

THE MARSHALL ISLANDS JUDICIARY'S 2014 COURT IMPROVEMENT PLAN (as of 8/8/14)

Area 1: Court leadership and management

Area 1: Court leadership and management	Action to be undertaken and expected outcome	Steps to achieve action and outcome	Responsibility/ Participants	Timing of steps	Performance indicator
1.1 . The Judiciary has published a statement of its vision and mission (purpose) together with details of how it meets its fundamental values (such as accessibility, timeliness and fairness).	Review, revise, adopt, and publicize Values, Mission Statement, and Vision as part of strategic planning process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review/Draft • Revise • Adopt • Publicize 	National Judicial Planning and Development Committee (NJPDC) with input from other judges and clerks	October 4, 2013 October 16, 2013 October 18, 2013 December 20, 2013	Done by target dates COMPLETED, INCLUDED IN STRATEGIC PLAN
1.2 The Judiciary's leadership is actively involved in setting time and service standards and reviewing judicial and administrative performance against those standards.	1.2.1 Review, develop, adopt, and publicize time goals and delay reduction polices for national courts.	Review/Draft – Through the Time Goals Workshop undertaken in April/May 2014. Adopt interim time goals for 6 months. Revise time goals and adopt final standards.	NJPDC with input from other judges and staff and from representatives of bar	Interim standards to be put in place for a period of 6 months from September 2014.	Time goals and delay reduction policies in place and being measured with a resultant increase in timeliness of disposition of cases.
	1.2.2 Review staff handbook to determine whether service standards should be updated.	Review staff handbook. Update as necessary.		Chief Clerk with input from court users	

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1.3 The judiciary holds regular meetings with court users to provide information on the court and seek feedback.	<p>President of the Law Society is a member of the NJPDC. Participation in these meetings will ensure feedback from the Law Society.</p> <p>At workshop on May 22, 2014 the Attorneys present noted that they were satisfied with the level of consultation with the Court and did not wish regular meetings to be scheduled.</p>	<p>Schedule twice yearly meetings of the NJPDC.</p> <p>Notify Law Society Executive in advance of NJPDC so that the Law Society's concerns can be brought to the attention of the NJDC.</p>	HCT Chief Justice	<p>October</p> <p>March</p>	Meetings scheduled and held as scheduled.
1.4 Judiciary actively informs the community and court users on its services, standards and performance and seeks feedback to improve its service.	1.4.1 Re-institute radio program.	Script, record, and broadcast radio programs.	Chief Clerk Travis Hainrick	Recorded programs broadcast in rotation every week	<p>At least 6 programs per year on rotation</p> <p>COMMENCED JANUARY 2014</p>
	1.4.1A Develop TRC radio announcements. The announcements will increase community awareness about the TRC and how it operates.	<p>Develop script, record, and broadcast TRC announcements.</p> <p>Include announcements in regular schedule of radio program.</p>	<p>TRC judges to draft script for one or two announcements depending on length.</p> <p>Travis to record announcements.</p>	<p>Script of first announcement to be drafted by end September 2014.</p> <p>Include TRC announcement in scheduled radio program. By the end of 2014</p>	TRC announcements regularly included in radio broadcasts.
	1.4.2 Post notices in the Marshall Islands Journal describing the courts' services, standards, and performance and seeking feedback.	Draft notice and have the MI Journal run them.	Chief Clerk	Monthly commencing March 2014	<p>Notices re court services, etc. are published.</p> <p>COMMENCED March 2014.</p>
	1.4.3 Progressively translate forms into Marshallese.	Translated forms to be placed on website as they are finalized.	Chief Clerk	Project to be completed by December 2014	Translated forms on website and on court counters.
	1.4.4 Include information in annual report.	Highlight in annual report.	Annual report team	Once a year	Timely annual report (published by June 30)

