



THE SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED KINGDOM

BUSINESS PLAN

1 April 2010 – 31 March 2011

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Section 1

Introduction and background

Introduction

1. The Supreme Court of the United Kingdom (UKSC) was established by the Constitutional Reform Act 2005 and came into being on 1 October 2009. Its mission and strategic objectives, which can be found in the next section, remain the same as those set out at its launch. This Business Plan covers the first full financial year of operation and sets out our aims and objectives for that period and how we plan to achieve them. We have included some objectives that are aspirational, in that their achievement will be dependent on sufficient resources being available.

(i) Background - the establishment of the institution

2. The Court's creation marked the visible separation of the United Kingdom's highest court from both the executive and the legislature. It was designed both to increase the transparency of the judicial process and to clarify the relationship between the Judiciary, Government and Parliament. The role of the Court and the Justices is to act as the final Court of Appeal for arguable points of law of general public importance arising from civil cases throughout the United Kingdom; and from criminal cases in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The Court also hears cases to determine issues relating to the legal competence of the devolved administrations, Parliaments and Assemblies. This jurisdiction was transferred to the UKSC on 1 October 2009 from the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council (JCPC), which remains a separate court, but which is now co-located with the UKSC in the same building.

3. The UKSC is independent of the Ministry of Justice and of the separate Court Services in England & Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. As an administration it is a non-Ministerial department headed by a Chief Executive who is also the Accounting Officer. The Constitutional Reform Act 2005 (CRA) sets out the statutory framework and defines the responsibilities of the Lord Chancellor, the President of the Court and the Chief Executive.

(ii) Background – constitutional position

4. It is an ongoing task to ensure that the separate roles of the Judiciary, Executive and Legislature are clear and widely publicly recognized.

- We will maintain the constitutional position of the UKSC as the apex of the judicial branch of the State and its independence from the Executive, in reality as well as in theory. Since the Executive is a part in over half the cases which come before the court, it is particularly important that this both is, and is seen to be, the case.
- A key outcome will therefore be that the UKSC is publicly recognized as unequivocally independent of political influence and interference; and it will remain visibly separate from both the executive and the legislature and be publicly acknowledged to be such.

- It will also be recognized as the single apex of the UK's civil law and, apart from Scotland, for criminal law as well. A key indicator will be that there will therefore be no successful challenges in the European Court of Human Rights on the grounds that a lack of judicial independence in the UKSC has compromised the Article 6 Requirement for a fair trial.
- We shall also devote effort to demonstrating that, although London based, the UKSC is truly a UK institution. The Justices have indicated that, if suitable cases arise, they would in principle hold sittings in Edinburgh, Belfast or Cardiff.

(iii) Background - benefits realisation

5. In establishing the UKSC the Government intended that the following benefits would be realised:

1. A modern, transparent and independent institution
2. Greater transparency in the use of public funding
3. Use of accommodation to conduct business more easily
4. Use of modern technology to improve court operations
5. Raising public awareness of the role and functions of the UKSC
6. A court and procedures which users find clear and easier to use
7. A place where people want to work

The way the UKSC intends to deliver these benefits is incorporated into the plan which follows.

Section 2

Mission and Strategic Objectives

Mission

6. The mission of the Supreme Court of the United Kingdom (UKSC) is to ensure that the President, Deputy President and Justices of the Court can deliver just and effective determination of appeals heard by the Court in ways which also best develop the Rule of Law and the administration of justice.

Strategic Objectives for the Administration of the UKSC

1. The UKSC will create an environment, which effectively maintains the independence of the Justices, in which they can carry out their work protected from external pressures and which empowers them to develop the Rule of Law.
2. The UKSC will maintain and increase confidence in the administration of justice throughout the United Kingdom. It will promote transparency in, accessibility to and knowledge of the ways in which justice should be rightly administered. It will thereby promote knowledge of the importance of the Rule of Law, not least as a guarantee of democratic freedom.
3. The UKSC will run an efficient and effective administration, which enables the Court to secure the effective determination of justice, while demonstrating the best possible value for the resources with which it is provided. In particular it will operate a case management system, which provides appropriate measureable monitoring of the throughput of applications and cases, thereby enabling the most effective support of the Justices in their work.
4. The UKSC will promote good relations with all the individual jurisdictions, legislatures and governments in the different parts of the United Kingdom.
5. The UKSC will similarly develop appropriate relationships with courts in Europe, throughout the Commonwealth and in other countries, especially those which share its common law heritage.
6. The UKSC will demonstrate appropriate corporate social responsibility. In particular it will promote diversity amongst its staff, ensuring they are also representative of all the jurisdictions of the United Kingdom. It will also both source its supplies and consume its resources in ways which contribute as much as possible to sustainable development and the conservation of the world's natural resources.
7. The UKSC, as the statutory custodian of its own records, will provide the most appropriate environment it can for the organisation, preservation and future inspection of those records.
8. The UKSC, as occupant of the former Middlesex Guildhall, will promote knowledge of, and interest in, this historic building, the works of art it houses, especially the Middlesex Art Collection, and more generally the history of the County of Middlesex.

