliver our core tasks in supporting the judiciary, making savings and improvements.

In the last year the Judicial College was formed; the single judicial HR team moved from being a concept into a reality; the Family Justice Review published recommendations; HMCTS came into existence; considerable work was done to translate the Jackson reforms for Civil Justice into practice; and the Government put forward proposals on criminal justice.

As we look forward to 2012/13, I am certain that the Judicial Office will build on much of the work that it has done this year: I am also certain that the coming year will bring all sorts of new developments and challenges.

To thrive and succeed in this environment, we will need to continue to build our personal and team capability across the Judicial Office; stay flexible while being clear about priorities; and focus on continually improving our efficiency and effectiveness. I am confident that with this approach, we will go from strength to strength.

Anne Sharp Chief Executive, Judicial Office

Background – Judicial Office

The Judicial Office provides support across a wide range of functions and was established following the Constitutional Reform Act. The JO is answerable to the Lord Chief Justice (LCJ) and Senior President of Tribunals (SPT) and supports the senior judiciary, as well as all 37,000 judicial office-holders, including the magistracy.

The JO is committed to constantly improving its efficiency and effectiveness – remaining flexible and responsive to changing needs and environments. Over the last couple of years it has delivered upfront savings of £2.9M and reduced staffing by ten per cent, despite taking on additional areas of work.

The JO is funded by the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) and is accountable to Parliament through the Permanent Secretary for financial propriety and regularity.

In its day-to-day activities the JO works closely with the senior judiciary, judicial governance bodies and judges around the country to make a difference to the operation of the judiciary and to the efficient, impartial and independent delivery of justice.

The JO is responsible for delivering a wide range of functions for the judiciary, including training, communications, media, human resources, welfare and policy advice.

Through the Office for Judicial Complaints, it also deals with complaints against the conduct of judicial office-holders. In this and a number of other specific activities, for example in relation to appointments, the JO provides support to the Lord Chancellor.

The JO seeks to achieve the same goals as the Ministry of Justice on the rule of law and efficiency of the justice system, but does so from a judicial perspective. It therefore works closely with the Ministry of Justice, Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Services (HMCTS) and across government departments.

The role of the judiciary

The judiciary is one of the three branches of state. The judiciary, the executive and the legislature have distinct roles and are independent of one another. The role of the judiciary is to uphold the rule of law and to deliver justice in disputes between citizens, businesses and the state fairly, efficiently and economically.

The principle of judicial independence underpins this and has been recognised for many centuries. The democratic health of a nation requires that individual judges and the judiciary as a whole are impartial and independent of all external pressures and of each other. This allows litigants and the wider public to have confidence that their cases will be decided fairly and in accordance with the law, including those to which the administration of the day is a party.

Judicial independence has been underlined in recent years by the bringing into force of the Constitutional Reform Act 2005. This Act made significant changes to the position of the Lord Chancellor, removing his role as a judge and transferring the role of Head of the Judiciary to the Lord Chief Justice. It also set out an explicit statutory duty for all government

ministers to uphold the independence of the judiciary, as well as placing the Lord Chancellor under a specific statutory duty to defend the judiciary's independence.

Under the Tribunals, Courts and Enforcement Act, the Senior President of Tribunals is responsible for the leadership, guidance and training of the tribunals' judiciary. The Senior President's responsibilities extend to Scotland and Northern Ireland, as well as to England and Wales. The Government has given a Ministerial commitment to create a unified judiciary encompassing both courts and tribunals under the overall leadership of the Lord Chief Justice, with such changes being included in a Bill as soon as Parliamentary time allows.

As well as delivering their functions hearing individual cases in court, judges at all levels play an important part in improving the operation of the justice system through their leadership and practical experience. Much of what is done beyond the courtroom is done in the judges' own time. The work of the Diversity and Community Liaison Judges is one illustration of leadership by judges in the local community.

Our aim and strategic objectives

The Judicial Executive Board has agreed the following purpose, aim and strategic objectives for the Judicial Office:

Our purpose: To support the judiciary in upholding the rule of law and delivering justice impartially, speedily and efficiently in the interests of society as a whole

Our Aim: To support and enable the continued effective operation and development of an independent and respected judiciary for the 21st century

Support and enable leadership and governance for the judiciary

Our Strategic Objectives

Support the effective administration of courts and tribunals

Support the judiciary in its responsibilities for justice and constitutional matters

of
high-quality training
which meets the
needs
of courts' and
tribunals' judiciary

Promote public confidence in the judiciary through the handling of complaints against the judiciary Build and maintain effective relationships while widening understanding of the role of the independent judiciary among the public and those with whom we work

Provide an
effective and
professional HR
service that meets the
needs of the judiciary
and supports its
diversity

Develop our people and continuously improve our efficiency and effectiveness

Support and enable leadership and governance for the judiciary

Effective leadership and governance for the judiciary is essential to the justice system and to equip the judiciary to face the demands of the present and the future.