 TRC
  District Court
  Court clerks
  Court users

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1.5 Data is kept and published on key aspects of the judiciary's work.	Continue to maintain and develop data management systems and to publish an annual report.	Maintain & enhance data management systems and annual report consistent with 15 Cook Islands indicators and IFCE.	NJPDC with input from All	Continuous	Publish annual reports by June 30 of the following year.
1.6 The Judiciary plans for the future, reviews feedback on its performance and identifies areas for improvement.	Conduct biannual meetings of the NJPDC incorporating feedback from biannual meetings of judges and staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set dates for meeting. • Set agenda for meeting. • Distribute agenda. • Hold meeting. • Prepare minutes and actions arising. 	HCT Chief Justice Chief Clerk	October March	Meetings are held twice each year. Consider feedback and areas of improvement.
1.7 Judiciary and its leaders promote a culture of new ideas.	Promote innovative suggestions in biannual meetings with judges and staff to then be discussed by NJPDC.	See 1.6 above and 2.2 below.	See 1.6 above and 2.2 below.	See 1.6 above and 2.2 below.	See 1.6 above and 2.2 below.

Area 2: Court planning and policies

Area 2: Court planning and policies	Action to be undertaken and expected outcome	Steps to achieve action and outcome	Responsibility/ Participants	Timing of steps	Performance indicator
2.1 Judiciary has a strategic plan setting out its goals, targets and plans for improvement.	Develop, adopt and publicize new strategic plan with strategic goals, strategies and actions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft • Review & revise • Adopt • Publicize on website and on radio 	NJPDC	December 16, 2013 December 20, 2013 December 27, 2013 January 1, 2014	Done by target dates. COMPLETED
2.2 Judiciary actively involves judges and staff in planning and problem solving tasks.	Conduct biannual meeting with judges. Conduct biannual meetings with staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set dates for meeting • Set agenda for meeting • Distribute agenda • Hold meeting • Prepare minutes and actions arising 	HCT Chief Justice for judges Chief Clerk for staff	September February	Meetings held twice a year, judges and staff actively participate.
2.3 Judiciary regularly reviews the plan and its performance against its targets.	The strategic plan and court improvement plans will be agenda items for biannual judicial and staff meetings and NJPDC meetings.	Include as items on agenda for meetings	Chief Clerk	See 1.6 and 2.2 above.	Plans are reviewed and updated twice yearly
2.4 Judiciary has published judicial and court policies that support its values, targets and plans.	2.4.1 Publicize list of management policies.	Include in website and annual report.	Webmaster and annual report team	Adopt and post on website by August 2014 and keep current. DONE July 31, 2014 Include in draft annual report.	Information on website is current. Included in annual report
	2.4.2 Development of continuance policies for High Court (HCT) and District Court (DCT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft • Review & revise • Adopt • Publicize 	Judges	August 2014	Done by target date. Decrease in number of continuances
	2.4.3 Development of continuance policy for the TRC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy drafted • Policy approved • Policy communicated: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To counsel ○ On website 	Jennifer Ehmann Ingram CJ Ingrid Kabua	April 2014 August 2014 August 2014	Number of continuances granted in the TRC decreases by XX%.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Copies in courthouse 			
	2.4.4 Substantial Changes to pre-trial preparation information for counsel in TRC matters.	Amend pre-trial notice to seek information from counsel to ensure a matter is ready for trial when it is set down for hearing.	TRC judges	New notice to be implemented for 28 May 2014 status conferences	<p>Continuances due to a matter not being ready for trial cease.</p> <p>Majority of TRC hearings proceed as timetabled.</p>
	2.4.5 Develop a manual for Court clerks about DCT processes including references to relevant court rules.	<p>Chief Clerk to discuss with DCT Presiding Judge exactly what information they would like included in the Manual.</p> <p>Manual drafted based on HCT procedures with some extra information where DCT procedures differ.</p> <p>The manual is to include the changed procedures agreed during the 2014 Time Goals Project.</p> <p>Court clerks informed of manual and trained about contents.</p> <p>Adopt manual.</p>	<p>DCT Presiding Judge</p> <p>Chief Clerk</p>	<p>June 2014</p> <p>Manual drafted December 2014</p> <p>Manual finalized by June 2015</p>	Consistency in duties undertaken by court clerks in the DCT
	2.4.5 Develop a brief checklist to be used by Clerks when setting up court rooms.	<p>Draft checklist.</p> <p>Approved by HCT Chief Justice</p> <p>Copy kept in each court room.</p>	Chief Clerk	July 2014	Court rooms ready, no delays due to problems with court room set up/equipment
	2.4.6 Develop and adopt a file retention policy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain policies from similar jurisdictions. • Draft policy. • Obtain HCT Chief Justice's approval. • Implement and publish policy. 	<p>Chief Clerk</p> <p>HCT Associate Justice</p>	December 2014	Policy is in place and files are being archived or disposed of in accordance with policy.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update clerks' manual to include the policy. 			
	2.4.7 Publicize policies on website and in annual report.	Include in website and annual report.	Webmaster Annual report team	Keep website current. Include in draft annual report.	Information on website is current. Included in annual report
2.5 Judiciary regularly reviews its policies to ensure their continuing effectiveness.	2.5.1 Policies will be reviewed bi-annually.	Identify policies to review Set dates for review and person responsible for review	HCT Chief Justice and Chief Clerk	During biannual meetings of judges and staff	Policies remain current, reviewed on an annual basis.
	2.5.2 Working with relevant stakeholders to review and redraft traffic and criminal citations (both local and national) to remove confusion. See 2014 Time Goals Project Report for detail of what is required and outcomes that will be achieved.	Identify people in the Attorney-General's office, police and local government who will need to be consulted to change the citation. Investigate potential of amending the Court's rules so that changes to the citation are required. Redraft citations ensuring relevant information is included. Arrange for citations to be translated. Investigate whether translation should also include Chinese languages.	DCT Presiding Judge, HCT Associate Justice, Court Clerk	TO BE DETERMINED	TO BE DETERMINED
	2.5.3 Review the discount concept for fines to determine whether it is having the desired effect. Depending on the outcome of the discount review, determine whether clearer guidelines for the discount should be introduced including when and how much the discount is.	Investigate whether it is possible to obtain information about the payment of fines prior to the discount being offered and after. If old statistics not available, determine whether a method for counting the number of discounted fines compared with non-discounted.	DCT Presiding Judge	TO BE DETERMINED	TO BE DETERMINED
	Court clerks indicated a new column could be included in the	Spread sheet to be amended	Chief Clerk	May 31, 2014	DCT traffic index includes fine discounts.