Section 3

Casework

Casework

7. This is the core work of the UKSC and will be given the highest priority.

Jurisdiction

8. The jurisdiction of the UKSC is the same as that of the Appellate Committee of the House of Lords, with the addition of devolution matters. These issues were formerly determined by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council and have been transferred to the UKSC. As the final court of appeal, the UKSC hears appeals from the following courts in each jurisdiction:

England and Wales

- The Court of Appeal, Civil Division
- The Court of Appeal, Criminal Division
- (in some limited cases) the High Court

Scotland

- The Inner House of the Court of Session

Northern Ireland

- The Court of Appeal in Northern Ireland
- (in some limited cases) the High Court

The procedure for appealing: permission to appeal (PTA) applications

9. In nearly all cases (except for Scotland) an appellant requires permission to appeal before he or she can appeal to the UKSC. The court appealed from may grant permission, but where that court refuses permission, the appellant can then apply to the UKSC itself for permission. Such applications are generally decided on paper without an oral hearing.

10. Once the required papers have been filed, an application for permission will normally be determined within eight sitting weeks. In urgent cases, a request for expedition may be made and an expedited application can be determined within 14 days or even less.

11. On 1 October 2009 the UKSC inherited 63 outstanding applications for leave not yet dealt with, of which 17 were lodged in the House of Lords before 31 July 2009, when the Judicial Office closed there.

12. The PTA figures for the UKSC during its first six months of operation from 1 October 2009 to 31 March 2010 are:

Applications Received **113**

Applications Granted **36**

Appeals

13. Once permission to appeal has been granted, a hearing date is fixed based on the time estimate provided by the parties. Appeals are normally heard in open court before five Justices, although in some cases seven or even nine Justices will sit. Hearings usually last for two days.

On 1 October 2009 the UKSC inherited:

- 41 appeal cases waiting to be heard;
- 14 cases, which had been heard by the House of Lords but where judgment had not yet been given; and
- 44 cases where costs issues were still outstanding.
- 7 further cases had been referred to or were the subject of proceedings before the European Court of Justice.

14. In the UKSC from 1 October 2009 to 31 March 2010:

- **33** separate appeal hearings have taken place (comprising 39 separate appeals with some grouped to be heard together); and
- **33** judgments have been given.
- **36** cases with outstanding costs issues have been resolved.

Sitting Days

15. In the Michaelmas term the UKSC sat for 32 days out of a theoretical maximum of 44 possible sitting days (the court does not sit on Fridays, which are reserved for case preparation and judgment writing). Approximately 30% of the Justices' work, however, broadly speaking, currently arises in the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, which gives a notional allocated maximum of 30.8 sitting days in the UKSC for the Michaelmas term. So the Justices sat that term in the UKSC for slightly more than every notionally allocated UKSC sitting day.

16. The equivalent figures for the Hilary term are 30 actual days sat out of 32.9 possible notional UKSC sitting days, so slightly less than every notionally allocated UKSC sitting day (47 possible sitting days in total, including those available for JCPC work).

17. In the light of these statistics for its performance over its first six months the Court's target remains for all appeals to be heard within 9 months of the grant of permission. The Court, however, seeks to arrange hearings according to the availability of parties' legal representatives. In practice it is this factor alone which can prolong the 'life' of an appeal: the Court can and has arranged hearings within weeks of the grant of permission in a number of urgent cases (e.g. family cases).