Implementation of revised governance arrangements began in 2010 and included structural changes to the Judicial Executive Board (JEB) and Judges' Council (JC). These were reviewed in 2011 and the Judicial Office will take forward the recommendations from the review over the coming twelve months.

2012 will see the introduction of the new leadership role of Chief Coroner. Support for the Chief Coroner will be provided by the Judicial Office.

Sub-objective	Delivered by	Outcomes
Provide a co-ordinated and corporate approach to decision making through effective support to JEB, JC, Tribunals Judicial Executive Board (TJEB) and the Judicial College Board and their subcommittees	Governance Team Senior President of Tribunals' office Judicial College Secretariat Working Group and sub- committee secretariats	Effective and timely preparation for meetings Prompt communication and discharge of actions Effective support to the committees of the Judges' Council The senior judiciary in a strong position to improve the administration of justice; decide, on matters which require action, and effectively communicate decisions, in an integrated and timely way to the wider judiciary
Support the new Chief Coroner in his role as Head of the coroner system and in the delivery of his functions in relation to leadership, training discipline, standard setting and acting as a champion for coroners	Judicial Office Judicial College	Establish a team to provide effective advice and support on the practical implications of policy and operational issues Ensure the provision of high quality induction and other training to coroners, their deputies, assistants and, where appropriate, staff

Support the effective administration of courts and tribunals

The effective administration of courts and tribunals is essential to the delivery of justice. The judiciary has an important role to play in this and in identifying and implementing measures to deliver greater efficiency across the system. It works in partnership with HMCTS, which is accountable to the Lord Chancellor, Lord Chief Justice, and Senior President of Tribunals.

The Judicial Office also supports judges in leadership roles in their interaction with the administration, as well as the role of all judges in improving efficiency in the courtroom.

Sub-objective	Delivered by	Outcomes
To support the role played by the judiciary in securing continued improvements in court and tribunal performance including improving and simplifying early guilty pleas and case management, and the review by the Deputy Senior Presiding Judge (DSPJ) on Civil Court and County Court Efficiency	Senior Presiding Judge's Office Senior President of Tribunals' office	Roll out of all pilot schemes by April 2013, leading to continued improvement in efficiency Support to Civil and County Court Review which enables completion to DSPJ timetable Monthly management information for judges around the country, which enables them to focus on how they can improve the performance of courts
To work with HMCTS to ensure the implementation of the agreed action plan based on the review of judicial security	Senior Presiding Judge's Office Senior President of Tribunals' office	HMCTS action plan delivered to timetable Increased confidence in judicial security arrangements and the coordination of effective responses to security issues

Sub-objective	Delivered by	Outcomes
To work with the judiciary, the Ministry of Justice and the Civil Justice Council to implement the recommendations and reforms set out in the Jackson Review of Civil Litigation Costs (see also Civil Justice Council business plan Annex 1)	Master of the Rolls' Office	Successful implementation by April 2013 of the 105 Final Report recommendations including the oversight and evaluation of judicial pilots to test proposals in practice and effective liaison with MoJ/HMCTS/CJC on all stages Rule changes and judicial training will be completed by April 2013
Support effective judicial participation in the HMCTS modernisation programme for civil justice and support initiatives to improve the efficiency of the Court of Appeal (Civil Division)	Master of the Rolls' Office	Effective collaboration with HMCTS in the development of policy and operational practices to improve efficiency including establishing, monitoring and evaluating a pilot mediation scheme for the Court of Appeal (Civil Division) from April 2012 – April 2013
To ensure that judicial views on the practical implications for the courts and the judiciary of proposed criminal justice policy and legislation are effectively communicated to government and parliament and that the impartial and fair delivery of justice remains a key component of government policy-making and administration	Criminal Justice team	Provision of high quality advice to ensure an effective judicial contributions to consultations, the formulation of criminal justice policy and legislation, in England and Wales and Europe Supporting judiciary involvement with CJS bodies including Sentencing Council, the Criminal Justice Council and the Criminal Procedure Rules Committee Developing a quality assurance scheme for criminal advocates by end March 2013