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	DCT spread sheet to show when a discount is given.				DONE
	2.5.4 Revise the notice of trial to provide DCT defendants with information to help them prepare for their trial. See 2014 Time Goals Project Report for more information about the suggested amendments.		DCT Presiding Judge Chief Clerk in consultation with DC Clerk	TO BE DETERMINED	Defendants are prepared for trials before the DCT.
	2.5.5 Investigate differential rules or obligations for resident and non-resident attorneys.	HCT Chief Justice to discuss with Law Society President. Amended rules if appropriate.	HCT Chief Justice	Prior to October 2014 NJPDC meeting	Discussion had, views expressed, possible amendment of practice rules.
	2.5.6 Review 120 day rule for service of documents with a view to possibly extending it.	HCT Chief Justice to discuss request with Law Society President. If it is decided to proceed with the request the rule should be changed. If not, practitioners should be advised of the steps they can take if service cannot be made within 120 days.	HCT Chief Justice	Prior to October 2014 NJPDC meeting	
2.6 Judiciary has a court new ideas strategy as an integral part of its strategic planning.	See 1.7 above.				

Area 3: Court Resources (Human, Material and Financial)

Area 3: Court Resources (Human, Material and Financial)	Action to be undertaken and expected outcome	Steps to achieve action and outcome	Responsibility/ Participants	Timing of steps	Performance indicator
3.1 Judiciary manages resources proactively to balance judicial and administrative workloads with timely and quality decision making	3.1.1 Seek funding for additional HCT judge or, at a minimum, a full time staff attorney position to assist in balancing the judicial and administrative workloads of the Courts	Include information in budget submission.	HCT Chief Justice Annual Budget Team	Dependent on when budget information is called for, usually in April	Included in the budget submission DONE for FY 2015 Budget
	3.1.2 Seek funding for a court probation officer to monitor compliance with probated sentences (including house arrest, community service, restitution, traditional apology, and the like). In the meantime, continue with the community services project to better monitor defendants doing community service.	See 3.1.1 above. Chief Clerk to discuss how to progress this with HCT Chief Justice	HCT Chief Justice Chief Clerk	October 2014	Included in the budget submission DONE for FY 2015 Budget
	3.1.3 At biannual judges and staff meetings, review and balance workloads to ensure they are distributed fairly and meet current and projected needs Discuss any potential changes at the NJPDC meeting.	Include workload in agenda for biannual meetings	HCT Chief Justice and Chief Clerk	September February	Judges and staff are content with workload distribution. Backlogs of cases (for judges) and work projects (for staff) are controlled
	3.1.4 Assign a clerk to focus on the TRC. Or, if this is not possible due to resources, then roster a clerk to assist TRC judges. Ensure the clerk is available when required by the TRC	Determine whether a clerk can be assigned to work full time with the TRC. Alternatively, ensure a clerk is available on call to assist the TRC. The clerk will copy case files, assist with translating opinions and undertake other duties as required.	Chief Clerk	Clerk is available to assist TRC as required. DONE July 2014	Decisions will be delivered in a more timely fashion. Decisions will be publishable in English.

Area 3: Court Resources (Human, Material and Financial)	Action to be undertaken and expected outcome	Steps to achieve action and outcome	Responsibility/ Participants	Timing of steps	Performance indicator
3.2 Judiciary has identified training needs of court staff and meets them.	3.2.1 Annually assess staff training needs.	Chief Clerk to discuss training needs with each clerk	Chief Clerk	October	Staff undertakes at least 1 training opportunities per year.