18. The Court would not, however, fulfill its duty to be accessible, if it insisted on parties instructing new counsel, if their counsel of choice was not available within the target period. The Court currently has 11 cases, in progress where listing has been delayed to suit the convenience of the parties.

19. The Court deliberately allows some gaps in its listing to enable urgent cases, usually family business, to be heard. In the Michaelmas term there were two such cases and one in the Hilary term, all involving children:

	PTA filed	PTA granted	Hearing	Judgment
• I (a Child)	1 Oct 2009	1 Oct 2009	12/13 Oct	1 Dec 2009
• S-B(Children)	19 Oct 2009	5 Nov 2009	25/26 Nov	16 Dec 2009
• W (Children)	12 Feb 2010	17 Feb 2010	1 / 2 March	3 March 2010

20. In *S-B (Children)* the parties were informed of the court's decision at the end of the hearing and did not have to wait for the reasons (contained in the subsequent judgment), in order to progress their case. Judgment in *W (Children)* was given the day after the hearing, in order to enable care proceedings to continue the following week.

A court and procedures which users find clear and easier to use

21. Another key objective for the UKSC was that it should be a more accessible court for users with procedures which users found clearer, simpler and more understandable. The UKSC is committed to providing an efficient and effective service to all court users:

- We have put in place a new set of Rules and Practice Directions intended to deliver these objectives. In 2010 - 2011 there will be regular meetings with, and surveys of, court users to establish whether they believe the new procedural regime has achieved these objectives.
- The UKSC will be monitoring the number of enquiries regarding rules and procedures (which we would expect to diminish) and the cost to the court of conducting cases (which we would also expect to reduce in real terms).
- We have established a User Committee which will provide a forum for practitioners and staff to review the operation of the Court and to make recommendations for changes to its procedures and practices with a view to promoting continuous service

improvements. Meetings take place twice a year with regular contact as required between meetings. The User Committee includes representatives from all the UK jurisdictions.

- Although we formally monitor the various time limits set out for processes in the Rules, in order to ensure compliance with them, the reality is that we are often able to shorten the time limits in many instances.
- We shall, however, monitor and record those instances where we get formal applications for extensions of time. These are nearly always to ensure the availability of those members of counsel who have appeared in a case in the lower courts. It would be hugely expensive for parties to have to instruct new counsel, not already familiar with a case, simply in order to expedite a UKSC hearing.
- Following Lord Justice Jackson's report on civil costs the UKSC will be conducting its own review of costs to see whether the UKSC's procedures (and those of the JCPC) should be changed in the light of that report and whether costs can be reduced.

Use of modern technology to improve court functions

22. The UKSC has an integrated modern Information Technology (IT) system, supporting both the conduct of cases in court and the back office case management, library services and office support work. There is a UKSC website as well as an intranet for Justices and staff.

- This technology is already permitting more effective and efficient support to the Justices with improved and quicker access to UKSC judgments. From January 2010 these were being put onto the UKSC website within an hour of their being handed down in court.
- From the beginning of the 2010 – 2011 financial year the court intends to start to move towards the use of electronic bundles accessible on screen for the actual hearing of cases in court. Progress with this depends not just or even mainly on the UKSC, but also on the professional parties to cases (solicitors and counsel / advocates) also having access to and the skills to use this technology. We are setting up a Working Group involving users to look at the implementation of this.

Section 4

Public Access, Education and Outreach

Public Access, Education & Outreach

23. The UKSC is easily accessible by the public who are able to visit the court building and attend hearings. In addition, we film all proceedings of the court and we can and do make recordings available to the main public broadcast organisations for use in news or current affairs programmes.

24. We are committed to promoting the work of the UKSC and to providing organised visits and tours for students and the public. If resources permit during 2010 - 2011, we would like to appoint a specialist to develop and operate an educational and outreach strategy and to manage the holding of other events in the UKSC building.

25. We want to run the court in the most efficient and cost effective way. As part of that objective we want to make maximum use of the building out of hours by hiring out rooms for events. During 2010- 2011 we would like at least to break even on this activity, and in future years we would plan to make a profit.

Raising Public Awareness of the role and functions of the UKSC

26. A key objective of the UK Supreme Court is to raise awareness of the activities of the court.

27. In the first six months of operation (October 2009 – March 2010) we welcomed 20,000 members of the public plus 183 groups and 102 parties of students and schoolchildren. Our website receives on average 17,000 distinct visitors each month.