Sub-objective	Delivered by	Outcomes
To work with the Ministry of Justice on implementation of reforms arising from the Solving Disputes in the County Court consultation paper	Master of the Rolls' Office	Effective communication and support, which will enable practical improvements to be made and enable disputes to be resolved proportionately
Support the Modernisation of Family Justice programme for the judiciary in response to the Family Justice Review, working with the Family Justice Council, MoJ and others (See the Family Justice Council's work plan at Annex 1)	President of the Family Division's Office	Secure agreement for improvements to court processes and judicial management of cases, to reduce the time taken to make the best decisions for children, by end of July 2012 Develop a project plan for detailed design, training guidance and implementation of changes required in the operation of the family justice system by end July 2012, and deliver to that project plan
Support the Judge Advocate General in the discharge of his duties in relation to the Court Martial and the Service Justice System	Judge Advocate General's Office	Ensuring high quality support to the judges and strong links between the Military Court Service and the Judge Advocate General The development of an early guilty plea system for the Court Martial, including a pilot scheme in Germany from mid-2012 onwards Effective support to the JAG in respect of the governance of the Service Justice System and maintaining a good working relationship with the Ministry of Defence

Sub-objective	Delivered by	Outcomes
 Support the President of the Queen's Bench Division to: Provide leadership to the Queen's Bench Division civil jurisdictions, particularly improving efficiency in the Administrative Court Deploy Queen's Bench judges to the RCJ civil jurisdictions, the Court of Appeal Criminal Division and crime and civil work on circuit 	President of the Queen's Bench Division's Office	Provision of timely, good quality advice on the practical implications of policy and other operational issues Effective work with HMCTS to identify areas for judicially-led improvements in practice and procedure, including the appointment of new QB Master (Administrative Court) by late 2012 Ensuring judicial resources are best used and an effective working relationship with HMCTS is maintained
Identify effective and efficient approaches to handling the large number of immigration Judicial Reviews to the Admin Court, including examining how the Upper Tribunal can support this work	President of the Queen's Bench Division's Office	Judicial resources used more effectively and efficiently than at present
To support the Senior President of Tribunals in his role as leader of the First Tier and Upper Tribunals and the ETs and EAT as well as in his wider judicial responsibilities as a member of the Judicial Executive Board and a Board member for HMCTS	Senior President of Tribunals' Office	Effective channels of communication between the Jurisdictional Boards and the Judicial Activity Group, which enable connections to be made Effective guidance and advice to tribunals on a range of policy, legal and operational issues
To support the Chancellor of the High Court in the efficient and smooth running of the work of the Chancery Division including authorisations of judges to sit in the division and assisting with the drafting and updating of practice directions and guidance notes	The Chancellor's Office	Authorisations processed promptly Good quality and timely contributions to practice direction and guidance

Support the judiciary in its responsibilities for justice and constitutional matters

The Lord Chief Justice (LCJ), in his role as President of the Courts of England and Wales, under Section 7 of the Constitutional Reform Act 2005, is responsible for representing the views of the judiciary of England and Wales to parliament, the Lord Chancellor and Ministers of the Crown generally.

To enable the LCJ to fulfil this role, the JO supports the senior judiciary in developing and communicating a coherent judicial position on the fair and effective administration of justice and constitutional matters.

The Senior President of Tribunals has a similar role under the Tribunals, Courts and Enforcement Act, and the JO is also responsible for providing support in relation to these functions.

Sub-objective	Delivered by	Outcomes
Maintain a strategic overview of the needs and concerns of the judiciary and build and maintain effective relationships with the executive, parliament and other external actors (such as academics) in order to represent and further Judicial views and objectives	Lord Chief Justice's office Senior President of Tribunals' office Strategy, Governance and Communications	Effective and consistent communication with the Executive, Parliament and others Sound relationships at working levels which support mutual understanding
Facilitate a judicial response to any constitutional issues arising during the year, assessing the constitutional implications of any relevant proposals that arise	Lord Chief Justice's office	Early identification of emerging issues and the need for a judicial response

Sub-objective	Delivered by	Outcomes
Maintain and develop the relationship between the LCJ and SPT with the Lord President and Lord Chief Justice (Northern Ireland) and their respective judiciaries	Lord Chief Justice's office Senior President of Tribunals' office	Early identification of emerging issues and the need for a judicial response
Develop the relationship between the judiciary, parliament and the Welsh Government	Lord Chief Justice's office Senior President of Tribunals' office Strategy, Governance and Communications	Prompt identification and response to issues relating to the justice system in Wales Effective communication at working level with officials in Wales Effective support to the Wales Committee of the Judges' Council
To assist and support the Lord Chief Justice and the Chancellor of the High Court's Judicial Pensions Committee in responding to the government's proposed reforms of the Judicial Pension Schemes	The Chancellor's office	Effective communication with the Executive Effective administration and support of the Pension Committee Appropriate professional advice to the Committee

Ensure the delivery of high-quality training which meets the needs of courts' and tribunals' judiciary

The Judicial College provides training of the highest professional standard for judicial office-holders that:

- satisfies the business requirements of judicial leaders
- promotes the professional development of judicial office-holders
- strengthens the capacity of judicial office-holders to discharge their judicial functions effectively;
- enhances public confidence in the justice system.

