

# Corporate Plan

2008/09 - 2010/11



**Corporate Plan**  
**2008/09 – 2010/11**

## **Table of Contents**

Foreword	1
The Judicial Appointments Commission	2
The Executive Team	2
The Directorates	3
What we do	4
How we Work	5
The Three Years of the Plan	5
Our Strategic Objectives for 2008/09 – 2010/11	6
Strategic Objective 1 – Selecting High Quality Candidates	7
Strategic Objective 2 – Fair, Open, and Effective Selection Processes	10
Strategic Objective 3 – Encourage a Wider Range of Eligible Candidates	15
Strategic Objective 4 – Building our Organisation	19

### List of appendices:

Appendix A:	List of selection exercises run in 2007/08
Appendix B:	Performance against the 2007/08 Business Plan

## Foreword

The Judicial Appointments Commission's second Corporate Plan sets our strategic objectives for the next three years, outlines our priorities and explains our plans for achieving these goals.

This plan details the way in which we operate and reflects on the organisation's progress during its first two years. It looks ahead and identifies how we want to develop further.

Our independent selection processes are now well established and are constantly being reviewed and developed. We continue in our commitment to selecting on merit and have undertaken an extensive amount of work to ensure that we attract a diverse range of applicants to our selection exercises and ensure that all those who apply are treated fairly. Our achievements are set out in more detail in our 2007/08 Annual Report.

Our four strategic aims remain constant; they reflect our statutory responsibilities and the main focus of our work. It will be essential for us to continue to review the way in which we operate, our progress and objectives over the life of this plan. Working together with our key partners will be essential to achieving our objectives and overcoming the challenges that we face.

Over the next three years, we hope to build on our successes and further establish the organisation as a key contributor to the delivery of an effective and diverse modern judiciary.



Baroness Usha Prashar

Chairman



Clare Pelham

Chief Executive

## **The Judicial Appointments Commission**

The Judicial Appointments Commission (JAC) was set up in April 2006. We are an independent commission that selects candidates for judicial office in courts and tribunals in England and Wales, and for some tribunals whose jurisdiction extends to Scotland or Northern Ireland.

The JAC is an executive Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB), sponsored by the Ministry of Justice (MoJ), previously the Department for Constitutional Affairs (DCA). Our aims and objectives are agreed with the Lord Chancellor and set out in our Business Plan, together with the services provided to the JAC by the MoJ.

The Commission comprises 15 Commissioners including the Chairman. The Commission has corporate responsibility for ensuring that the JAC fulfils its role under the Constitutional Reform Act 2005 (CRA), for achieving its aims and objectives and for promoting the efficient and effective use of staff and other resources available to the JAC. The Commissioners work closely with the JAC's staff, who are led by a Chief Executive and four Directors.

The Commission is required by statute to consist of a lay Chairman and 14 Commissioners. The latter are made up of five judicial members, one barrister, one solicitor, five lay members, one tribunal member and one lay justice. Each Commissioner was appointed in his or her own right, not as a delegate or representative of their profession. Twelve, including the Chairman, were selected through open competition and three by the Judges' Council.

## **The Executive Team**

Clare Pelham – Chief Executive

Jane Andrews – Director of Courts Appointments

Sue Bush – Interim Director of Tribunals Appointments

Nigel Reeder – Director of Strategy and Outreach

Sue Martin – Director of Corporate Resources

## The Directorates

**Courts Appointments Directorate** is primarily responsible for the management of the selection exercises relating to appointments to courts, but also operates flexibly in undertaking some tribunal selection exercises. It plays an active role in the development of policies and processes associated with the overall Selection Exercise Programme (SEP).

**Tribunal Appointments Directorate** is responsible for the management of selection exercises relating to the appointment of tribunal members. It also provides support to the SEP through practical operational services, such as making interview arrangements, and overall selection exercise programme management.

**Strategy and Outreach Directorate** has responsibilities for the development and implementation of JAC's selection policies, for promoting diversity in judicial appointments, for the Commission's public profile and for any legislative proposals which will affect and impact on the Commission's work.

**Corporate Services Directorate** has responsibilities for all business support services for the JAC. This includes corporate planning and reporting, finance, human resources and business services.

During 2008/09, we intend to create a fifth Directorate, responsible for operational services.

## What we do

The JAC is a selecting commission responsible for recommending candidates to all judicial offices listed in Schedule 14 of the CRA, as well as to the offices of the Lord Chief Justice, Master of the Rolls, President of the Queen's Bench Division, President of the Family Division, Chancellor of the High Court, Lords Justices of Appeal and High Court Judges.

The Commission may be required to select a candidate for immediate appointment under section 87 of the CRA or to identify candidates for vacancies that will arise in the future, from lists created under section 94. Magistrates are included in the judicial offices listed under Schedule 14 but no timetable has been set for bringing that provision into force. The selection exercises undertaken in 2007/08 are set out in Appendix A.

The JAC selects one candidate for each appointment and recommends that candidate to the Lord Chancellor. The CRA provides for the Lord Chancellor to accept or reject the recommendation, or ask the Commission to reconsider the recommendation. The Lord Chancellor cannot select an alternative candidate.

In fulfilling its role, the JAC has three statutory obligations:

- to select candidates solely on merit;
- to select only people of good character;
- and to have regard to the need to encourage diversity in the range of persons available for selection for appointments.

## **How we work**

The JAC has adopted a set of values that underpin how we work. The values are:

### **Fairness**

We are objective in promoting equality of opportunity and we treat people with respect.

### **Professionalism**

We are committed to achieving excellence by working in accordance with the highest possible standards.

### **Clarity and openness**

We communicate in a clear and direct way.

### **Learning**

We strive for continuous improvement and welcome and encourage feedback.

