



Justice Matters

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We receive an award for our Anti-Money Laundering and Countering Financing of Terrorism work; our Women's Network wins the Empowerment Award at the 2018 Diversity Awards; we celebrate 125 years of suffrage; and we report from the Criminal Justice Summit.

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MINISTRY OF
JUSTICE
Tāhū o te Ture



What data tells us about our performance

Andrew Bridgman
Secretary for Justice and Chief Executive



This is always an interesting time of the year as government departments are finalising their annual reports. There's a particularly sharp focus on our performance.

In the Justice sector, we're increasingly using data to assess our performance. Building this capability has been a priority for the Ministry over the last 4 years. Data allows us to measure how well the system is delivering for the people who use it.

This year's Annual Report, which will be available online soon, includes a lot of interesting snippets. For example, the volume of new criminal cases in the District Court has decreased by 4%, but the workload has grown due to increasing complexity and an increase in the number of events before a case is disposed of. We're dealing with approximately 50,000 more District Court events in criminal cases than 5 years ago.

Another example shows us that only 10% of scheduled judge-alone criminal trials in the District Court actually go ahead on the day. The biggest single reason for that is adjournments: nearly 1 in 3 scheduled trials are adjourned on the day they're set down for. An analysis of the reasons for adjournments shows that delays occur for a number of reasons – no one participant is responsible for all delays and we all have a role in ensuring that hearings can go ahead as planned.

There's been some helpful commentary in the sector canvassing how case review hearings work and the potential for participants to address more at that stage before the trial begins.

Similarly, data highlights strong performance. In 2017/18:

- since June 2013, District Court criminal cases that are more than 3 years old have decreased by 83%
- since 2012/13, the average age of less serious active criminal cases has dropped by nearly 50% for category 1 cases and by nearly 7% for category 2 cases
- we resolved nearly 36,000 serious harm cases, 31,900 of these within 12 months
- High Court disposals increased by 15%.

Reflecting on our performance, there's been a lot of effort go into making the Ministry a place where our people can be healthy and safe, trusted, supported, and involved. We want all of our people to feel they can be themselves.

We've had a significant increase in employee engagement between 2016 and 2018. Our people feel more informed about the Ministry and its activities, and we're retaining them for longer.

We also saw a general lift in our people's perceptions of what the Ministry is like as a place to be. Our biggest improvements were in the clarity of our vision and strategy (18% increase), a belief that we're making the changes we need to be successful in the future (up 16%), and a stronger belief that we're delivering on our promises to our customers (up 13%).

Our people have delivered some excellent performances in 2017/18 for the people who we serve, and I would like to conclude by thanking them for doing such a great job.



Message from our Minister

Andrew Little
Minister of Justice and Courts



Last month's 3-day Criminal Justice Summit was an important start to a nationwide reform discussion. Intended to launch a public conversation, the summit was attended by more than 600 people, from victims' advocates, to community groups, to those who've been through the system themselves. There were moments of tension, moments of grief, and moments of shared vision. We knew when we inherited a broken criminal justice system that solutions wouldn't be found without proper consultation. The purpose of the summit was to bring together experts and those on the frontline to have the tough conversations, and it certainly achieved its intent.

Criminal justice reform is a major undertaking. It won't happen overnight, and it'll likely take successive governments. It was good to see opposing MPs at the summit, and I welcome their continued engagement in the ongoing programme of reform. Because this is bigger than political party agendas; this is bigger than individual Ministers. As the Prime Minister said in her opening address to the summit, everyone in New Zealand deserves to feel safe, to be safe, and to be free to experience a future full of opportunity.

We literally have hundreds of ideas from the summit, and the job of the Safe and Effective Justice Advisory Group is to draw all that together and then start to work up some plans for change. I expect to get that in the early part of next year and then we'll start the reform process to reduce offending, reduce reoffending, and have better support for victims of crime.

'The purpose of the Summit was to bring together experts and those on the frontline to have the tough conversations, and it certainly achieved its intent.'



Minister Little with attendees at the Justice Summit.

You can find out more at safeandeffectivejustice.govt.nz

Anti-money laundering initiative recognised

The Ministry has been honoured for implementing a new system to deter money laundering and counter financing of terrorism.