28. Subject to the availability of resources, we want to maintain and build on this excellent beginning by:

- ensuring that film of the court hearings, particularly the delivery of judgments, is made available for broadcasting and educational purposes promptly and efficiently (subject always to the court's overriding right to withhold this, if it would not be appropriate);
- providing clear information and advice to visitors – including versions of our leaflets being translated into other languages;
- ensuring press summaries of judgments are published on the UKSC website promptly after they have been handed down;
- responding positively to requests for group tours;
- setting up a system of weekly guided tours with greater focus on the UK legal system;
- refreshing our exhibition space to keep it up-to-date and relevant; and,

- developing a more proactive education and outreach policy with a dedicated education officer and producing education pack and material;
- a significant part of any educational outreach we are able to develop in 2010 – 2011 will be devoted to promoting public knowledge of the importance of the independence of the judiciary in a modern democracy.

(The last two proposals above are likely to be particularly resource intensive, so they may well not be achievable, or only partially achievable in 2010 – 2011, owing to the reduction in the resources available to us.)

29. We also intend to wait for a full year of operation so we can assess how we manage visitors and groups within existing resources before considering drawing up specific targets in this area. There is a potential for visitor demand, especially at peak times, to exceed the maximum level we can accommodate. We shall be seeking feedback from visitors to assist us with this.

Section 5

Corporate Services:

Finance

Risk

People

Complaints etc

Information Assurance, FOI and Data Protection

Library Facilities

Sustainable Development

Health and Safety

Building and Accommodation

Corporate Services

30. The co-location of the JCPC with the UKSC has created an opportunity to generate efficiencies from integrating the administration of the two courts. The JCPC, however, currently remains one of the courts for which the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) is responsible. The current agreement is that the UKSC will simply provide the JCPC with accommodation and corporate services support on a repayment basis.

- A key objective extending across corporate services for 2010 – 2011 will therefore be to gain agreement from the MoJ to the formal transfer of the administration and the staff of the JCPC also to the UKSC. The UKSC is confident that the synergy of being able to administer both courts together should deliver further efficiencies in the use of operational expenditure.

Finance

31. The Finance Division provides the Chief Executive and the Management Board with vital support to enable effective corporate decision making and to assist in the shaping of the court's future direction. Its aim is to put the Court's customers (both internal and external) at the heart of everything the UKSC does, ensuring that finance & procurement systems and processes meet their needs and continue to meet the expectations of all stakeholders.

32. Its main priorities in 2010 – 2011 will be to

- Continue to maintain a robust framework of financial planning, management and reporting (including value for money) in the court; and
- Respond to requirements from key external Departmental stakeholders (e.g. Treasury, Internal & External Auditors, Her Majesty's Court Service (HMCS) etc.) in a timely manner.

Resources

33. The division also manages UKSC finances overall and ensures that none of the control limits imposed by the Treasury is breached.

34. The UKSC's Estimate for 2010 - 2011 is summarised below:

	£'000
Gross Voted Programme Expenditure	9,943
A in A (Fees & Contributions)	(6,520)
Net Voted Programme Expenditure	3,423

Non Voted Expenditure	2,882
Total Resource Budget	6,305
Capital DEL	100
Net Cash Requirement	2,594

35. The main finance objectives of the UKSC over the period covered by this plan are:
- Resolution of the funding structure of the court with the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) and the other contributing jurisdictions.
 - Review of the current Finance systems against the backdrop of UKSC's specific requirements.
 - Operating within the agreed budget control limits and ensuring value for money, propriety and regularity are demonstrated in all financial decisions.
 - Ensuring all processes are in place to make timely and accurate financial payments.
 - Ensuring UKSC is in a good position to respond adequately to the demands of the forthcoming Spending Review.
 - Ensuring an adequate system is in place to monitor spending and report it regularly to the UKSC Management Board.
 - Ensuring timely and appropriate Supplementary Estimates are agreed with HM Treasury.
 - Producing IFRS compliant resource accounts at the end of 2010 - 2011 in accordance with a timetable agreed with the external auditors.

Greater Transparency in the use of public funding

36. The Constitutional Reform Act (CRA) 2005 places upon the Lord Chancellor the duty of providing the UKSC with such resources as he thinks are appropriate for the Court to carry on its business. This is balanced by the duty on the Chief Executive to ensure that the Court uses its resources to provide an efficient and effective system to support the Court in carrying on its business.

