



FEDERAL COURT OF AUSTRALIA

Corporate Plan 2015-19



Table of contents

Introduction	5
Background Federal Court of Australia	6
Background National Native Title Tribunal	7
Environment	8
Federal Court of Australia Goals	11
Federal Court of Australia Performance Measures	11
Federal Court of Australia Strategies and Priorities	12
National Native Title Tribunal Goals	18
National Native Title Tribunal Performance Measures	18
National Native Title Tribunal Strategies and Priorities	19
Resourcing	22
Risk Oversight and Management	23
Compliance Table	23

Foreword

The Federal Court of Australia was created by the *Federal Court of Australia Act 1976* (Cth) as a superior court of record and a court of law and equity. Its overarching goal is to contribute to the social and economic development and wellbeing of all Australians by applying and upholding the rule of law. Among the statutes which confer original jurisdiction on the Court is the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth).

The National Native Title Tribunal is an independent body established by the Native Title Act. Since July 2012 the Court has had responsibility for the corporate administration of the Tribunal.

I am pleased to present the corporate plan for the Federal Court of Australia and the National Native Title Tribunal for 2015-19.

The plan sets out our purpose, our environment and the strategies that will guide our key activities over the next four years.

The plan describes strategies for both the Federal Court and the National Native Title Tribunal. It takes into account the challenges and opportunities for both organisations to define the strategic goals, objectives and tactics that we will use over the next four years. The strategic objectives and tactical plans have been separated into those that apply to the Federal Court and those that apply to the National Native Title Tribunal.

We look forward to implementing the plan and continuing to build the reputation of both the Court and the National Native Title Tribunal.



Warwick Soden
Registrar and Chief Executive Officer
6 August 2015

Introduction

Statement of Preparation

In my capacity as the Registrar of the Federal Court of Australia (the accountable authority), I present our four year Corporate Plan as required under paragraph 35(1)(a) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (Cth). The plan is prepared in accordance with the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014.

Period of Coverage

This Corporate Plan is prepared for the reporting period 2015-16, and covers the reporting periods 2015-16 to 2018-19.



Warwick Soden
Registrar and Chief Executive Officer
6 August 2015

Background

Federal Court of Australia

The Federal Court of Australia (the Court) was created by the *Federal Court of Australia Act 1976* (Cth) and began to exercise its jurisdiction on 1 February 1977. It assumed jurisdiction formerly exercised in part by the High Court of Australia and the whole jurisdiction of the Australian Industrial Court and the Federal Court of Bankruptcy.

The Court is a superior court of record and a court of law and equity. It sits in all capital cities and elsewhere in Australia from time to time.

The Chief Justice is the senior judge of the Court and is responsible for managing the administrative affairs of the Court. He is assisted by the Registrar. The Registrar is appointed by the Governor-General on the nomination of the Chief Justice. The Principal Registry of the Court is in Sydney and is responsible for the overall administrative policies and functions of the Court’s Registries. It has a Registry in all capital cities of the States and Territories. In addition, the Registrar assists the President of the National Native Title Tribunal (NNTT) in managing the administrative affairs of the Tribunal.

The Court’s original jurisdiction is conferred by over 150 statutes of the Parliament. It has a substantial

and diverse appellate jurisdiction. It hears appeals from decisions of single judges of the Court and from the Federal Circuit Court in non-family law matters. The Court also exercises general appellate jurisdiction in criminal and civil matters on appeal from the Supreme Court of Norfolk Island.

The Court’s jurisdiction is broad, covering almost all civil matters arising under Australian federal law and some summary and indictable criminal matters. It also has jurisdiction to hear and determine any matter arising under the Constitution through the operation of s39B of the *Judiciary Act 1903*.

The objectives of the Court are to:

- Decide disputes according to law promptly, courteously and effectively and, in so doing, to interpret the statutory law and develop the general law of the Commonwealth, so as to fulfill the role of a Court exercising the judicial power of the Commonwealth under the Constitution
- Provide an effective Registry service to the community
- Manage the resources allotted by Parliament efficiently.

The Portfolio Budget Statement outlines the key strategic outcome measure for the Court. This is, that through its jurisdiction, the Court will apply and uphold the rule of law to deliver remedies and enforce rights and in so doing, contribute to the social and economic development and well-being of all Australians. This outcome underpins the strategies and plans for the Court over the next four years.