The award for the new Anti-Money Laundering and Countering Financing of Terrorism (AML/CFT) regulatory system was presented at the 2018 Deloitte IPANZ Public Sector Excellence Awards. This was a shared win with other agencies: Internal Affairs, the Reserve Bank, Financial Markets Authority, Customs and Inland Revenue.

Brendan Gage, General Manager Criminal Justice says: 'This was a huge piece of work with some very challenging deadlines. The team put in a lot of hard work, with a real spirit of collaboration across all of the agencies involved.'

The Ministry launched its anti-money laundering public awareness campaign in July.

The Anti-Money Laundering and Countering Financing of Terrorism Act currently applies to lawyers and accountants. From January 2019, real estate agencies will need to comply with the Act; from August 2019, it will also apply to high value goods dealers.

Justice Minister Andrew Little says: 'The business sectors coming under the Act connect with thousands of New Zealanders every day. Whether you're buying a house, using a lawyer or accountant, you may be affected by the new anti-money laundering laws.'

The campaign informs the public of the changes including that they may need to show identification or be asked where their funds come from.

You can find out more at [keepourmoneyclean.govt.nz](https://www.KeepOurMoneyClean.govt.nz)



(From left) Rajesh Chhana (Deputy Secretary Policy), Dolon Sarkar (Senior Advisor Policy) and Brendan Gage (General Manager Criminal Justice, Policy) with the award.

Public submissions on the family justice system

The Ministry is encouraging people to make public submissions about their experiences in the family justice system.

An independent panel wants to hear from people who have used family justice services to resolve a dispute about the care of their children following a separation. There's also an issues paper on the Ministry's website for people's information.

‘Separation can be an extremely stressful and confusing time, and members of the public might wish to remain anonymous when telling us about their experiences.’

Rosslyn Noonan, the panel's chair says: ‘We want to ensure that as many people as possible can have their say, and that they don't feel rushed if they want to share their experiences of the Family Court and the out-of-court services, like Family Dispute Resolution.’

The panel is examining the 2014 reforms to the family justice system because of a big increase in the number of urgent ‘without notice’ applications that must be put before a Family Court judge.

‘The removal of access to lawyers in many cases for separating parents has meant that families and children are losing out because of not receiving adequate advice and support at a distressing time in their lives,’ Rosslyn says.

The Ministry is supporting the panel's public consultation. People can share their stories online or answer a questionnaire about how the process worked or didn't work for them.

A priority for the panel is to ensure that people feel safe when sharing their story, says Rosslyn.

‘Separation can be an extremely stressful and confusing time, and members of the public might wish to remain anonymous when telling us about their experiences. We're carefully designing the submissions process so that people don't have to share their details if they don't want to.’

Submissions can be made until 9 November and the panel will submit its report to the Government in May 2019.

You can find out more at <https://consultations.justice.govt.nz/policy/rewriting-family-justice-reforms/>



Have Your Say
on the family justice system

A consultation document released by the Independent Panel examining the 2014 family justice reforms



Diversity awards

The Ministry's Women's Network won the Empowerment Award at the recent 2018 Diversity Awards. The awards are hosted by Diversity Works NZ and acknowledge organisations that champion diversity in the workplace.

The Women's Network was recognised for being an employee-led initiative that promotes the interests of our women and supports them to achieve their personal and professional goals.



Karin Schofield, founder of the Women's Network and Director, Strategic Performance, was also nominated under the Walk the Talk category, which celebrates leaders who exemplify excellence in managing a diverse workplace.

Karin says: 'We're extremely honoured to receive this award, and to be given a chance to showcase what we do.'

The Ministry's well-being education and training programme was nominated in the Emerging Diversity and Inclusion category. The category recognises a milestone achievement by an organisation that has just begun its diversity and inclusion journey.

Ninety-three nominees were in the running for 9 different awards.

The network was established 3 years ago and now has more than 730 members across the country.

(From left) Hayley McKenzie, Karin Schofield and Caitlin Melhuish were at the ceremony to accept the award.