	3.2.2 Offer annual training to staff: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in core areas including interpreter training, ethics, document management and productivity software, dealing with internal and external customers, and bailiff responsibilities) • in specialized areas (including leadership, budgeting, accounting, server software, and website management). Options for training might include in-country training, visits to courts in other jurisdictions, and computer program/video conferencing/web-based and other types of courses.	Interpreter/translation training for staff has been identified as the priority. Once new staff member is employed, dates for the translation training should be set and a trainer engaged. Second priority is training on the latest Adobe Acrobat Pro to be arranged with the 9 th Cir's Sally Pym. Third priority is Excel and Microsoft Word training. A training provider or online training packages should be sourced. Other training should be scheduled in discussions between Chief Clerk and relevant staff members.	Chief Clerk	Interpreter training undertaken by December 2014 Throughout the calendar year	Interpreter training completed for all staff (including on Ebeye). Staff undertake at least 1 training opportunities per year Feedback on training is very positive.
	3.2.3 Suggested areas of focus for training for court staff include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss how these suggestions fit into staff training plan. • Prioritize training. • Identify available training providers. • Arrange training subject to funding. 	DCT Presiding Judge in consultation with Chief Clerk	TO BE DETERMINED	TO BE DETERMINED
	3.2.4 Encourage staff to learn together and from each other. Where staff travel for training a brief trip report will be prepared.	When a staff member attends training they will discuss the outcomes of the training at a staff meeting.	Chief Clerk to organize staff meeting. Staff member to report back at meeting	Within a week of a training activity being held	Other staff report that they have gained relevant knowledge from the discussion.

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	3.2.5 Provide for bailiff training, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Importance of prompt service especially when it is known a person might soon be unavailable • Using discretion if the person cannot be found to serve documents on someone else who is over 18 at the person's workplace or home. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and schedule bailiff training 	Chief Clerk	TO BE DETERMINED	Feedback on training is very positive. Feedback from practitioners about service of documents by bailiffs is generally positive.
3.3 Judiciary conducts regular professional development for judges.	3.3.1 At least annually assess judicial training needs	HCT Chief Justice to meet with judges	HCT Chief Justice	At beginning of financial year	Judges of HCT, TRC, and DCT undertake at least 1 training opportunities per year. CC Judges undertake training biennially.
	3.3.2 In 2015/16 provide leadership and management training to senior judges and staff, including training in change leadership and leadership styles. Offer training to senior officers from other government agencies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify training provider. • Schedule dates for training. • Invite participants from other government departments. • Run training. 	HCT Chief Justice and Chief Clerk	Training to be completed by May 2016	Feedback on training is very positive.
	3.3.3 Offer professional development workshops and seminars to judges that include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • core topics (such as, the role of courts and judges and public perception, ethics, evidence, opinion writing, self-represented litigants, conducting the trial, and productivity software) and/or • specialized areas (including mediation, traditional land rights, criminal law and procedure, domestic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other training should be scheduled in discussions between HCT Chief Justice and relevant judges. 	HCT Chief Justice and judges	When the National Judicial College catalogue for the following year is received. When the Pacific Judicial Development Programme Management Team advises member jurisdictions of program offerings.	Judges undertake at least 1 training opportunities per year Feedback on training and of judges is very positive.