The merger of the corporate functions of the Federal Court with those of the Family Court and Federal Circuit Court was announced in the May 2015 Federal Budget. From 1 July 2016, a single administrative body will exist with a single appropriation under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (Cth). The objective of the merger is to deliver more efficient and effective shared services whilst preserving each Court’s operational independence and accountability.

Our vision

An internationally respected Court.

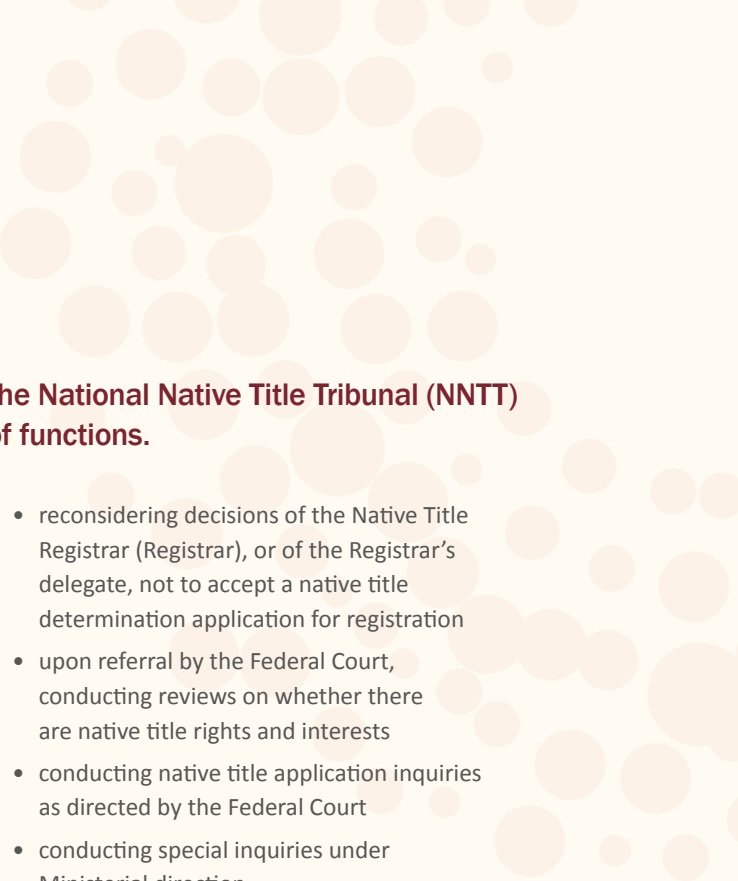
Mission

To contribute to the social and economic development and wellbeing of all Australians by applying and upholding the rule of law to deliver remedies and enforce rights.

Our values

Prompt, Courteous, Effective, Efficient, Accountable.

We are committed to upholding the Australian Public Service Values and Employment Principles, and to comply with the Code of Conduct. We are impartial, committed to service, accountable, respectful and ethical.



Background

National Native Title Tribunal

The *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth) establishes the National Native Title Tribunal (NNTT) as an independent body with a wide range of functions.

The NNTT was established as a special measure for the advancement and protection of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders and is intended to advance the process of reconciliation among all Australians.

The Tribunal comprises a President, Deputy Presidents (if any) and Members, who are appointed by the Governor General under the Act to perform a broad range of functions which are specified in the Act.

The purpose of the native title scheme, under the Act, is:

- to provide for the recognition and protection of native title
- to establish a mechanism for determining claims to native title
- to establish ways in which future dealings affecting native title (future acts) may proceed.

The President and Members of the Tribunal have the following statutory functions:

- upon referral by the Federal Court of Australia, mediating in native title proceedings
- mediating in relation to certain proposed future acts on areas where native title exists or might exist
- arbitrating objections to the expedited procedure in the future act scheme
- where parties cannot agree, arbitrating applications for a determination of whether or not a future act can be undertaken and, if so, whether any conditions will apply
- assisting people to negotiate Indigenous Land Use Agreements (ILUAs), and helping to resolve any objections to registration of area or alternative procedure ILUAs
- assisting with negotiations to settle applications that relate to native title
- assist with statutory access agreement negotiations
- assist with statutory access agreement negotiations providing assistance under s203BK of the Act to representative bodies in performing their dispute resolution functions

- reconsidering decisions of the Native Title Registrar (Registrar), or of the Registrar’s delegate, not to accept a native title determination application for registration
- upon referral by the Federal Court, conducting reviews on whether there are native title rights and interests
- conducting native title application inquiries as directed by the Federal Court
- conducting special inquiries under Ministerial direction.