- The UKSC has remained within its budget for 2009 - 10 and will aim to do so again in 2010 - 2011.
- Its first set of accounts demonstrates that proper financial systems and controls are in place with clear accountability for all funding and services and that efficiency and value for money are being delivered from the resources consumed through the

UKSC's improved facilities (and its co-location with the JCPC). The aim is that this will continue in 2010 - 2011.

- Key indicators will continue to be no adverse National Audit Office (NAO) comments on the accounts; and that these and the first Annual Report are produced and published before the Summer Parliamentary Recess.
- Details of Justices and Senior Management remuneration will be published in the Annual Report together with the details of Justices' expenses, which will also be published quarterly on the UKSC website.

Risk

37. Risk is an inherent part of doing business. The management team has the responsibility for managing principal risks on a day to day basis and has developed a robust process for identifying and evaluating and managing the risks faced by the court. These are formally reviewed by the UKSC Management Board, at present on a monthly basis. The identified risks are captured in the Court's Risk Register. Ownership of each risk is allocated to an individual member of the Management Board who is responsible for managing the likelihood and impact of the risk.

38. There is also a Business Continuity Plan in place to support the continued operation of the Supreme Court and in particular its casework.

39. Additionally, the audit committee reviews and advises how the Supreme Court should identify, model and manage risks. The committee comprises two non executive directors and two members from the contributing jurisdictions of Scotland and Northern Ireland.

40. In relation to internal risks the Supreme Court has a clear set of rules and procedures. This covers all aspects of finance, HR, procurement, information security and general areas of governance.

People

41. Our staff perform a variety of roles and we will ensure that we give them the best tools to do the job, make guidance easily available and provide support to individuals.

42. Throughout 2010-2011 we will continue to build a comprehensive human resources strategy that takes account of the particular needs of staff and Justices. An important part of this work will be to research and consider the best possible options for future staff terms and conditions and for the provision of HR services, whether by continuing to use Ministry of Justice (MoJ) as our service provider or otherwise, when the current MoJ Deal expires in 2011.

43. In 2009 – 2010 and in response to initial operational requirements some members of staff have received training appropriate to their roles. We have also invested in bespoke training and development courses. However, training and development activities need to be reviewed regularly and embedded into the office routine. In 2010 - 2011 our training strategy will be formalised and published in a detailed learning and development plan. The plan will be based on an assessment of training needs which will be identified through the staff appraisal process and a skills needs analysis. We are committed to the principles of Investors in People and in the longer term we intend to discuss with the accreditors what would be a feasible timetable for working towards accreditation.

44. In 2010 - 2011 we therefore intend in particular to:-

- Develop and implement a UKSC Induction Programme; and
- Review our start – up staffing structure to determine whether it continues best to meet our needs; and to manage any changes which may emerge as needed.

Diversity and equality

45. We strive to be an organisation that reflects fully the diversity of the society we serve and truly values the contributions which employees from all sections of society make to our work.

46. We are also committed to providing fair and open access to justice for everyone. We want to ensure that we do not discriminate against anyone using our services and address any real or perceived disadvantage experienced by the public and/or professional court users.

47. In 2010-2011 we will:-

Publish and implement an equality and diversity strategy which sets out the actions we will take to embed the principles of equality and diversity into all we do. Key actions will include:-

- Improving the quality and consistency of our employment data.
- Training for all staff to enable them to understand their responsibilities in relation to equality and diversity.
- Use of Equality Impact Assessments to develop effective policies and processes for staff, court users and visitors which minimises or eliminates negative impacts.

A place where people want to work

48. The UKSC wants to be an organisation that provides an environment where people positively enjoy working and where staff morale is high. We expect to provide strong organisational values where staff know the behaviour that is expected of them, but also feel

they can contribute to decision making and that their work is valued and recognised. In 2009- 2010 we introduced a staff intranet and a recognition and reward policy. We also hold staff meetings each quarter, which provide an open forum for all staff to convey their comments and suggestions to senior management on any aspect of the work of UKSC.