Area 3: Court Resources (Human, Material and Financial)	Action to be undertaken and expected outcome	Steps to achieve action and outcome	Responsibility/ Participants	Timing of steps	Performance indicator
	<p>violence, juvenile case, small claims, and traffic cases, enforcement of judgments)</p> <p>The training options will include in-country training, visits to courts in other jurisdictions, and computer program/video</p>				
	<p>3.3.4 Encourage judges to learn together and from each other.</p> <p>Where judges travel for training a brief trip report will be prepared.</p>	When a judge attends training they will be asked to discuss the outcomes at the next judges' meeting.	HC Chief Justice to organize meeting. Judges to report back at meeting	September February	Other judges report that they have gained relevant knowledge from the discussion.
3.4 Judiciary provides access to information to support judicial decision making.	3.4.1 On the TRC's index, change information being collated by court clerks to include which title is being disputed and which Atoll/Island.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clerks to add two columns to spread sheet <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - title being disputed - location Clerks to input information for all new cases filed and progressively for existing outstanding cases 	Travis	November 2014	Increased consistency of decision making as will be more easily able to refer to relevant previous decisions
	3.4.2 Develop a project to create an index of Land cases (HCT, TRC, TT) to assist with identifying relevant case law in support of judicial decision making.	<p>Develop a working group (CJ, TRC judge, court clerk) to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> discuss what is required discuss how the information should be collected Identify available resources. <p>Set time frames for completion of project</p>	HCT Chief Justice and TRC Chief Judge	<p>First working group meeting to develop a plan held by August 31, 2014</p> <p>Project to be completed by May 31, 2015</p>	Increased consistency of decision making as will be more easily able to refer to relevant previous decisions
	3.4.3 DC judges were unaware if they have access to online legal research services. Usefulness of access to such services to be discussed with the DCT Presiding Judge. If a staff attorney is	Investigate possibility of providing access to online services to DC judges.	DCT Presiding Judge in discussion with the HCT Chief Justice	August 2014	<p>DCT judges can access the Judiciary's WestlawNext account.</p> <p>DONE July 31, 2014</p>

Area 3: Court Resources (Human, Material and Financial)	Action to be undertaken and expected outcome	Steps to achieve action and outcome	Responsibility/ Participants	Timing of steps	Performance indicator
	appointed to the HCT he/she will be able to provide assistance to DCT judges with legal research.				
3.5 Judiciary effectively manages material resources.	3.5.1 Review printing facilities for TRC judges so they do not need to go to clerk's office to print documents.	Arrange for TRC printer to be networked if possible.	Chief Clerk	August 2014	More efficient work practices. Less interruption for judges and clerks. DONE July 28, 2014
	3.5.2 Determine whether the website can be moved to a different computer and additional staff trained on updating the website.	Chief Clerk to discuss with HCT Chief Justice	Chief Clerk	TO BE DETERMINED	Website is accessible from other computers.
3.6 Judiciary facilities are adequate and safe.	3.6.1 Replace the roof at the Majuro Courthouse. During consultation with court users it was suggested the court investigate installing solar panels on the new roof to power the lights.	Work with government contracting office on plans. Sign off funds available. Oversee work.	Chief Clerk HCT Chief Justice Chief Clerk	Project completed by December 31, 2014	New roof with no leaks
	3.6.2 Periodically, including at biannual meetings of judges and staff, review whether more office space is needed for judges and staff to properly perform their duties.	Include as agenda item for biannual meetings.	Chief Clerk in consultation with HCT Chief Justice	See item 1.6 above	
	3.6.3 At least annually, review equipment and supply needs, including the need for computers and vehicles, to ensure that judges and staff can efficiently perform their duties in Majuro,	Review carried out by Chief Clerk and other staff as delegated.	Chief Clerk in consultation with HCT Chief Justice, TRC Chief Judge and DCT Presiding	In time for inclusion in the Court's annual budget proposal.	The Court's resources remain adequate for its operational requirements.