The President is responsible for managing the administrative affairs of the NNTT with the assistance of the Federal Court Registrar, who may delegate his powers under the Act, to any of the Native Title Registrar, Deputy Registrar or staff assisting the NNTT. The Federal Court also has powers of delegation under the *Public Service Act 1999* (Cth) and the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (Cth). The President may direct the Federal Court Registrar regarding the exercise of his power to assist the President in managing the administrative affairs of the NNTT.

Our vision

Shared country, shared vision.

Mission

Provide predictable, just decisions, procedural justice, and delivery of a fair and efficient dispute resolution service.

Our values

Competent, Reliable, Honest, Having integrity, Respectful of others.

We are committed to upholding the Australian Public Service Values and Employment Principles, and to comply with the Code of Conduct. We are impartial, committed to service, accountable, respectful and ethical.

Environment

Federal Court of Australia and the National Native Title Tribunal

The Court and the NNTT undertake regular reviews of their operating environment, challenges and risks to determine performance goals and operational plans each year.

A review of our operating environment suggests that the key environmental drivers during the period of this plan will be government policy, technological change, globalisation and social change.

Government Policy

The work of the Court and the NNTT is greatly influenced by Government policy and legislative change. These changes are outside of our control and can impact the volume and type of workloads, as well as the jurisdiction of the Court and the NNTT.

Both organisations need the agility to be able to structure resources and systems to ensure we can respond to change in the most cost effective way.

For example, changes to fee structures can shift demand either to or from the Court. Past policy decisions which have influenced strategic decision making include changes to legal aid funding, expanding the jurisdiction of the Court and legislative changes relating to native title.

For the NNTT, the recent recommendations made by the Australian Law Reform Commission in relation to native title connection issues, the Federal Government’s White Paper on Northern Australia, the outcomes of the COAG investigation and the recommendations of the Broome Round Table, all expose emerging pressures in the native title system which will impact upon practitioners and influence service delivery for the NNTT.

Technological change has created significant internal and external stakeholder expectations for speed, accessibility and tailored information.

The 2015 budget decision to merge corporate services for the Federal, Family and Circuit Courts will significantly impact on the operation of the Court. The challenge will be to maintain the efficient and effective operation of the Federal Court whilst the amalgamation occurs.

The drive for greater public sector efficiencies and accountability with enhanced access to justice will

result in a need to deliver more services at a lower or the same cost.

The Court and the NNTT have an ongoing commitment to relentless improvement, with many programs currently in place to improve efficiency. For the Court, these programs encompass changes to the way that cases are managed and provision of alternative dispute resolution processes, in addition to technological innovations. The Court and the NNTT invest in educational materials and support to improve access for external stakeholders including the public, litigants and the legal profession. These initiatives improve efficiency and reduce the demands on staff.

The Court and the NNTT have a successful history of proactively responding to policy and legislative change to meet the challenge of managing variations in volumes and workloads to avoid delays, meet stakeholder and client needs and reduce the cost of litigation.

Technological Change

Technological change has created significant internal and external stakeholder expectations for speed, accessibility and tailored information.

Mobile devices and mobile technologies have enabled information and transactions to occur in multiple environments. Mobile technologies are fast becoming the key drivers of technological change for both the Court and the NNTT.

The pace of technological change and innovation creates challenges for us to fund the development of services uniformly across multiple platforms. The challenge is exacerbated as the lifecycle of new technologies continues to become shorter.

Advances in communications technology play a key role in building the reputation of the Court and

judiciary. Public and professional access to decisions, information and processes has been greatly improved through the use of technology. However these benefits come with challenges to ensure accuracy, security of data and timeliness.

Globalisation

The growth of globalised trade impacts on the work of the Court. In addition, continued growth in the economies and societies within our region will have a major impact on the type and volume of work done by the Court. This economic, commercial and social change needs to be matched by strengthening and deepening the rule of law and of the mechanisms for its regional and transnational enforcement. It will require new and more sophisticated structures to strengthen the region’s court systems and strengthening and deepening of its arbitral systems and related dispute resolution mechanisms.

Social Change

The expectations and types of court users, clients and stakeholders for both the Court and the NNTT are expected to change significantly over the next four years.

Business, government and commercial organisations expect the legal profession to conduct business with them electronically. We need to position the Court and the NNTT to continue to respond to this expectation and identify the most effective technology platform to address their needs.