### **Sensitivity**

We are considerate and responsive in dealing with people.

## **The three years of the plan**

This Corporate Plan covers the years 2008/09 to 2010/11. It updates the first Corporate Plan of the JAC, which covered 2007/08 to 2009/10. Our performance against the Business Plan for 2007/08 is set out in Appendix B.

The JAC's four strategic objectives have remained constant since we were set up. We have focused on specific priorities each year.

As each year of the Corporate Plan progresses we will review the four strategic objectives, and the priorities that flow from them to take account of internal and external factors, to ensure we build on the progress made and maintain momentum.

## **Our Strategic Objectives for 2008/09 – 2010/11**

**Strategic objective 1** - To select candidates on merit based on the selection exercise programme agreed with our business partners.

**Strategic objective 2** – To further develop fair, open and effective selection processes and to keep them under continuous review.

**Strategic objective 3** - To encourage a wider range of eligible applicants.

**Strategic objective 4** - To ensure that the JAC is fully equipped to carry out its statutory objectives and achieve continuous improvement.

The JAC's objectives support and promote the strategic objectives of our sponsor ministry, the MoJ, in supporting an efficient and effective justice system. The MoJ has developed Departmental Strategic Objectives (DSO) that support ongoing work to improve public services. JAC plays a key role in the delivery of these objectives, through execution of this Corporate Plan. The JAC shall continue to work with colleagues in the MoJ and the Judiciary to deliver against Government Public Service Agreements (PSAs), DSOs and policies.

## Strategic Objective 1: Selecting High Quality Candidates

GOAL	PRIORITIES
<i>“To select high quality candidates for appointments based on the Selection Exercise Programme agreed with our business partners”</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1.1 Establish, agree and complete a programme of selection exercises.</li><li>1.2 Respond flexibly within available resources to any priority selection exercises arising in the year, negotiating and agreeing consequential changes to the selection exercise programme with our partners</li><li>1.3 Improve capability within the organisation to carry out high quality selection exercises, including ensuring the selection exercise teams are fully trained and able to fulfil their roles.</li></ol>

### **Priority 1.1: Establish, agree and complete a programme of selection exercises with our partners.**

This priority is fundamental to our business. To ensure that we have a greater ability to plan, commence and complete our selection exercise programme, we need timely forecasting, developed through good working relationships with our partners. We aim for 2009/10 to be the first year of a ‘rolling programme’ – that is a core number of major programmes that we have agreed will take place on a fixed and regular basis, eg every year, 18 months, two years etc. This approach will greatly aid planning on all sides.

Building on steps taken in 2007/08, we will:

- Conduct a regular programme of bilaterals with our partners to develop and monitor the programme following an early exchange of forecasting information.
- Ensure all selection exercises are completed according to the final programme, including any reasonable and agreed changes made to that programme.
- Plan the following year’s programme, following receipt from our partners of comprehensive forecasts in September and confirmation of budget from MoJ in

January.

- Respond to essential in-year changes to the programme, arising from circumstances other than unforecast selection exercises, negotiating and agreeing any consequential changes with the appropriate partners.
- Develop performance standards on timeliness relevant to the size and complexity of the selection exercise and achieve these standards.
- To the extent that the JAC continues to receive requests under s94 of the CRA, provide responses to the Lord Chancellor within 10 weeks.<sup>1</sup>
- Continue to work with those who conduct external character checks with a view to reducing the time taken for this element of the selection process.
- Work with our partners to develop forecasting information that will enable a rolling programme of selection exercises to be negotiated and agreed.

**Priority 1.2: Respond flexibly within available resources to any priority selection exercises arising in the year,** negotiating and agreeing consequential changes to the selection exercise programme with our partners

This priority requires us to respond positively and responsibly to the likelihood of receiving requests to run selection exercises unforeseen at the time of finalising the original annual programme.

This goal needs to be achieved alongside delivering the rest of the programme to the highest quality as outlined in Priority 1.1 above and Priority 1.3 below. It is essential that we communicate effectively to our partners the importance of the JAC undertaking such additional exercises to the standards that we and our customers require.

---

<sup>1</sup> This is the use of a s87 request to select one name from a list previously created under s94.

The JAC, like all public sector organisations, has to work within a fixed level of resource and we therefore have only a limited capacity to take on extra work in-year. MoJ decide each year our programme, including some level of capacity to take on unplanned exercises, but any additional requirements have to be considered against delivery of the programme as a whole.

By working closely with our business partners on their priorities, we are confident that we can deliver sufficient high quality selection exercises to meet the needs of the judicial business.

We will:

- Provide partners with early warning about the impact of any change to their business priorities and of any delays which will affect selection exercises, ensuring they understand the possible consequences for the programme as a whole.
- Engage in negotiation with business partners to agree priorities in the selection exercises programme to accommodate any changes/additions that they request.

**Priority 1.3: Improve capability within the organisation to carry out high quality selection exercises,** including ensuring the selection exercise teams are fully trained and able to fulfil their roles.

During its second year the JAC conducted selection exercises using our own processes, which had been implemented for new exercises from October 2006. The goal of continuing to select high quality candidates can only be achieved if the JAC has staff that are fully conversant with the processes, and can apply them with the consistency that is required, and make recommendations about which way to proceed, when those key decision points are reached.

Building on the steps taken in 2007/08, we will:

- Conduct the selection process review with full input from operational staff and implement changes agreed by the Commission.
- Develop and implement an on-going and modular selection exercise training programme for all relevant JAC staff, focused on the need to provide high quality

services including keeping business areas and candidates in touch with progress at key stages.

- Identify and manage risks for each new selection exercise.