TRC
 District Court
 Court clerks
 Court users

Area 3: Court Resources (Human, Material and Financial)	Action to be undertaken and expected outcome	Steps to achieve action and outcome	Responsibility/ Participants	Timing of steps	Performance indicator
	Ebeye, and on the outer islands. Judge Paul suggests a court vehicle for Ebeye would be useful.		Judge		
	3.6.4 Develop and enforce policies to ensure that the Judiciary's facilities and equipment are well maintained and the Judiciary's facilities, equipment, and supplies are not abused	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft policies. • HCT Chief Justice approve policies. • Make policies known to judges and staff. • Publish policies. 	Chief Clerk	Completed by March 2015	Policies in place and all judges and staff are aware of them.
	3.6.5 Investigate whether arrangements can be made with local governments for specific court space in community centres on outer islands.	<p>Discuss with Ministry of Internal Affairs.</p> <p>Discuss at the annual Mayors Conference.</p>	TRC Chief Judge in consultation with HCT Chief Justice	December 2015	Will benefit community courts and also TRC and other Marshall Islands Courts when visiting the outer islands.
	3.6.6 Install a clock in the ground floor court room in Majuro	Purchase a suitable wall clock and arrange for its installation.	Chief Clerk	As soon as possible	Working clock is available DONE June 2014
	3.6.7 As a longer-term proposal, depending on finances and available space, consider the relocation of the Clerk's Office to the ground floor of the Majuro Court House.	<p>Brainstorm options including pros and cons.</p> <p>Develop initial ideas so that if funding becomes available or there is a higher priority to progress this, the initial thinking has been done.</p>	Chief Clerk and HCT Chief Justice	Longer-term idea. Initial brainstorming to be undertaken in late 2015.	Ground floor office for the Clerk of the Courts
3.7 Court has an appropriate budget process and regularly monitors expenditure.	Annually, in accordance with the National Government's budget cycle, develop and defend budgets that are consistent with the Judiciary's needs and strategic plan, including innovation.	Develop budget. Include bid for additional legal resources (either additional judge or staff attorney and probation officer).	HCT Chief Justice Chief Clerk Finance Clerk	Usually by April	Court's budget is adequate to meet its needs.
3.8 Judiciary provides training, support and recognition for new ideas.	See 1.6 and 1.7 above.				

TRC
 District Court
 Court clerks
 Court users

Area 4 Court Proceedings and Processes

Area 4 Court Proceedings and Processes	Action to be undertaken and expected outcome	Steps to achieve action and outcome	Responsibility/ Participants	Timing of steps	Performance indicator
4.1 Judiciary ensures it deals with matters efficiently while maintaining quality of decisions.	4.1.1 Investigate suggestions from 2014 Time Goals Workshop about DCT in-court room procedural changes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing efficiency in court room routines Changes to court clerk procedures such as using FTR functions and notes to record proceedings and an Excel spread sheet as the court list. 	Investigate the suggestion to see if it will result in more efficient processes. Devise new procedures. Train the court clerks in the new procedures and include in the DCT Clerk's procedures manual.	DCT Presiding Judge Chief Clerk	TO BE DETERMINED	TO BE DETERMINED
	4.1.2 Revise and improve the template for TRC decisions resulting in more useful decisions for HCT and Supreme Court (SCT) if a matter is appealed.	TRC judges to revise template when drafting next decision.	TRC judges	By October 2014	SCT and HCT are satisfied with the information included in the TRC decisions
	4.1.3 Review translation of TRC decisions prior to them being published. This will ensure the accuracy of the translations.	Chief Clerk to review TRC decisions prior to publication.	Chief Clerk	Ongoing as decisions are written	TRC decisions translated from Marshallese to English are accurate translations.
4.2 Judiciary has a system for actively managing its cases and looks for improved ways to resolve cases effectively.	4.2.1 Examine with court users clearance rates, average durations of cases, backlog cases and continuances. Encourage judges to differentially manage their cases and caseloads, particularly customary land title cases, referring matters to mediation and other alternative dispute resolution methods if appropriate.	2014 Time Goals Workshop Implement outcomes from Time Goals Workshop for all courts while ensuring quality of decisions remains. Initial goals are to be in place for a 6-month period and then reviewed as necessary.	HCT, TRC, and DCT judges and Chief Clerk	April/May 2014 By September 2014	Time Goals Workshop completed. Interim Goals Adopted and publicized
	4.2.2 Show DC judges and clerks how to filter DC indices to	Reports to include cases filed/disposed/pending	Chief Clerk	August 31. 2014	Improved management of pending cases