The work of the Court has also been impacted by economic and social change. For example workloads for judges have increased as a result of increase in self represented litigants and class actions. This trend is expected to continue over the four years of the plan.

For the NNTT, an increase in the determination of native title claims has placed greater emphasis on the challenges facing Prescribed Bodies Corporate (PBCs) and how native title holders can leverage economic development from the recognition of their native title rights and interests. Further, as the resolution of native title claims in settled areas proceed, tenure analysis is becoming increasingly challenging. The NNTT has been actively involved in assisting stakeholders to identify more efficient and timely ways to capture and analyse current and historical tenure.

Individualised services and communications, convenience and personalisation are another expectation of the different stakeholder groups serviced by the Court and the NNTT. Whilst technology provides a lower cost option to meet this need, defining stakeholder needs and developing tailored responses creates significant workload.

Federal Court of Australia

GOALS, STRATEGIES, PRIORITIES AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Federal Court Goals

This corporate plan is based on five strategic objectives that will drive the operations of the Court over the next four years. Our performance against these objectives will be reported in our Annual Report and Annual Performance Statement.

This plan reflects both the purpose of the Court, our vision and our culture of relentless improvement.

Our strategic objectives for the next four years are:

1. Efficient and just dispute resolution
2. Provide leadership on international jurisprudence
3. Contribute to the Australian legal system - strengthen relations with Court users
4. Streamline systems and processes
5. Build an agile, skilled and engaged workforce.

The Court has a track record of innovation and a number of projects aligned to these objectives were initiated in the 2014-15 plan year. These include international projects led by the judiciary, the introduction of the National Court Framework and the implementation of electronic court files. These initiatives will continue to be implemented and enhanced in the 2015-16 plan year and over the life of this corporate plan.

Performance Measures

The key strategic outcome measure for the Court is contained in the Portfolio Budget Statement. This is, that through its jurisdiction, the Court will apply and uphold the rule of law to deliver remedies and enforce rights and in so doing, contribute to the social and economic development and well-being of all Australians.

The Court maintains three time goals to measure the performance of its work. All strategies and tactical plans are designed to support the achievement of these performance goals.

Our Annual Performance Statement will report on the success of the plan to achieve the following targets:

1. Eighty-five per cent of cases completed within eighteen months of commencement
2. Judgments to be delivered within three months
3. Disposition of migration appeals and related applications within three months.

Strategic Objective 1

Efficient and just dispute resolution

The Court began the process of reinvigorating its case management approach in 2015 with the introduction of the National Court Framework (NCF). The NCF is an innovative approach to case management. It involves the development of an optimal structure to facilitate the delivery of quality judgments, by experienced judges, in a timely manner and for a reasonable cost. It is consistent with our vision to build an internationally respected Court.

A national court structure allows the Court to organise work along practice area lines rather than the previous practice of organising the Court’s work along Registry lines. Benefits to stakeholders include simplification of practice and procedures, access to judicial experience and expertise, early scheduling of conferences and enhanced facilitation for mediation. Within the Court, the NCF will broaden the base of judicial knowledge and experience.

eTrials are a further innovation by the Court to provide efficient and just dispute resolution.

A pilot project will be conducted during the plan year to determine an efficient way for the judiciary to manage electronic documents in the courtroom. The project will also address a need identified in the legal profession for clarification and consistency on how the Court wants documents to be prepared for use in the courtroom.

Our strategies over the next four years are to:

- 1. Restructure the Court and the system of allocation and management of matters to ensure efficiency and national consistency
- 2. Create nationally consistent practices and procedures, replacing individual Registry and Chambers arrangements
- 3. Implement real time business intelligence reporting to monitor and manage workloads for the judiciary
- 4. Define the potential for and implement eTrials across the Court’s work.

Priorities for the 2015-16 plan year

In the 2015-16 plan year, we will focus on the following projects and deliverables:

Objective or Project	Tactics	Target
Implement the National Court Framework	Simplified practice notes introduced Operational structure established Business intelligence system implemented	June 2016
Design and develop eTrial capability (Stage 1)	Conduct pilot project including definition of structures, technologies and training requirements	June 2016

Strategic Objective 2

Provide leadership in international jurisprudence

The Court’s judicial officers are recognised as thought leaders in international jurisprudence. The Court’s international programs support our vision to become internationally respected by promoting judicial independence and the developing judicial services, with particular emphasis on the Asia and Pacific regions.