## **Strategic Objective 2: Fair, open and effective selection processes**

<b>GOAL</b>	<b>PRIORITIES</b>
<p><i>“Further develop fair, open and effective selection processes and keep them under continuous review.”</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.1. Continuously review equality policies and procedures, including undertaking an annual review of our selection processes</li> <li>2.2. Increase our knowledge and expertise through wider engagement with, and support of, groups representing potential candidates, judicial office and other partners (including the JAC advisory group) to improve the selection process and deliver better outcomes and understanding of selection exercises</li> <li>2.3. Improve response to candidates during and after each session</li> <li>2.4. Enhance the effectiveness of the selection process, through better planning and operation</li> <li>2.5. To deal with complaints fairly and thoroughly and within applicable timescales</li> </ul>

### **Priority 2.1: Continuously review equality policies and procedures**, including undertaking an annual review of our selection processes.

We believe fairness to all applicants requires, as a minimum, the following:

- that the application process is easy to find out about, to understand and take part in;
- that applicants know what is required to give them the best chance of success;
- that the methods we use do not discriminate against any candidate or groups but rather that they promote equality of opportunity;

- that candidate can rely on us using professional, up to date, tested assessment methods;
- that the information required is only that which is needed to assess their personal merit and that data collected for monitoring purposes is clearly defined as such and used for those purposes.

To ensure we meet our commitments in this area, we have developed a clear framework to ensure that all our processes and materials are fair. This equality-proofing work forms part of our quality assurance framework. The impact of the equality-proofing is reflected in four areas – design, training, measurement and documentation. The project is formalised in the JAC Single Equality Scheme, which was published after public consultation in June 2008.

Building on steps taken in 2007/08, we will:

- For each selection exercise - review equality indicators, at a minimum of three formal check points in the selection process, and take action to address any issues
- Ensure the equality proofing procedures approved by the Commissioners are rigorously applied and lessons learned are acted upon
- Publish (in Q1), implement and review annually the JAC Single Equality Scheme
- Consider innovative ways to further test and improve the selection process including external diversity advisers to “equality-proof” stages of the process and the products and tools used, as well as learning from other organisations and groups.

**Priority 2.2: Increase Knowledge and Expertise** through wider engagement with, and support of groups representing potential candidates, judicial office holders and other partners (including the JAC Advisory Group) to improve the selection process and deliver better outcomes and understanding of selection exercises.

In order to ensure the quality of our selection processes, we need to be in close contact with candidates who experience those processes first hand, with the professional bodies who understand the needs of potential candidates, and with the Judiciary, HM Courts Service and the Tribunals Service who understand the judicial office to which candidates

will be appointed. Only by pooling this collective knowledge and experience can we be confident the selection processes are producing the right outcomes and will attract high quality candidates in the future who know they will be assessed fairly.

Building on steps taken in 2007/08, we will:

- Develop the JAC Advisory Group's membership and role to ensure it delivers improvements to selection exercise implementation and review the Group's effectiveness (Q1 onwards)
- As part of a programme of continuous improvement, review the success of the selection process by:
  - monitoring the comments from the judiciary made through the statutory consultation process
  - monitoring the LC's use of powers to reject, or require reconsideration of, selected candidates
  - pressing for further use of judicial appraisal
  - reviewing selection exercise processes in light of lessons learnt (Q2)
  - reviewing selection exercise statistics (Q2)

### **Priority 2.3: Improve response to candidates during and after each selection**

Clarity and Openness are both core values in themselves and essential components of fairness. They are a valuable means of creating trust in the work we do. We undertake to be informative about what we are doing and why we are doing it and communicate that in ways which can be widely accessed. Our review of the selection process is informed by how candidates themselves view the changes that have been made to the selection process.

Building on the steps taken in 2007/08, we will:

- Maintain and enhance candidate service by:

- Evaluating feedback we receive from candidates
  - Developing a draft formal Candidate Service Plan to record and take forward improvements
  - Consulting key interested parties on the draft and then finalising it
  - Training staff on the selection process, including elements of good candidate service
- Systematise collection of feedback from candidates about the service received at every stage of the process, use to inform changes in practise and establish targets for selection exercise teams.
  - Improve written explanations given to candidates on their performance by training panel chairs to deliver according to our policy

## **Priority 2.4: Enhance the effectiveness of the selection process, through better planning and operation**

Learning is one of the five core values of the JAC. We have achieved much in our first two years of operation by developing our own processes, and we review issues arising with a view to learning lessons and making improvements.

Policy is successfully put into practice by effective planning and management of the complex logistics that underpin each exercise. We work closely with our key partners – HM Courts Service, Tribunals Service and the MoJ – in ensuring the information required to launch an exercise, is available at the right time. The majority of this information is captured within the “Vacancy Notice” which is the critical trigger for an exercise.

We have also made good progress in recruiting and training new panel chairs. They are key to successful selection, and in the coming year we will continue to share good practice and offer development to them through feedback and performance management.

Building on the steps taken in 2007/08 we will:

- Work with others to improve the efficiency of the process as a whole, including working with key interested parties to develop an agreed timetable for receipt of a full and clear statement of all vacancy request information by the start of each financial year.
- Ensure that all significant procedural issues raised in selection exercises or identified at closedown meetings are carefully analysed, advice provided to the Commission, and any changes set out in the process manual are implemented.
- Implement new training and appraisal procedures for Panel Chairs and other panel members (Q1 and Q3 respectively)

### **Priority 2.5: To deal with complaints fairly and thoroughly and within applicable timescales**

We recognise that having good complaints handling arrangements is important to our success. It is right that candidates should have an opportunity to tell us if they are dissatisfied and we wish to learn and improve our selection processes and operations. We monitor complaint trends and address those areas that raise concerns.