Sub-objective	Delivered by	Outcomes
Ensure the learning and development needs of all judicial office-holders are identified, priorities for training determined and training programmes delivered to meet needs. Administrative support to include the development of the online booking system and online prospectus of available courses	Judicial College Courts, Magistrates and Tribunals teams ICT Team Education and Development Advisers	Training delivered on time and to budget Infrastructure created to allow access to online information and online booking of training which is easy to use
Review and evaluate methods of delivery of judicial training to ensure continuous development and improvement and value for money	Specific teams to look at Estates and Course Support. All managers to review budgets	Implementation and evaluation of Continuous Improvement plan.

Sub-objective	Delivered by	Outcomes
Devise and implement a strategy for judicial e-learning which increases its current use and complements face to face training	ICT Team	Framework for Learning Management System (LMS) for pilot use May 2012 Operational LMS from September 2012
Participate in appropriate judicial training projects which strengthen judicial independence and reinforce the judiciary as a key institution of democratic governance within the UK, across Europe and Internationally	Judicial College	The courts and tribunals judiciary will receive appropriate training in relevant international law and procedure, EU law and International Conventions, strengthening the rule of law and building closer relationships with the judiciary internationally

Promote public confidence in the judiciary through the handling of complaints against the judiciary

The work of the Office for Judicial Complaints (OJC) enhances public confidence in our system of justice by providing a way for members of the public to have their concerns about the personal conduct or behaviour of judges, tribunal members or magistrates, independently investigated and where appropriate, addressed through disciplinary sanction. OJC reports jointly to the Lord Chancellor and Lord Chief Justice.

Sub-objective	Delivered by	Outcomes
Deal with judicial complaints promptly, meeting or exceeding agreed Key Performance Indicators (KPI) that reflect the stages in the Judicial Discipline (Prescribed Procedures) Regulations 2006 (as amended)	OJC	KPIs met or exceeded, prompt action taken to address problems which arise Members of the public are assured that there is an appropriate, independent disciplinary procedure to address their concerns
In accordance with the Lord Chief Justice and Lord Chancellor's directions to the OJC, deliver revised legislation following a review of the rules and regulations governing judicial discipline	Head of OJC	A streamlined system for dealing with complaints of judicial misconduct which increases efficiency and effectiveness and enables the delivery of an improved service to the public and judicial office-holders

Build and maintain effective relationships while widening understanding of the role of the independent judiciary among the public and those with whom we work

To maintain confidence in the judiciary and their work, it is important that the role of the judiciary is understood and valued. It is also important that we have effective relationships with those with an interest in the work of the judiciary, and those with whom we need to work, both here and internationally.

Sub-objective	Delivered by	Outcomes
Ensure the implementation of an effective communications strategy and guidance for the judiciary	Communications Team working with the Press Office and the Standing Committee on Communications	Strategy remains relevant and is subject to review annually Major projects (Judicial Portal and Intranet) to be completed by July 2012
Evaluate and develop the communication channels for the judiciary, JO staff and wider public to increase their effectiveness and efficiency; including updating the Judicial Intranet and website and complete review of the Judicial Portal	Communications Team	Major projects (Judicial Portal and Intranet) to completed by July 2012 Systems and material remain up to date and relevant, meeting the needs of the judiciary and providing good value for money
To provide a Press Office function that meets the needs of the judiciary, JO and the media	Press Office	Effective relationships with the media Judicial and media confidence through support provided by the Press Team Media coverage which is accurate and balanced

Sub-objective	Delivered by	Outcomes
To work with the judiciary, MoJ, HMCTS and broadcasters to address the practical issues arising from a change in legislation which will allow the introduction of broadcasting from courts	Head of SGC and Press Office	Effective working relations and practical solutions to the issues identified
Ensure the development and implementation of a judicial strategy for engagement and action on European and wider international matters	International Team	Appropriate and timely use of judicial expertise Programme for international judicial relations and visits/exchanges delivered to time and budget
Contribute to the building of relationships and sharing of knowledge and experience between the judiciary and its European and international colleagues	International Team	Continued good relationships which result in increased mutual understanding and allow the judiciary to contribute effectively to EU and other international initiatives that may affect judicial independence or the administration of justice

Provide an effective and professional HR service that meets the needs of the judiciary and supports its diversity

Effective operation of the justice system requires appropriate members of the judiciary to be selected, appointed and available to deal with cases in the right place, at the right time. The JO needs to be in a strong position to provide appropriate support.