This strategy also recognises the need to position the Court to respond to the growth in global trade and the rapid expansion of economies in the region by building Australia’s international reputation as a centre of the rule of law and of efficient and just resolution of disputes.

The Court achieves this by working closely with international jurisdictions and developing relationships with our international counterparts. This includes hosting international delegations, as

well as our international development and co-operation program where we partner with judiciaries around the world.

We currently have Memorandums of Understanding with international Courts in Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu and Dubai. In addition, we participate in the Pacific Judicial Development program with fourteen other Pacific countries. The program is designed to strengthen governance and the rule of law by enhancing the professional competence of judicial and court officers along with the processes and systems that they use.

Our strategies over the next four years are to:

- 1. Enhance the professional competence of judicial and court officers through international collaboration and co-operation
- 2. Identify areas of thought leadership in international jurisprudence.

Priorities for the 2015-16 plan year

Priorities for the 2015-16 year include further work on existing Memorandums of Understanding with international courts, as well as continuing our work on intellectual property and admiralty.

Strategic Objective 3

Contribute to the Australian legal system - strengthen relations with Court users

This strategy takes into account the changing needs and expectations of Court users and the wider range of choices available through technological advances. We will continue to create user driven services which meet needs and overcome barriers created by geography, culture, language and socioeconomic circumstances.

The Court aims to develop innovative approaches to meet the needs of Court users and improve access to justice. These approaches extend to the communication channels we use, as well as providing procedures which are clear, consistent and understandable.

The Court engages in a wide range of activities with the legal profession and community that support the Australian legal system. This work ensures that the Court develops positive relationships with, and gains

the support of the legal sector and the Australian public. The Court provides opportunities for members of the legal profession to discuss existing and emerging issues, provide feedback to the Court and act as a reference group. It is vital to the Court’s and the Australian legal system’s reputation nationally and internationally, that these relations continue to be maintained.

Our strategies over the next four years are to:

- 1. Contribute to the legal profession through liaison and education
- 2. Collaborate with members of the judiciary and legal sector on initiatives of mutual interest and benefit
- 3. Maintain effective media relations to deliver timely public information
- 4. Strengthen connections with the Australian community.

Priorities for the 2015-16 plan year

In the 2015-16 plan year, we will focus on the following projects and deliverables:

Objective or Project	Tactics	Target
Communication strategy for Court user education	Develop tailored resources and educational materials via different channels to assist Court users	Ongoing
Continued enhancement of our online strategy	Identify and develop additional online and digital services to support Court users transacting with the Court	Ongoing
Contribute to the legal profession through consultation and educational services	Consult with educational providers and professional bodies to provide education and identify needs	Ongoing
Collaboration with the profession	Conduct regular forums to identify needs	Ongoing

Strategic Objective 4

Streamline systems and processes

This strategic objective is based on developing a Registry blueprint of consistent national Registry procedures and practices, as well as continuing to expand and enhance eServices.

The Court’s eServices Strategy aims to utilise technology to maximise the efficient management of cases, by increasing online accessibility for the legal community and, where appropriate, members of the public, as well as assisting judges in their task of deciding cases according to law quickly, inexpensively and as efficiently as possible.

Over the next four years, we will continue to identify and develop eServices to support improvements in case management, enhance online access for the legal profession as well as to assist judges.

The Court will build upon the successful implementation of electronic court files to further

its vision of an environment where actions are commenced and cases are managed and heard electronically. With the introduction of electronic court files, the Court also has the opportunity to review its Registry procedure and practice to ensure that the most effective processes are used consistently across all Registries.

Our strategies over the next four years are to:

- 1. Develop and implement the blueprint for national standardisation of Registry procedure and processes
- 2. Deliver enhancements to the electronic court file
- 3. Optimise the use of data to improve decisions, services and compliance
- 4. Relentlessly improve the Court’s key business systems.

Priorities for the 2015-16 plan year

In the 2015-16 plan year, we will focus on the following projects and deliverables:

Objective or Project	Tactics	Target
Modernise Courtroom technology to improve the quality and range of services	Upgrade Video conferencing systems Enhance the electronic court file Upgrade judicial resources to mobile platforms	June 2016
Transition plan for Registry Blueprint delivered	Consult with Registries to identify streamlined processes and functions Develop the workplan and governance structure	June 2016
Develop and modernise the Court’s key business systems	Commence identification of requirements for a new case management system	June 2016

Strategic Objective 5

Build an agile, skilled and engaged workforce

Over the next four years, the type and nature of work performed by the Court’s corporate services and Registry staff will change significantly. With the continued evolution and development of the Court’s eServices and the increasing use of technology to manage cases, our workforce will need to be skilled, agile and engaged.