We advise candidates to wait until they receive written feedback on their performance before lodging a complaint. Thereafter we have a clear process of investigation, keeping the complainant informed of progress. The candidate has recourse to the Judicial Appointments and Conduct Ombudsman (JACO), should they not be satisfied with our response.

Building on the steps taken in 2007/08 we will:

- Make regular reports on complaints to the Commission highlighting areas where the complaint process has demonstrated a need for change in the selection exercise procedure and ensure agreed improvements are made. {Q1 and Q3}
- Aim to reduce the percentage of candidates who make a complaint about the selection process (rather than about the outcome)

- Aim to keep the number of complaints upheld by the JACO at levels below those made under the previous relevant arrangements
- Ensure that lessons learnt from complaints are fully reflected in the annual process review.
- Respond to complaints within 20 working days or to other agreed timescales.

### **Strategic Objective 3: Encourage a wider range of eligible candidates**

<b>GOAL</b>	<b>PRIORITIES</b>
<i>“Encourage a wider range of eligible applicants”</i>	<p>3.1. Work with partners to ensure that diversity is a high priority in all areas relevant to judicial diversity including the legal profession</p> <p>3.2. Target our outreach to eligible groups effectively, working to encourage applications from suitable people regardless of disability, gender, race or professional background.</p> <p>3.3. Target our communications strategy effectively to encourage a wider range of eligible applicants to apply for judicial appointment</p> <p>3.4. Further develop our measures of progress to ensure accurate monitoring and publication of selection exercise statistics</p>

#### **Priority 3.1: Work with partners to ensure that diversity is a high priority in all areas relevant to judicial diversity including the legal profession.**

The JAC has a statutory duty to encourage a wider range of applicants. It is clear that no one single organisation can bring about such a change. All those working in the legal arena have a responsibility – from the profession from which we draw our candidates, HMCS and the Tribunals Service who specify the requirements for vacancies and the

MoJ who co-ordinate and set overall policy and legislation, as well as the Judiciary themselves. And many more groups besides. We all have a part to play.

Co-ordinating the efforts of such a wide ranging set of organisations is often a difficult task – even though they are pulling in the same direction. The “JAC Diversity Forum” was set up by Baroness Prashar, the JAC Chairman, to bring together representatives of the JAC, the MoJ, the Judiciary, the Attorney General’s Office, the Law Society, The Bar Council, the Institute of Legal Executives, Academia and others in a joint effort to reinforce existing initiatives, prevent duplication and ensure resources are jointly directed to where they can best effect change. The Forum, which is strongly supported by its member organisations, meets every two to three months.

The Forum builds on the foundations set by the second key mechanism – the “Trilateral Strategy”, which was set up in 2006 to co-ordinate actions between JAC, the DCA (now MoJ) and the Judiciary. The strategy, aimed at a more diverse judiciary, was agreed by the Lord Chief Justice, the Lord Chancellor and the Chairman of the JAC. The Trilateral Strategy provides a high level framework through which the three members can target and co-ordinate their diversity actions.

Building on the steps taken in 2007/08, we will:

- Ensure that the Diversity Forum operates effectively and delivers meaningful outcomes.
- Press for the tri-lateral Diversity Strategy to embody a comprehensive programme of action and that it is taken forward by all parties.

**Priority 3.2: Target our outreach to eligible groups effectively,** working to encourage applications from suitably qualified people regardless of disability, gender, race or professional background.

To achieve our objectives, we must make sure our message reaches our candidates. With limited resources it is paramount that we target our efforts and to do this our starting point is good knowledge, intelligence and research about our customer base.

Our Outreach events take many different forms, from JAC candidate roadshows to Chairman and Commissioner regional visits to appearing at other organisations' events. Some events are generic and give useful information to prospective candidates for any exercise, others are more specifically linked to a selection exercise at hand. In all of these activities we aim to understand their impact to help direct our strategy going forward.

Building on steps taken in 2007/08, we will:

- Identify barriers to application, particularly from target groups, and better understand the characteristics of the eligible pool.
- Ensure that plans for candidate outreach activities for each selection exercise take full account of the characteristics of the eligible pool.
- Hold outreach events to generate applications appropriate to vacancy requests, with particular focus on target groups.
- Review impact of outreach.

**Priority 3.3: Target our communications strategy effectively to encourage a wider range of eligible applicants to apply for judicial appointment.**

In addition to Outreach events we use other communications tools including publications and our website. The value of having a well-presented, accessible and functional website cannot be underestimated and we are doing our best to improve this within available resources. We are also constantly reviewing the impact of our newsletter – “Judging your future” and last year had a major cleanse of our email contacts; it is now more likely to be read by those people who receive it.

Our communications activities need to be co-ordinated in a way that maximises the resources we have. The Outreach Working Group will supervise the strategic communications plan.

Building on the steps taken in 2007/08, we will:

- Develop and maintain a strategic outreach plan for approval and oversight by the outreach working group.
- Deliver Individual initiatives through a variety of arrangements including the JAC electronic Newsletter “Judging Your Future”, use of the JAC website and outreach roadshows.

### **Priority 3.4: Further develop our measures of progress to ensure accurate monitoring and publication of selection exercise statistics**

In order properly to assess whether we are reaching a wider pool of candidates we require data on the ‘eligible pool’. Put simply, the pool of those individuals eligible to apply for any specific vacancy will vary in its diversity depending on the minimum entry requirements for the vacancy itself. In general terms salaried judicial posts will, at this moment in time, have a less diverse ‘eligible pool’ than fee paid offices.

We will work in partnership with the Law Society and Bar Council, who hold data on their members’ qualifications and experience, to be in a position to define readily the eligible pool characteristics for each exercise. We have made a good start, and now have some preliminary data, but there is still much to do, particularly given the changes to eligibility introduced by the Tribunal Courts Enforcement Act 2007.