TRC
 District Court
 Court clerks
 Court users

Area 4 Court Proceedings and Processes	Action to be undertaken and expected outcome	Steps to achieve action and outcome	Responsibility/ Participants	Timing of steps	Performance indicator
	produce case management reports on demand.				DONE July 31, 2014
	<p>4.2.3 Introduction of the DCT measures outlined in the 2014 Time Goals Project Report including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Last opportunity for defendants to pay their fines before court procedures • Persist in seeking the attendance of the public defender on list days to minimize not guilty pleas • Trial of calendaring practices for trial matters – 4 cases at 9am; 4 cases at 11am; 4 cases at 2pm • Ensuring each case has a date for future action • Defended matters receive a hearing date in court and are served with a notice in court • Converting outstand bail monies cases to fine payments and closing these cases. 	<p>DCT Presiding Judge and HCT Chief Justice to meet to discuss steps for implementing measures</p> <p>Procedural changes to be included in DCT Clerk's manual.</p>	<p>DCT Presiding Judge in consultation with HCT Chief Justice</p>	TO BE DETERMINED	TO BE DETERMINED
	<p>Providing defended matters with a hearing date in court and being served with the notice in Court was also requested during consultations with court users on May 22, 2014.</p>				
	<p>4.2.4 DCT case management suggestions from trial assistant to be gathered.</p>	<p>Discuss case management suggestions with Eldon Note. Determine whether suggestions can be put in place.</p>	<p>Chief Clerk</p> <p>Chief Clerk and DCT Presiding Judge</p>	June 30, 2014	<p>Court users will see their input is valued and suggestions listened to.</p>
	<p>4.2.5 Ensure every case has a</p>	<p>Set status conference for inactive</p>	<p>TRC judges</p>	<p>May 28, 2014</p>	<p>Backlog of cases will</p>

TRC
 District Court
 Court clerks
 Court users

Area 4 Court Proceedings and Processes	Action to be undertaken and expected outcome	Steps to achieve action and outcome	Responsibility/ Participants	Timing of steps	Performance indicator
	date for a future activity	matters with no future listing date. Where a party has died, the HCT should issue an order to substitute for the deceased party w/i 90 days or face dismissal w/o prejudice per rule.	HC Justices	Ongoing	substantially reduce
	4.2.6 Introduce recommendation from 2014 Time Goals Report that TRC cases be divided into two categories according to case complexity and listing of cases from both current and backlog categories.	Review existing cases. Categorize into A and B. Ensure listings reflect categories.	TRC judges Travis	TO BE DETERMINED	Less complex cases can be quickly substituted when more complex cases get continued.
	4.2.7 Investigate options for issuing local government receipts by the Court or by local government staff at the Court to stop people having to return to the Court at a later time to receive a receipt.	Chief Clerk and Ella to discuss possible options. Ella to discuss proposals with executive in local government. Ella to inform Chief Clerk if proposals are to be adopted. If not, Chief Clerk to discuss with HCT Chief Justice alternative options.	Ella Chief Clerk	Discussions to commence as soon as possible	MALGOV issues receipts at courthouse upon collection of fines.
	4.2.8 Investigate option for national police to serve documents in Laura by providing them with a computer/printer and scanning and emailing documents to them.	Chief Clerk to discuss this further with the HCT Chief Justice to determine how it might be progressed.	Chief Clerk	TO BE DETERMINED	Faster and cheaper service of court documents past the airport
	4.2.9 Ensure Attorneys are aware of the facilities available for child victims to enable them to appear in court 'in camera.'	MLSC and other attorneys who routinely practice in this area to be referred to the relevant court rule, MIRC rP Rule 26(b).	Chief Clerk	July 2014	Attorneys are familiar with rules to protect child witnesses. DONE 07.03.14
4.3 Judiciary successfully balances workload	Regularly, including at biannual	Include in agenda for biannual	Chief Clerk	September	Judges and staff are