In addition, although the merger of corporate services functions with the Family and Federal Circuit Courts will not impact on Registries and judicial staff, it will impact on the work of corporate services staff. Consultation with corporate services staff across the three Courts will be undertaken in 2015 to determine the most appropriate structures and processes.

Priorities for the 2015-16 plan year

In the 2015-16 plan year, we will focus on the following projects and deliverables:

Objective or Project	Tactics	Target
Workforce analysis, reporting and management	Implement regular and ad hoc reporting, develop tools and resources, and utilise a range of staffing options to manage workforce planning effectively Implement improvements to the HR information system and reporting processes Provide training and support to managers on contemporary recruitment and selection practices	June 2016
Manage the transition of the amalgamated corporate services functions	Develop and implement a change management strategy Co-ordinate departmental working groups to define and document new functions	June 2016
Learning and development	Develop a learning and development plan for the next four years based on the changing needs of the workforce Align staff skills with future needs	June 2016

Our strategies over the next four years are to:

- 1. Build and sustain an engaged workforce who are passionate about working together to achieve the vision
- 2. Identify the components for high performance and develop the capability and experience of our people to deliver the full range of services.

National Native Title Tribunal
GOALS, STRATEGIES, PRIORITIES
AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

National Native Title Tribunal Goals

The corporate plan for the NNTT contains three strategic objectives. The following pages provide more detail on these objectives including our strategies, projects and performance measures.

This information will also be reflected in the Annual Report and Annual Performance Statement for the Federal Court. Performance measures also include those which appear in the Portfolio Budget Statement for the Federal Court.

The NNTT has undergone significant cultural change since amalgamating its back office with the Federal Court in 2012. These changes have included restructuring its workforce, reviewing and changing systems and processes, and introducing new technologies.

In the past 12 months the NNTT has focussed on technological innovations to improve its services to stakeholders. We have also successfully collaborated

more closely with our clients and stakeholders to improve the resources and services we provide. The success of this program has driven our overarching goal to be a more outwardly focussed and responsive organisation.

This plan continues the focus on innovation and collaboration as we build a workforce that is skilled to meet future change and deliver on our vision.

Over the next four years we will focus on three strategic objectives:

- 1. Promote service excellence and innovation
- 2. Reshape our culture and capabilities
- 3. Promote services to improve client access.

Performance Measures

The NNTT strives to be an externally focussed organisation. We will measure our success by monitoring how well our services meet the needs of our clients and stakeholders and how they engage with us.

Our success will be measured by how effectively we can grow the volume and diversity of assistance requests that we receive each year. Increasing the volume of requests for assistance by clients and stakeholders by service type will be used as our key indicator of success and reported on in our Annual Performance Statement to illustrate our success in implementing our strategies.

Strategic Objective 1

Promote service excellence and innovation

The NNTT will focus on close collaboration with our clients and stakeholders to develop services which meet their needs.

Workshops held in 2014 with stakeholders and clients illustrated a need for more tailored and culturally appropriate services and resources. These workshops also highlighted a need to simplify our processes to improve access by clients and reduce the administrative burden on staff.

This strategy emphasises the need for the NNTT to become more externally focussed and responsive to the needs of clients. Technology will be an important enabler to achieve this strategy, as will developing the skills of staff to identify and deliver new innovations.

Our strategies over the next four years are to:

- 1. Leverage technology to develop culturally appropriate services and information for clients
- 2. Develop our internal capability and culture to focus on service excellence
- 3. Standardise and simplify processes to improve our efficiency and responsiveness to our clients' needs.

Priorities for the 2015-16 plan year

In the 2015-16 plan year, we will focus on the following projects and deliverables:

Objective or Project	Tactics	Target
Implement our road map for online services	Expand our online statistics function Enable online lodgement of forms Increase the functionality of our geospatial services Improve our online resources and publications	June 2016
Ensure policies and procedures are consistent nationally	Identify and address areas of duplication and complexity in policy and procedures Align processes and procedures within each state Develop simplified practices	June 2016
Create a shared vision of what service excellence means	Conduct service workshops to define our value proposition	All staff participate by January 2016

Strategic Objective 2

Reshape our culture and capabilities

Over the next four years, we will focus on building the skills and capability of our staff to ensure that the NNTT is better equipped to respond to the needs of clients. A key component of this strategy is to ensure that we communicate regularly with our people to promote engagement and passion for our work.