To enable enlightened and objective debate on the issue of judicial diversity we publish, in an easy to understand format, diversity data for each exercise. The only occasion we will not publish single exercise data is where confidentiality would be compromised which can be the case for very small exercises.

Building on the steps taken in 2007/08, we will:

- Use data supplied by the Law Society and the Bar Council about solicitors and barristers eligible to apply for judicial appointment, to advance the design of

appropriate comparators throughout the selection exercise programme. We will initiate comparable arrangements with ILEX.

- Publish accurate statistics including performance of under-represented groups in all selection exercises.

## Strategic Objective 4: Building our Organisation

<b>GOAL</b>	<b>PRIORITIES</b>
<p><i>“To ensure that the JAC is fully equipped to carry out its statutory responsibilities and achieve continuous improvement”</i></p>	<p>4.1 Maintain and enhance the effectiveness of our staff, ensuring that we meet their needs and nurture talent through training and opportunities for development within the JAC.</p>
	<p>4.2 Recruit high quality staff through fair and open competition.</p>
	<p>4.3 Develop our relationship as an NDPB, sponsored by and as a customer of the MoJ, to ensure that the obligations in the Framework Document are met and that the JAC is supplied with appropriate and high quality corporate services as set out in the Memorandum of Understanding.</p>
	<p>4.4 Further improve the JAC’s internal governance and infrastructure</p>
	<p>4.5 Build on and establish new relationships with key parties across Government and beyond to ensure that the JAC is able to deliver its core business and take its place in the wider delivery of justice.</p>

**Priority 4.1: Maintain and enhance the effectiveness of our staff,** ensuring that we meet their needs and nurture talent through training and opportunities for development within the JAC

The staff of the JAC are vital to successful delivery of our business. In our early days, most staff were seconded from the former DCA, and the original secondments of the last tranche of these staff end in 2008/09.

The JAC started to recruit externally for staff from January 2008, following the Lord Chancellor’s agreement of JAC terms and conditions for employment. At the start of 2008/09 eight staff were employed by the JAC and we expect this number to grow steadily now.

We are planning for approximately 112 members of staff (full-time equivalents (FTE)) in 2008/09. As well as employees, there will continue to be staff who are seconded or loaned to the JAC by their departments.

Turnover as secondments end and the resulting recruitment and change has naturally caused pressures. Sick absence has been higher than the Civil Service average. Supporting staff and managers continues to be a high priority in 2008/09 and beyond.

It is critical to the reputation of the JAC that staff possess the skills, knowledge and experience that enable them to work to a very high standard; that they are well-managed and motivated within the culture and values of the organisation and that they are recruited in the right numbers and at the right time.

Building on the steps taken in 2007/08, we will:

- Further develop and formalise the Human Resources Strategy, integrating the staffing strategy, learning and development, talent management etc and implement the HR strategy to further develop our permanent staff.
- Develop support options for staff working in the JAC including providing managing pressure at work (MPaW) sessions and taking forward actions identified from these.
- Maintain the drive to reduce sickness levels in line with Civil Service levels of 7.5 days per FTE member of staff in year, by reviewing trends, interventions and impact and refining sickness management processes.
- Identify an acceptable turnover rate of staff for a public service organisation of our size and business type and aim to achieve that level.
- Implement formal planning to meet future recruitment needs and implement recruitment and vacancy specification forms to ensure prompt action to fill vacancies as required.

## **Priority 4.2: Recruit high quality staff through fair and open competition**

The JAC seeks the most suitable staff from the widest possible field. We advertise externally, using the press and websites. We match the competencies of those applying to vacancies by tests, presentations and interviews. We have also employed several interim staff, to provide skills needed or if we are not able to fill a vacancy straight away. We expect the number of interim staff to reduce in 2008/09.

The final 18 original secondments from the former DCA are due to end during 2008/09. We will plan ahead to recruit to the jobs they leave and, in conjunction with MoJ, offer them support to find new positions. We may fill their posts before they are due to leave, to provide continuity and knowledge transfer.

Building on the steps taken in 2007/08, we will:

- Implement formal planning to meet future recruitment needs and implement recruitment and vacancy specification
- Manage the impact of secondees returning to the MoJ and other government departments, ensuring that any potential effect on the business is assessed and managed and that staff are provided with information, points of contact and other appropriate and effective support throughout the returning process.
- Advertise vacancies internally and externally to reach the best candidates and appoint interim staff to permanent posts only where there is a skill gap or permanent recruitment has been unsuccessful or delayed.

**Priority 4.3: Develop our relationship as an NDPB, sponsored by and as a customer of the MoJ,** to ensure that the obligations in the Framework Document are met and that the JAC is supplied with appropriate and high quality corporate services as set out in the Memorandum of Understanding.

Partnerships are essential to all of our work. Our key partner is our sponsoring department, the MoJ. We work with them on many different levels. The Chairman has regular meetings with the Lord Chancellor. The executive team and staff have regular

contact to discuss and agree operational and other issues. The formal relationship and the responsibilities of each party is set out in our Framework Document.

It is good practice for an organisation of the size and nature of the JAC to share services with its sponsoring department. At present, Internal Audit, Finance, HR, IT and Commercial Services are shared with MoJ, and the provision of each service to the JAC is supported by a Memoranda of Understanding (MoU). These MoUs have been developed in partnership with the MoJ during 2007/08 and provide a sound basis on which to review the services provided.

