

LEGAL AID COMMISSION (ACT)

Objectives

The Legal Aid Commission, established by the *Legal Aid Act 1977* (the Act), provides legal assistance in accordance with the Act. The assistance may be provided by private legal practitioners or the Commission's own officers. The Commission also represents regional residents whose legal proceedings take place in the ACT.

The main objective of the Commission is to maximise access to justice in the ACT by providing legal services to disadvantaged members of the community.

The Commission also provides other services such as duty lawyers, advice, community education and input on law reform.

2002-03 Highlights

Strategic and operational issues to be pursued in 2002-03 include:

- ongoing improvement in delivery of services through the web based electronic assessment of applications for legal aid and electronic pro-forma invoicing;
- continuing to improve the community's access to justice through a proactive community legal education program which will provide information about legal services and the law. This program particularly targets requirements for special needs groups and will maximise their use of the Commission's web-site;
- continuing to undertake responsibilities under the agreement dated 29 March 2001 for Primary Dispute Resolution; and
- continuing to undertake responsibility for War Veterans' matters in accordance with the agreement.

Legal Aid Commission Statement of Financial Performance

2001-02 Budget \$'000		2001-02 Est.Outcome \$'000	2002-03 Budget \$'000	Var %	2003-04 Estimate \$'000	2004-05 Estimate \$'000	2005-06 Estimate \$'000
Revenue							
500	User Charges - Non ACT Government	190	200	5	190	180	170
5 090	User Charges - ACT Government	5 090	5 991	18	5 551	5 532	5 639
0	Grants from the Commonwealth	380	0	-100	0	0	0
465	Interest	680	550	-19	550	550	550
6 055	Total Ordinary Revenue	6 340	6 741	6	6 291	6 262	6 359
Expenses							
2 543	Employee Expenses	2 284	2 477	8	2 510	2 544	2 578
348	Superannuation Expenses	429	421	-2	426	431	436
3 222	Administrative Expenses	3 323	4 069	22	3 810	3 439	3 540
92	Depreciation and Amortisation	90	46	-49	70	70	70
6 205	Total Ordinary Expenses	6 126	7 013	14	6 816	6 484	6 624
-150	Operating Result	214	-272	-227	-525	-222	-265
0	Increase/(Decrease) in other reserves	0	-100	#	-350	0	0
0	Transfer to/from Reserves	0	100	#	350	0	0
687	Total Equity From Start of Period	1 070	1 284	20	1 012	487	265
537	Total Equity At The End of Period	1 284	1 012	-21	487	265	0

Legal Aid Commission Statement of Financial Position

Budget as at 30/6/02 \$'000		Est.Outcome as at 30/6/02 \$'000	Planned as at 30/6/03 \$'000	Var %	Planned as at 30/6/04 \$'000	Planned as at 30/6/05 \$'000	Planned as at 30/6/06 \$'000
Current Assets							
856	Cash	1 086	859	-21	814	661	465
280	Receivables	246	247	..	248	249	250
21	Investments	621	621	-	0	0	0
1 157	Total Current Assets	1 953	1 727	-12	1 062	910	715
Non Current Assets							
224	Receivables	220	220	-	220	220	220
46	Property, Plant and Equipment	73	27	-63	167	97	27
270	Total Non Current Assets	293	247	-16	387	317	247
1 427	TOTAL ASSETS	2 246	1 974	-12	1 449	1 227	962
Current Liabilities							
362	Payables	426	426	-	426	426	426
409	Employee Entitlements	465	465	-	465	465	465
771	Total Current Liabilities	891	891	-	891	891	891
Non Current Liabilities							
119	Employee Entitlements	71	71	-	71	71	71
119	Total Non Current Liabilities	71	71	-	71	71	71
890	TOTAL LIABILITIES	962	962	-	962	962	962
537	NET ASSETS	1 284	1 012	-21	487	265	0
REPRESENTED BY FUNDS EMPLOYED							
237	Accumulated Funds	834	662	-21	487	265	0
300	Reserves	450	350	-22	0	0	0
537	TOTAL FUNDS EMPLOYED	1 284	1 012	-21	487	265	0