An organisational review in 2014 was undertaken to revitalise and re-energise the NNTT and to ensure that we have skilled people performing at the best of their ability. In the next 12 months, we will implement the recommendations of that review and monitor progress towards our goals.

Priorities for the 2015-16 plan year

In the 2015-16 plan year, we will focus on the following projects and deliverables:

Objective or Project	Tactics	Target
Internal communications strategy designed and implemented	Establish a dedicated communications function to guide internal and external communications Deliver the advanced training program to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and build the capacity of our staff	June 2016
Build cross-cultural knowledge	Develop a program for building cross-cultural knowledge and capacity among staff and Members Embed cultural knowledge in all training programs	Ongoing
Professional development needs of staff defined and training plan implemented	Skills audit and gap analysis conducted National training plan developed	December 2015
Conduct leadership and talent recognition program to identify key staff	Identify future leaders Develop teams/key experts in each office who can undertake high-level work in support of the Tribunal and Native Title Registrar's functions Sponsor employees in key areas of study/specific programs to develop organisational expertise	February 2016
Performance management program enhanced	Refine performance management process Define rewards and means of recognition	June 2016

Our strategies over the next four years are to:

1. Build a passionate, dynamic and inquisitive workforce
2. Align our skills and capabilities with the needs of the organisation
3. Build cross-cultural knowledge across the organisation
4. Redevelop our internal communications function to ensure that we communicate meaningfully with staff.

Strategic Objective 3

Promote services to improve client access

Ensuring that clients and other stakeholders know about and understand the services offered by the NNTT is critical to achieving our vision. This strategy compels the NNTT to ensure that we proactively engage with our external stakeholders and clients to better understand their needs. In creating an externally focussed organisation, we can build a reputation with clients for being trustworthy, supportive and relevant.

In the past, some Indigenous stakeholders have been reluctant to make enquiries due to cultural barriers or have been unable to actively participate in the process of native title claims due to a lack of tailored information. The NNTT recognised this barrier last year and consulted with the community to produce new plain English fact sheets and information.

Over the next four years, we will continue to improve our understanding of the issues and barriers faced by clients and other stakeholders in dealing with the NNTT.

Priorities for the 2015-16 plan year

In the 2015-16 plan year, we will focus on the following projects and deliverables:

Objective or Project	Tactics	Target
Develop a marketing strategy	Collaborate with clients to build and define the range of services that the NNTT can provide Establish the necessary capacity to deliver Promote the NNTT's services internally and externally through the website, publications and other channels Identify public relations opportunities to communicate the NNTT's services and resources Ensure that the President, Members of the Tribunal, the Native Title Registrar and staff have a presence at conferences and workshops	January 2016
Improve native title resources for clients	Update our information products about existing services Identify opportunities to create new products and areas of service delivery Collaborate with clients to review products, services and information tailored specifically for Indigenous people to improve engagement with Indigenous communities	Ongoing

An important goal for the NNTT is to continue to build the capacity of clients to become effective participants in native title processes.

Part of the engagement strategy for the NNTT is to educate and inform the broader community, with the President, Members of the Tribunal and the Native Title Registrar presenting at many conferences and lectures both in Australia and overseas.

Our strategies over the next four years are to:

1. Establish the NNTT as the pre-eminent provider of native title information
2. Engage with our clients to promote the vision of a shared country and a shared future
3. Simplify and improve our practices and procedures to make them more accessible to clients.

Resourcing

The Court’s resourcing in relation to the achievement of this Corporate Plan is contained in the Portfolio Budget Statement. The tables below detail our budget and capital expenditure for the four years of this plan.

	2014-15 Estimated actual \$'000	2015-16 Budget \$'000	2016-17 Forward estimate \$'000	2017-18 Forward estimate \$'000	2018-19 Forward estimate \$'000
COMPONENT 1					
Annual administered expenses					
Special appropriations					
<i>Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013 s 77</i>	600	600	600	600	600
Annual departmental expenses					
Program support	84,058	85,839	83,257	84,218	84,972
Expenses not requiring appropriation in the budget year	36,674	37,351	37,433	37,465	37,691
Total component expenses	121,332	123,790	121,290	122,283	123,263
COMPONENT 2					
Annual departmental expenses					
Program support	11,090	10,960	10,834	10,887	10,922
Total component expenses	11,090	10,960	10,834	10,887	10,922
Total program expenses	132,422	134,750	132,124	133,170	134,185
Average staffing level	406	400	-	-	-

Component 1 is the exercise of the jurisdiction of the Federal Court. Component 2 is the provision of support to the National Native Title Tribunal.