Building on the steps taken in 2007/08, we will:

- Agree how to manage our relationship with the Access to Justice Group of MoJ, as a NDPB sponsored by that department, and work with them to ensure we provide all information required by them to agreed timescales.
- Review shared service arrangements provided for the JAC with the MoJ and ensure they meet service delivery targets specified in Memoranda of Understanding

#### **Priority 4.4: Further improve the JAC's internal governance and infrastructure**

The JAC has an established Audit and Risk Committee to oversee governance and many of the policies and processes of the JAC. The Audit and Risk Committee reviews Risk Registers, the Budget and Financial Process and Policies, the Fraud policy and the Annual Accounts.

The JAC now has an established governance structure of risk management and assurance statements. Risk management is being further developed so that it is embedded throughout the JAC: corporately, in Directorates and teams and on individual selection exercises. Internal Audit also provides valuable assurance and advice.

The JAC continues to manage resources carefully, spending to within 2.3% of budget in 2007/08. The final budget allocation for 2007/08 was £6.97m, within which we delivered 41 selection exercises (see Appendix A).

Our budget allocation for 2008/09 is £8.148m, a 17% increase on 2007/08. We plan to deliver 41 selection exercises, including some very large ones. We seek value for money and will develop the JAC procurement strategy during 2008/09 to seek efficiencies in the goods and services we buy.

As we continue to develop our infrastructure, better systems of providing management information and communicating to staff are essential. During 2008/09 work will continue on developing both these areas.

Building on the steps taken in 2007/08, we will:

- Further develop risk management to anticipate, make decisions and maximise achievement of all business objectives.
- Achieve value for money (VFM) across the JAC's activities by developing a procurement strategy and procedures and managing resources efficiently. Contain spend within the budget provided for the year and seek end year flexibility if selection exercises are delayed.
- Further develop the JAC's management information system to provide quality information in a timely manner and deliver agreed key products in a timely and accurate way.
- Further develop the intranet as the prime internal communications tool.
- Agree an effective internal audit programme and implement the recommendations.

**Priority 4.5: Build on and establish new relationships with key parties across Government** and beyond to ensure that the JAC is able to deliver its core business and take its place in the wider delivery of justice.

We are ambitious to achieve all that has been set out in the plan thus far – timely exercises, excellent selections based on merit, a more diverse judiciary, and more; but we cannot reach these goals alone – we need the close help and support from all our partners across Government, in the legal profession and elsewhere. We will focus on further developing those relationships, being open and honest and engaging in a

constructive and encouraging manner, listening and learning from both those who agree with our stance and those who hold another viewpoint. Only in this way can the JAC make significant progress in delivering this three year plan.

Building on the steps taken in 2007/08, we will:

- Continue to develop effective working relationships with key partners, including the Lord Chancellor, the Lord Chief Justice, and the judiciary across England and Wales as well as legal professional bodies such as the Law Society and the Bar Council, and a range of diversity organisations.
- Contribute to the Parliamentary scrutiny of the draft Constitutional Renewal Bill ensuring that JAC's interests are properly represented, and continue this process in the event that legislation is introduced to Parliament.

## Appendix A: List of Selection Exercises in 2007/08

<i>In progress on 1 April 2007</i>	<i>Completed in 2007/08</i>	<i>In progress on 31 March 2008</i>
High Court 2007	High Court 2007	
District Judge	District Judge	
Deputy District Judge	Deputy District Judge	
Deputy Bankruptcy Registrar	Deputy Bankruptcy Registrar	
Deputy Chancery Masters	Deputy Chancery Masters	
Circuit Judge	Circuit Judge	
Senior Circuit Judge Designated Family Judge	Senior Circuit Judge Designated Family Judge	
Senior Circuit Judge Crime	Senior Circuit Judge Crime	
Senior Master Queen's Bench Division	Senior Master Queen's Bench Division	
Employment Tribunal Legal Tribunal	Employment Tribunal Legal Tribunal	
Employment Tribunal Regional Chairman	Employment Tribunal Regional Chairman	
Social Security and Child Support Appeals Tribunal District Chairman	Social Security and Child Support Appeals Tribunal District Chairman	
Social Security and Child Support Appeals Tribunal Fee Paid Medical Members	Social Security and Child Support Appeals Tribunal Fee Paid Medical Members	
Social Security and Child Support Appeals Tribunal Fee Paid Legal Member	Social Security and Child Support Appeals Tribunal Fee Paid Legal Member	
Criminal Injuries Compensation Appeals Panel Fee Paid Legal	Criminal Injuries Compensation Appeals Panel Fee Paid Legal	
Care Standards Deputy President	Care Standards Deputy President	
Gambling Appeal Tribunal Fee Paid Legal Member	Gambling Appeal Tribunal Fee Paid Legal Member	

<i>In progress on 1 April 2007</i>	<i>Completed in 2007/08</i>	<i>In progress on 31 March 2008</i>
President Social Security and Child Support Appeals Tribunal	President Social Security and Child Support Appeals Tribunal	
Copyright Tribunal Deputy Chairman	Copyright Tribunal Deputy Chairman	
Residential Property Tribunals Chairman (Wales)		Residential Property Tribunals Chairman (Wales)
Competition Appeal Tribunal President (withdrawn)		
	Senior Circuit Judge Resident Judge Manchester	
	Senior Circuit Judge Chancery	
	Social Security and Child Support Appeals Tribunal Fee Paid Disability Member	
	Charity Tribunal President	
	Mental Health Review Tribunal Fee Paid Medical Member	
	District Judge Magistrates	
	Senior Circuit Judge Designated Civil Judge Wales	
	Senior Circuit Judge Manchester Technology and Construction Court	
		Charity Tribunal Fee Paid Legal Member
		Pensions Appeal Tribunal
		Charity Tribunal Fee Paid Ordinary Member
		Asylum and Immigration