Legal Aid Commission Cashflow Statement

2001-02 Budget \$'000		2001-02 Est.Outcome \$'000	2002-03 Budget \$'000	Var %	2003-04 Estimate \$'000	2004-05 Estimate \$'000	2005-06 Estimate \$'000
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES							
Receipts							
5 590	User Charges	5 280	6 191	17	5 741	5 712	5 809
465	Interest Received	680	550	-19	550	550	550
0	Grants Received from the Commonwealth	380	0	-100	0	0	0
163	Other Revenue	163	167	2	171	176	176
6 218	Operating Receipts	6 503	6 908	6	6 462	6 438	6 535
Payments							
2 891	Related to Employees	2 713	2 898	7	2 936	2 975	3 014
3 222	Related to Administration	3 323	4 069	22	3 810	3 439	3 540
164	Other	164	168	2	172	177	177
6 277	Operating Payments	6 200	7 135	15	6 918	6 591	6 731
-59	NET CASH INFLOW/(OUTFLOW) FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES	303	-227	-175	-456	-153	-196
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES							
Receipts							
50	Proceeds from Sale/Maturities of Investments	50	0	-100	621	0	0
50	Investing Receipts	50	0	-100	621	0	0
Payments							
0	Purchase of Property, Plant and Equipment	0	0	-	210	0	0
0	Purchase of Investments	500	0	-100	0	0	0
0	Investing Payments	500	0	-100	210	0	0
50	NET CASH INFLOW/(OUTFLOW) FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES	-450	0	100	411	0	0
-9	NET INCREASE/(DECREASE) IN CASH HELD	-147	-227	-54	-45	-153	-196
865	CASH AT BEGINNING OF REPORTING PERIOD	1 233	1 086	-12	859	814	661
856	CASH AT THE END OF THE REPORTING PERIOD	1 086	859	-21	814	661	465

Notes to the Budget Statements

Significant variations are as follows:

Statement of Financial Performance

- user charges – non ACT Government: the decrease of \$0.310m in 2001-02 from the original budget is due to an ongoing reduction in client contributions and recovered costs;
- user charges – ACT Government: the increase of \$0.901m in the 2002-03 Budget from the 2001-02 estimated outcome is due to indexation and a rollover of \$0.606m in additional grants from the Commonwealth that were received in 2001-02 for expensive cases, war veterans' matters and primary dispute resolution;
- grants from the Commonwealth: the increase of \$0.380m in 2001-02 from the original budget is due to a one-off increase to cover the additional costs associated with some Commonwealth law cases;
- interest: the increase of \$0.215m in 2001-02 from the original budget is mainly due to an increase in statutory revenue from the ACT Law Society. The decrease of \$0.130m in the 2002-03 Budget from the 2001-02 estimated outcome is due to a reduction in cash balances and the expectation of lower statutory revenue than received in 2001-02;
- employee expenses: the decrease of \$0.259m in 2001-02 from the original budget is due to lower than planned staffing levels with delays in recruitment. The increase of \$0.193m in the 2002-03 Budget from the 2001-02 estimated outcome is mainly due to an increase in staffing to normal levels; and
- administrative expenses: the increase of \$0.101m in 2001-02 from the original budget is due to higher contractor expenses for Commonwealth cases. The increase of \$0.746m in the 2002-03 Budget from the 2001-02 estimated outcome is mainly due to the rollover of additional grants from the Commonwealth for expensive cases, primary dispute resolution and war veterans' matters.

Statement of Financial Position

- cash and investments: the increase of \$0.830m in 2001-02 from the original budget is mainly due to higher statutory interest revenue being received. The decrease of \$0.227m in the 2002-03 Budget from the 2001-02 estimated outcome is due to expenditure on longer running Commonwealth cases; and
- reserves: the increase of \$0.150m in 2001-02 from the original budget is the result of an increase to the reserve for information technology at the end of 2000-01. The decrease of \$0.1m in the 2002-03 Budget from the 2001-02 estimated outcome is due to the use of the reserve with the commencement of a national Legal Aid information technology project that will continue into 2003-04. The reserve for expensive cases is also expected to be used in the 2003-04 financial year.