The table below shows the capital expenditure budget for the four years of the plan.

	2014–15 Estimated actual \$'000	2015–16 Budget \$'000	2016–17 Forward estimate \$'000	2017–18 Forward estimate \$'000	2018–19 Forward estimate \$'000
NEW CAPITAL APPROPRIATIONS					
Capital budget—Bill 1 (DCB)	4,327	4,968	4,812	4,624	4,711
Total new capital appropriations	4,327	4,968	4,812	4,624	4,711
Provided for:					
Purchase of non-financial assets	3,968	4,593	4,437	4,249	4,336
Annual finance lease costs	359	375	375	375	375
Total items	4,327	4,968	4,812	4,624	4,711
PURCHASE OF NON-FINANCIAL ASSETS					
Funded by capital appropriation—DCB(a)	3,968	4,929	4,437	4,249	4,336
Funded by finance leases	-	1,500	-	-	-
Funded internally from departmental resources(b)	-	314	42	-	-
Total purchases of non-financial assets	3,968	6,743	4,479	4,249	4,336
RECONCILIATION OF CASH USED TO ACQUIRE ASSETS TO ASSET MOVEMENT TABLE					
Total purchases	3,968	6,743	4,479	4,249	4,336
Less additions by finance lease	-	(1,500)	-	-	-
Plus annual finance lease costs	359	375	375	375	375
Total cash used to acquire assets	4,327	5,618	4,854	4,624	4,711

Prepared on Australian Accounting Standards basis.

DCB = departmental capital budget.

(a) Does not include annual finance lease costs. Includes purchases from current and previous years’ DCBs.

(b) Includes the following sources of funding: current Bill 1 and prior year Act 1 appropriations (excluding amounts from the DCB).

Risk Oversight and Management

The Court and the NNTT are exposed to a diverse range of risks. This exposure includes professional risks, reputational risks, personnel risks, political risks, operational risks, risks to our stakeholders and risks associated with competition.

The Court has developed a Risk Management Plan in accordance with the Australian/New Zealand Risk Management Standard (AS/NZS ISO 31000).

The Court has adopted six broad criteria for establishing its risk management priorities. These are:

1. Risks that affect the reputation of the Chief Justice and Judges and their ability to perform, or which may impair the community’s trust
2. Risks that affect the Registrar’s management of and accountability for performance, including the Court’s service delivery obligations, regulatory framework and business relationships
3. Risks that affect performance against identified strategic priorities
4. Risks that affect the integrity of decisions, processes and information
5. Risks that affect the security of the Court’s and NNTT’s resources (including property) and visitors to its premises
6. Risks that affect the health and safety of the Court’s and NNTT’s personnel.

Risks are reviewed at least each quarter and the risk register is updated each quarter. All staff are provided with training on risk management and their responsibilities.

Oversight

The Audit Committee is responsible for the overall risk management program, which includes:

- endorsing the Court’s Risk Management Plan
- endorsing risk treatment strategies and action plans
- over-sighting the implementation of the Court’s Risk Management Plan
- compliance with finance law
- reviewing annual risk reports.

The identification and review of critical risk areas within the Court and the implementation of the Court’s Risk Management Plan will also be the subject of internal audit protocols, to be applied by Internal Audit with the oversight and approval of the Audit Committee.

Compliance Table

The table below lists matters to be included in the Corporate Plan under section 35(1)(b) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (Cth) and their relevant page numbers.

	Page number	
	Federal Court of Australia	National Native Title Tribunal
Introductory statement	5	5
Purpose	6	7
Environment	8-9	8-9
Performance including how the entity will achieve its purpose and how the entity’s performance will be measured	11	18
Capability - the key strategies and plans that the entity will implement in each reporting period covered by the plan to achieve the entity’s purposes	12-16	19-21
Risk and oversight management – a summary of the risk oversight and management systems of the entity for each reporting period covered by the plan including any measures that will be implemented to ensure compliance with the finance law.	23	23



**FEDERAL COURT
OF AUSTRALIA**