49. In addition, in 2010-2011 we will:-

- Work with staff and Justices to develop and publish a set of shared values and behaviours.
- Issue a staff engagement survey after a year of operation to measure staff attitudes. We will then benchmark our survey results against those of the wider Civil Service and put in place an action plan to tackle issues raised.
- Just as the Justices comprise judges from all three jurisdictions, we shall seek over time to achieve experience among the staff from all the jurisdictions of the United Kingdom.
- In the shorter term we will seek to maintain this diversity among the annual Judicial Assistant appointees, as we do at present, provided this remains consistent with the requirements of fair and open competition and appointment on the basis of merit.

Complaints, correspondence and core standards

50. We deal with complaints in accordance with our complaints policy covering staff and administrative procedures. We are monitoring the level of complaints, using them as a tool to improve our performance.

51. All staff at the UKSC operate under a set of agreed core office standards which deal with external contacts and communications, together with internal issues such as staff management, Information Technology, use of resources, health and safety, security and team-working.

Information Assurance, Freedom of Information and Data Protection

52. Reliable and accurate information is critical to proper decision making. This makes information a vital business asset that needs to be protected. Procedures for the storage, handling, transmission and disposal of information will be further developed and staff trained so that information is accurate, available only to the right people, in order to protect its confidentiality, and easily accessible for those with a right to see it.

53. An electronic file system will be rolled out to users in 2010 - 2011 with full training provided to enable it to be used to maximise its potential. As well as providing easy access to information for internal administrative purposes it will aid the preparation of prompt replies, where applicable, to Freedom of Information (FOI) and Data Protection (DP) requests. In addition the system will be used to implement the records retention and disposal schedule which is in place, ensuring that records are destroyed or retained at the correct times

according to their administrative or historical worth in line with public records legislation. Staff have already been trained on and are using the case management system on a daily basis.

54. Information assurance processes have begun with the creation of an Information Asset Register and the allocation of responsibilities to Information Asset Owners. Further work in 2010 - 2011 will involve the continuing assessment and management of information risks to ensure compliance with the Hannigan requirements on information assurance.

55. Our FOI Publication Scheme is available on the website and will be reviewed in September 2010. The Data Protection Notification is in place and will be reviewed and renewed in September 2010.

56. In the first half of 2010 - 11 we will consider the implications of the proposed Welsh Government Assembly Measure on our plans to develop a Welsh Language Scheme, seeking advice as appropriate from the Welsh Language Board and taking action accordingly.

Library facilities

57. In 2010 - 2011 the librarians will continue to review the book stock to identify areas which should be expanded as well as evaluating the current provision of online databases to ensure that the Justices and staff have access to relevant and up to date library resources.

58. There is a range of Scottish material in the Library, in the Lawyers' Suite and on the online databases to which the Library subscribes. The collection in the Lawyers' Suite is for the use of Scottish Advocates appearing before the Supreme Court and was provided and maintained by the Library of the Faculty of Advocates in Edinburgh. In early 2010 the Library came to an agreement with the Advocates' Library concerning ownership of certain publications in the collection. The Advocates' Library will make suggestions about useful publications for the Supreme Court to acquire in 2010 - 2011 and beyond.

59. The Library holds some Northern Ireland publications and has access to online databases which contain Northern Ireland material. In 2010 - 2011 the librarians will review the current stock and investigate the availability of other Northern Ireland material, both in print form and electronically to ensure that there is adequate access to relevant materials for the Justices and staff.

Sustainable development

60. Sustainable development provides a framework for redirecting economies to enable everyone to meet their basic needs and improve their quality of life while ensuring that the natural resources on which they depend are maintained and enhanced, both for their benefit and for that of future generations. The UKSC has a role in this scheme and will source its supplies with sustainability as a key consideration. Our building also consumes resources. Despite the constraints imposed by a historic building, the designers have achieved a BREEAM (BRE Environmental Assessment Method) rating of "very good" and we will monitor our energy usage to direct measures to improve our efficiency wherever we can.

Health & Safety

61. The health and safety of Justices, our staff and visitors is paramount and robust management procedures will be applied. All statutory requirements will be met and regularly monitored by a Health and Safety Committee which reports quarterly to the Management Board. An innovation already implemented has been the issue of an introduction to health and safety, which draws attention in an informal way to the key measures to ensure health and safety; and all staff are receiving an induction upon starting work at the Court. The Chief Executive delivers strong leadership which champions the importance of, and a common-sense approach to, health and safety in the workplace. There will, throughout, be a focus on the core aims of health and safety to help managers distinguish between real health and safety issues and trivial matters. An early priority is to review current guidance on occupational health so that we may institute best practice on the control of stress at work.