<i>In progress on 1 April 2007</i>	<i>Completed in 2007/08</i>	<i>In progress on 31 March 2008</i>
		Tribunal Designated Immigration Judge
		Asylum and Immigration Tribunal Senior Immigration Judge
		Social Security and Child Support Commissioners
		District Judge Rhyl
		Recorder Northern Ireland, North Eastern and Wales
		Mental Health Review Tribunal England Legal Member
		High Court 2008
		Chamber President
		Senior Circuit Judge Birmingham Chancery, Designated Civil Judge and Technology and Construction Court
		Social Security and Child Support Appeals Tribunal Regional Chairman
<b>Total: 21</b>	<b>Total: 27</b>	<b>Total: 14</b>

## Appendix B: Performance against 2007/08 Business Plan

### JAC strategic objective 1

Ref	Activity	Achievement
1.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish, agree and complete a programme of selection exercises agreed with our partners.</li> <li>• Conduct regular programme of bilaterals with our business partners to build on early exchange of forecasting information.</li> <li>• Initiate the planning of the following year's programme at a sufficiently early stage.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agreed programme (as amended in year) delivered</li> <li>• 24 new selection exercises launched and run.</li> <li>• Received over 2,500 applications.</li> <li>• 27 selection exercises completed.</li> <li>• 458 selections sent to the Lord Chancellor.</li> <li>• Directors have attended meetings with senior HMCS and TS staff during the year to plan and oversee the delivery of programmes with all our partners.</li> <li>• Planning for the 2008/09 programme began in the summer. First draft was drawn up, based on last year's three-year forecast, but progress was delayed by late delivery of HMCS and TS forecasts.</li> </ul>
1.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accommodate to the best of our ability within available resources any selection exercises where a business need arises in-year or advise the business area and MoJ of the need to reconfigure the programme or provide further funding.</li> <li>• Provide early warning to business partners of prioritisation difficulties.</li> <li>• Seek early resolution by timely liaison with the ministry, judiciary and business partners.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seven exercises were added to the programme.</li> <li>• This process was undertaken systematically throughout the year.</li> </ul>

## JAC strategic objective 1

<p><b>1.3</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve the capability of the organisation to carry out the highest quality selection exercises.</li> <li>• Implement a selection exercise training programme for all JAC staff.</li> <li>• Put in place a risk management strategy incrementally for new selection exercises.</li> <li>• Ensure the accuracy of all printed and website material for each selection exercise.</li> <li>• Develop a standard records management policy, including guidance on Freedom of Information Act and Data Protection Act, to support new processes and implement policy.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Selection exercise process manual in place, supported by training.</li> <li>• All staff trained by July 2007.</li> <li>• Structured and comprehensive training days provided quarterly over the year to train new staff.</li> <li>• Training package developed at the end of the year for delivery by experienced staff from 2008/09. Once this is in place, training for new staff can begin on their first day and be delivered at their own pace over time.</li> <li>• Training programme for new panel chairs developed and delivered.</li> <li>• Strategy in place and selection exercise risk registers are used.</li> <li>• Risks are monitored and either accepted or actions taken.</li> <li>• Most staff trained in risk management.</li> <li>• All selection exercises quality assured and publication authority signed by Director.</li> <li>• Policy and guidance developed and promulgated through Directors and Information Managers in each team.</li> </ul>
<p><b>1.4</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build on the relationships developed with our business partners.</li> <li>• Ensure regular liaison meetings on all aspects of the selection exercise programme with the sponsorship team in the ministry and our business partners.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meetings have taken place and key issues raised and resolved (see 1.1 above).</li> </ul>

## JAC strategic objective 2

Ref	Activity	Achievement
<p><b>2.1</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further develop equality policies and procedures.</li> <li>• Produce costed plans to further develop the equality proofing of our processes, resulting in best practice in design, training, measurement and documentation, for approval by Commissioners.</li> <li>• Publish in draft JAC Single Equality Scheme, following public consultation.</li> <li>• Publish final JAC Single Equality Scheme.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equality proofing embedded in policies and practice.</li> <li>• Two policies verified by external expert and Law Society and Bar Council: 'Reasonable Adjustment' and 'Written Feedback to Candidates'.</li> <li>• Plans to be reviewed early in 2008/09</li> <li>• Scheme published in draft, consultation exercise completed.</li> <li>• Impact Assessment document approved, Scheme to be published early in 2008/09.</li> </ul>

Ref	Activity	Achievement
2.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve responsiveness to candidates.</li> <li>Systematise collection of service feedback given to and by candidates at every stage of the process.</li> <li>Improve on written explanations given to candidates on their performance.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Policy on written feedback to candidates agreed, equality proofed and implemented consistently by all selection exercise teams.</li> <li>Feedback comments are prepared by new panel chairs.</li> <li>A consistent and standard approach for written explanations to candidates was approved in September 2007 and implemented.</li> </ul>
2.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhance the effectiveness of the selection process.</li> <li>Contribute to the MoJ review of appointments process according to the timetable set by the ministry.</li> <li>Develop terms of reference for the review of the operation of our new policies and processes.</li> <li>Ensure that an Assigned Commissioner is allocated to each selection exercise.</li> <li>Select the cadre of panel chairs.</li> <li>Train and start to deploy the cadre of panel chairs.</li> <li>Further training on the new processes for existing panellists.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Representations made throughout the year and response to Consultation Paper made in January 2008.</li> <li>Contribution made to the Nooney review, through discussions with MoJ officials.</li> <li>Terms of reference for the review agreed and work began in 2007/08.</li> <li>Assigned Commissioner/Commissioner panel arrangements in place and Commissioners are taking an active role.</li> <li>32 panel chairs selected.</li> <li>Panel chairs received induction and training in January and March 2008. Manual drafted. Panel chairs deployed.</li> <li>Training arranged for June 2008 for existing panel members.</li> </ul>