Convention Against Torture report

New Zealand will report to the United Nations on steps it has taken to implement the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

The convention covers a broad range of topics relevant for many New Zealanders like detention in prisons and Police facilities, young people in detention, mental health issues and violence against women.

Last year, the UN requested a report on New Zealand's progress and, in August and September, the Ministry held public consultation sessions to provide input.

The panel will submit its report to the Government by the end of May 2019.

New research reports published

The Ministry of Justice has published a wide range of justice research reports for the Government on the effectiveness of programmes aimed at reducing crime.

Dr Michael Slyuzberg, principal advisor with the Research and Evaluation Team, says the team spent almost 4 years researching these papers.

‘We wanted to produce a series of succinct and credible papers, using the latest international evidence, to provide government with a basis to make good decisions on where it should invest in the justice system, what’s effective, for whom, when and why.’

The reports draw on a well-developed and extensive database of research produced by the international criminological community such as the UK’s What Works Centre for Crime Reduction, Norway’s Campbell Collaboration, and the Washington State Institute for Public Policy in the United States.



Tim Hughes, Chief Advisor, (left) and Dr Michael Slyuzberg, Principal Advisor, co-ordinators of the research reports.

‘Effective programmes in one country often work in other countries. Even if international research shows that an investment type can reduce offending, it may not be worth adopting

unless we’re able to replicate the results in New Zealand’s crime environment,’ says Michael.

The reports assess international and New Zealand research using the Maryland Scale of Scientific Methods, a 5-point scale with randomised controlled trials at the top (level 5).

The final rating is built around 2 separate assessments, one reflecting international evidence, and the other, New Zealand evidence. This results in a 6-grade scale varying from one for a ‘harmful’ outcome category to 6 for a ‘strong’ outcome category. The reports also assess other socio-economic outcomes beyond reoffending.

You can view the research reports at the Ministry’s website: justice.govt.nz/justice-sector-policy/research-data/what-works

Women in justice Celebrating 125 years of suffrage

The Ministry is proud to celebrate the 125th anniversary of Women’s Suffrage and the extraordinary contribution women have made to justice in New Zealand.

In 1893, Ethel Benjamin was the first woman in Australasia to be admitted to law school. Four years later, Ethel graduated and became New Zealand’s first female lawyer. Ethel challenged the status quo, and helped pave the way for other women to succeed in the justice sector.

In 1976, Dame Augusta Wallace was appointed as a District Court judge. She was the first woman to achieve this position, which she held for 18 years.

In 1987, Annis Somerville set up her own all-women barristers and solicitors practice and in 2001, she was the first Māori Family Court judge to be appointed.

In 1989, Dame Silvia Cartwright became the first female Chief District Court Judge, and in 1993 she was the first woman to be appointed to the High Court.

In June 2017, New Zealand’s Supreme Court sat for the first time with a majority of women members.

These are just some of the women who have contributed to the New Zealand justice system.

Women make up more than 68% of the Ministry, and 51% of the senior management. Every day these women make a difference.



Justice Summit begins national conversation



‘It was pretty extraordinary seeing people who have offended stand up beside people who have been victimised and empathise with each other’s points of view.’

More than 600 people shared their views on how New Zealand can reform its criminal justice system at the Justice Summit in Porirua in August. Goals for the Summit included finding ways to address New Zealand’s high imprisonment rate and the over-representation of Māori in prison.

Justice Minister Andrew Little said: ‘This summit is the start of a national conversation, with online engagement and a series of regional meetings to be held to help gauge the widest possible range of people and opinions.’

Attendees came from a range of backgrounds, including advocates and community service providers, academics, public sector officials, and interested members of the public. There were also people who have been victims of crime and former offenders.

All attendees participated together in breakout sessions, sharing their own experiences with the criminal justice system and views for reform.

Our people across the Ministry-led event, alongside our colleagues from Corrections and Police, ensured people felt safe and that there was open and honest discussion.

There was a great response from attendees. One person commented: ‘It was a great opportunity for us to have a dialogue directly with the public; there were very passionate and eloquent contributions.’

Another person said: ‘It was pretty extraordinary seeing people who have offended stand up beside people who have been victimised and empathise with each other’s points of view. There’s a shared passion for positive change.’