Sub-objective	Delivered by	Outcomes
The development of a unified HR Strategy for the Judiciary	Judicial HR	Approved by JEB and TJEB May 2012
		Development and timely delivery of project plans on priority areas
Provide policy advice and support to the LCJ and SPT in connection with their responsibilities for the welfare and deployment of the judiciary and support the LC in setting the conditions of appointment and terms of service for judicial office-holders	Judicial HR	Renew and re-launch judicial health and welfare policy by December 2012
Support the development of a more diverse judiciary and take forward the recommendations of the Judicial Diversity Taskforce	Judicial HR	Anniversary report on progress of the Judicial Diversity Taskforce recommendations in May 2012/13 which fully reflects activities and progress Proposal developed for Recorder appraisal by summer 2012

Sub-objective	Delivered by	Outcomes
Support the Lord Chief Justice, Senior President of Tribunals and Lord Chancellor in the effective operation of the appointments process, and undertake a review of the processes for ad hoc appointments, extensions and judicial roles	Judicial HR	Increased efficiency in process contributing to the reduction in the 'end to end' timing for appointments by March 2013
Develop and design an appraisal scheme for recorders	Judicial HR	A new appraisal scheme for recorders, piloted and ready for roll-out, subject to funding, by March 2013
Implement reporting enhancements to the judicial HR system to meet user requirements, by improving the quality, accuracy and management of Judicial HR records	Business Support	Routine reports available by June 2012

Develop our people and continuously improve our efficiency and effectiveness

The JO is funded by public money. It is accountable to Parliament through the Permanent Secretary of MoJ for propriety and regulation in managing its budget.

The people who make up the JO, their commitment and skills are crucial to its success. Effective leadership, management of resources and development of the JO's capabilities are essential to attracting and retaining good people and to continuous improvement in delivering the JO's work. In the course of 2012 -13 we will continue to build on work to develop a shared sense of purpose across the enlarged JO, and ensure that continuous improvement is incorporated into our working practices and that there is a strong customer focus in all our work in delivering an efficient and effective support service for the judiciary.

Sub-objective	Delivered by	Outcomes
To develop a shared sense of purpose across the JO, clear and effective leadership, effective management of change and a high level of commitment to our purpose in support of the judiciary	Management Board and all line managers	Continued improvement in Staff Engagement Survey results (November 2012 to January 2013)
To support and enable our staff to develop, engage fully with our purpose and give of their best	Management Board and all line managers	Effective communications through Stand Up Meetings and use of intranet Programme of All Staff and team events that increases knowledge and interaction across the JO
To develop our processes and capabilities in the management of resources	Management Board and all line managers	Targets for financial and resource management met Early identification of efficiencies and surrender of related savings

Sub-objective	Delivered by	Outcomes
To develop our processes and capabilities in the management of resources, including investigating the use of new technologies to reduce costs wherever possible	Management Board and all line managers	Opportunities for further savings identified and realised
To embed a culture of Continuous Improvement (CI) in all parts of JO and to show that an improved level of service is provided to the judiciary and that actual financial savings have been made	Business Support, with Management Board and all line managers	Delivery of measurable improvements by April 2013

Staff headcount

Over the last two years, the JO has taken on additional areas of work, whilst reducing staffing by around 10%. The table below shows the position at the start of 2012/13.

Area of activity	FTE*
Chief Executive, Business Support and LCJ's Private Office	19.1
Jurisdictional Support	35.9
Judicial College	65.2
Judicial HR	42.5
Strategy, Governance and Communications, including Civil and Family Justice Councils	25.8
Office for Judicial Complaints	16.0
Total	204.5

^{*} FTE: Full-time equivalents

Draft budget

Over the last two years, the JO has delivered savings of around £2.9 million while taking on additional work. The table below shows the position for 2012/13.

Activity	£000s
Staffing	9,158
Centrally managed expenditure (including ICT, printing and staff-related)	1,100
Judicial HR	287
Jurisdictional Support	60
Strategy, Governance and Communications	251
Civil and Family Justice Councils, including grants for LFJCs	316
Office for Judicial Complaints	71
Judicial College	10,627
Less: recoveries from other government departments*	1,024
Total	20,840

^{*} Anticipated recoveries from BIS and DWP in respect of tribunals training activity