Building and Accommodation

62. This is one of the key benefits of the physical move from the House of Lords (HOL) and that of the JCPC from 9 Downing Street, which has already begun to pay dividends.

- There is an additional courtroom available compared to those in HOL and 9 Downing Street. The largest courtroom allows for 9 Justices to sit in one court, when required, whereas the space available in the HOL did not easily permit this.
- There is an enlarged and easier to use law library for Justices and staff resulting from the successful combination of the HOL and JCPC legal book collections and some additional material from the Royal Courts of Justice.
- There is also now space for eight Judicial Assistants to work in support of the Justices.
- There is a significantly increased number of dedicated meeting rooms available for advocates and parties to cases to use and a formal 'Lawyers Suite', which provides a comfortable working environment with, for example, access to Wi Fi.
- There is much improved ease of access for the public to come to the court compared with the real practical difficulties of finding the right locations within the HOL and 9 Downing Street. Access is also now fully compliant with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act.
- The accommodation for staff is much improved, with significantly better provision for the storage of case papers than was the case in the House of Lords, thereby reducing risks and promoting efficiency.

**The Supreme Court of the United Kingdom
Parliament Square
London SW1P 3BD
May 2010**

Performance Indicators (PIs)

Section 51 of the CRA places a duty on the Chief Executive of the UKSC to ‘ensure that the Court’s resources are used to provide an efficient and effective system to support the Court in carrying on its business.’ The UKSC Rules also provide statutory time limits for certain steps and processes. The UKSC Executive team is therefore committed to seeing that the administration of casework and other non-judicial activities are carried out as efficiently and effectively as possible, whilst fully respecting and upholding the independence of the judiciary.

Overarching

- The UKSC will continue to be publicly recognized as unequivocally independent of political influence and interference; and it will remain visibly separate from both the executive and the legislature and be publicly acknowledged to be such.

Casework

Consultation with the UKSC User Committee - there have been two user committee meetings - and comparison with statistical data from the work of the Appellate Committee of the House of Lords has suggested the following PIs for the administration of the Court’s casework.

Independence and Fairness

- There will be no successful Article 6 challenges at the European Court of Human Rights.

Permission Applications

- All decisions will be made within 3 months of filing.

Appeal Hearings

- All hearing dates will be allocated within 4 weeks of the grant of permission.

Costs

- All assessments of costs will be completed within 12 months of completion of the appeal hearing.

Public Access, Education and Outreach

- We will ensure that film of court hearings, particularly the delivery of judgments, is made available for news and current affairs broadcasting and for educational

purposes promptly and efficiently (and by prior request for live transmission), subject always to the court's overriding right to withhold this, if it would not be appropriate.

- We will ensure press summaries of judgments are published on the UKSC website promptly (and on the same day) after they have been handed down.
- If resources permit (which at April 2010 it looks as if they may well not), we will develop a proactive education and outreach policy with a dedicated education officer producing material for an education pack for schools and colleges.

Finance

- The UKSC will produce and publish (as part of its Annual Report), by 31 July 2010, IFRS compliant resource accounts for the financial year that ended on 31 March 2010, without attracting any adverse National Audit Office (NAO) comments.
- The UKSC's Annual Report for 2009 – 2010 will demonstrate that it is using its resources efficiently and effectively.
- The UKSC will manage within its budget during the financial year 2010 – 2011, so that it is in a position to produce similar accounts in its Annual Report after the end of the present financial year.

Human Resources

- 100% of staff performance appraisals will be completed within deadline.

Correspondence and Core Standards

The following service standards apply in dealings with both court users and members of the general public:

- The UKSC will write in plain English and structure and tailor its communications to the recipient. It will aim to reply (or send a holding letter) to 90% of enquiries within 10 working days of receipt (or to an agreed timetable).
- UKSC staff will aim to answer 90% of telephone calls within 5 rings or as soon as possible if the line is engaged dealing with another caller.

Data Protection & Freedom of Information Requests

- Freedom of Information and Data Protection requests will be dealt with in accordance with the timings set out in the relevant legislation – within 20 working days for FOI and 40 calendar days for DP requests.