### JAC strategic objective 3

Ref	Activity	Achievement
3.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Target our outreach to eligible groups effectively.</li> <li>Implement a new advertising strategy.</li> <li>Review strategy and pilot new approach for candidate outreach.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing outreach activity</li> <li>New online advertising strategy implemented</li> <li>Data being compiled to review strategy</li> </ul>
3.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Target our communications strategy effectively</li> <li>Ask the Commission to agree our communications strategy – to help deliver the JAC's strategic objectives by a combination of communication and marketing means – at the May 2007 meeting.</li> <li>Deliver strategy in accordance with the priorities determined by the Commissioners.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advertising and events strategies agreed</li> <li>Strategy delivered, as amended in light of developments to the selection exercise programme during the year.</li> </ul>
3.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Further develop our statistical measures of progress.</li> <li>Draw up a project plan for designing and implementing eligible pool comparators throughout the selection exercise programme.</li> <li>Assess the return rate of the JAC diversity monitoring form to ensure effective collection of data.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Diversity statistics developed and analysed. Published on JAC website.</li> <li>Initial comparators agreed.</li> <li>Diversity monitoring forms reviewed. Return rate to be assessed in 2008/09.</li> </ul>

## JAC strategic objective 4

Ref	Activity	Achievement
4.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain and enhance the effectiveness of our staff taking account of the challenges presented by the high level of seconded staff.</li>   <li>• Agree with MoJ our own Terms and Conditions and supporting arrangements for staff.</li>   <li>• Reduce level of agency staff in permanent non-specialist posts (except at AO/PS level).</li>   <li>• Manage the two further tranches of secondees returning to MoJ effectively.</li>   <li>• Adopt long-term staffing strategy including an increased intake from external recruitment market</li>   <li>• Put management policies in place aiming for sickness levels to Civil Service target levels.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Induction and training in JAC processes provided to staff. Ongoing provision of information and communications keep staff up to date and involved. Performance management measures effectiveness and development plans are put in place as necessary.</li>   <li>• Terms and Conditions agreed in November 2007. Using MoJ shared services, supplemented by JAC procedures.</li>   <li>• Level of interim staff increased to full time equivalent average of 20 in 2007/08 (from 16 in 2006/07) due to continuing need for flexible resource and expertise. Expected to reduce in 2008/09 as staffing stabilises.</li>   <li>• Almost all staff redeployed quickly and knowledge lost minimised by processes being documented and training. Secondments due to end in March 2008 were extended to September 2008 while arrangements to recruit on JAC terms and conditions were put in place.</li>   <li>• Staffing strategy agreed and being implemented. External recruitment started in January 2008.</li>   <li>• Policies in place and sickness levels reduced over year. However, average number of days per member of staff over year was just under 13, compared to Civil Service target of 7.5, as JAC had a lot of long term sickness especially early in the year.</li> </ul>
4.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain and enhance customer service.</li>   <li>• Achieve the standards set out in our complaints procedure.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Over 95% of candidates attending for selection exercises, who expressed an opinion, have indicated high satisfaction with service received from the front of house team</li>   <li>• Average time to deal with complaints is 27.8 days. 43% of complaints answered within 20 days. No complaint upheld by the Ombudsman.</li>   <li>• Thorough investigations and responses made.</li> </ul>
4.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building on existing relationships with our sponsorship ministry and partner organisations.</li>   <li>• Review our partner engagement to date and agree priorities for each key partner.</li>   <li>• Provide early consultation on key policy developments or legislative proposals.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developed links with counterparts in key organisations to allow for improved outreach and marketing activity.</li>   <li>• Stakeholder management plan developed.</li>   <li>• Represented on an officials-level board chaired by MoJ that has been working up proposals for implementation of TCE Act.</li>   <li>• Responded to the Consultation Paper on the Constitutional Reform Bill in January 2008.</li> </ul>

## JAC strategic objective 4

Ref	Activity	Achievement
4.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review and implement key policies and processes required for good governance of the JAC as an NDPB under the Framework Document.</li> <li>• Embed risk management at all levels of the organisation.</li> <li>• Each year agree an effective Internal Audit Programme and implement the recommendations.</li> <li>• Formulate a revised timetable for corporate reporting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policies and processes in place.</li> <li>• Progress continues with embedding risk management. We assess that the JAC is at level 3 of the Risk Management Assessment Framework as at 31 March.</li> <li>• IA Programme delivered as required in 2007/08. Of the 23 recommendations received during 2007/08, 14 have been completed, 5 partially completed, and four are no longer applicable.</li> <li>• Timetable in place for month and quarter end processes and for Business Plan and Annual Report preparation.</li> </ul>
4.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and implement internal communications strategy across the organisation.</li> <li>• Write a programme of internal communications activity and commence implementation.</li> <li>• Redesign, build and oversee the development and maintenance of a new JAC intranet.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internal communication activity includes weekly directorate and team meetings to discuss points from Leadership meetings, weekly staff newsletter and regular staff events.</li> <li>• Intranet designed, built and tested for go live April 2008.</li> </ul>
4.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and implement a new management information system.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management information requirements identified and package of reports from stated sources developed.</li> <li>• Guidance for production of MI prepared.</li> </ul>
4.7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achieve value for money (vfm) across the JAC's activities.</li> <li>• Embed a value for money culture throughout the organisation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Framework of delegation and assurance in place with Directors overseeing expenditure. Close monitoring of use of budgets.</li> <li>• Training undertaken and Financial Management Guide produced and issued.</li> </ul>