TRC
 District Court
 Court clerks
 Court users

Area 4 Court Proceedings and Processes	Action to be undertaken and expected outcome	Steps to achieve action and outcome	Responsibility/ Participants	Timing of steps	Performance indicator
of judges and court staff.	meetings of judges and staff, examine judge and staff functions to ensure an effective division of judicial and non-judicial functions between and among judges and staff.	meetings.		February	comfortable with their workloads and there is no unreasonable delay.
4.4 Judiciary maintains efficient case files and records systems.	4.4.1 At least annually test the integrity of files and the filing systems including in the Ebeye Courthouse.	Arrange for a clerk from Majuro to travel to Ebeye when HCT judge next sits there to undertake file audit. Undertake a 'spot' audit of Majuro files at least once per year.	Chief Clerk	Dependent on next HCT sitting in Ebeye, but to be completed by May 2015. At any time up until May 2015	Court files in Ebeye can be readily located Court files in Majuro can be readily located.
	4.4.2 Continue the scanning of court files and the disposal of older and rarely accessed physical files.	New clerk to be shortly appointed will be assigned this task.	Chief Clerk	Ongoing	Old and rarely accessed files are preserved electronically
	4.4.3 Develop and adopt a file retention policy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obtain policies from similar jurisdictions. Draft policy. Obtain HCT Chief Justice's approval. Implement and publish policy. 	Chief Clerk HCT Chief Justice	December 31, 2014	Policy is in place and files are being archived or disposed of in accordance with policy.
	4.4.4 Efficient copying of case file for TRC judges	Court clerks to copy relevant parts of case file for TRC judges as soon as a matter is filed.	Travis	Ongoing	TRC judges more efficiently able to manage cases.
4.5 Judiciary encourages new ideas in case management.	At least annually explore possible improvements to the manual and electronic document management systems.	Discuss possible improvements at one of the biannual staff and judges meetings.	Chief Clerk and HCT Chief Justice	Annually	Where practicable improvements are made to the courts' document management systems.

Area 5 Client Needs and Satisfaction

Area 5 Client Needs and Satisfaction	Action to be undertaken and expected outcome	Steps to achieve action and outcome	Responsibility/ Participants	Timing of steps	Performance indicator
5.1 Judiciary surveys and seeks regular feedback from all court users.	At least once every two years conduct court user surveys to gauge user perceptions of court fairness and use feedback to improve court services. See also 1.3 – Law Society President as member of NJPDC	Design user survey. Conduct user survey. Analyse results. Provide feedback to survey participants. Implement changes.	HCT Chief Justice Chief Clerk	Survey undertaken by 31 December 2014 Results analysed March 2015 Reported in annual report – June 30, 2015 Feedback included in court improvement plan August 2015	Results of client survey are equal to or higher than 2012 survey results.
5.2 Judiciary implements changes identified by surveys and feedback.	See 5.1 above.				
5.3 Judiciary reports publicly and regularly on changes made in response to surveys and feedback.	Information on survey results will be included in the Court's annual report and website.	Once survey results analysed include information on Court's website. Prepare information for annual report.	Webmaster Annual report team	April 2015 June 2015	Survey results are posted on website and published in annual report.
5.4 Judiciary surveys its users on their satisfaction with its processes, procedures and services.	See 5.1 above.				
5.5 Judiciary uses technology and innovation to deliver higher quality services to all court users.	5.5.1 Investigate obtaining software for controlling allocation of bandwidth to IP addresses to enable clearer video connections when using Skype or similar technology for court hearings.	Meet with NTA. Determine Court's technical requirements. Obtain details of relevant software. Install solution.	Travis in consultation with HCT Chief Justice	August 2014	Able to allocate band width to specific computers

Area 5 Client Needs and Satisfaction	Action to be undertaken and expected outcome	Steps to achieve action and outcome	Responsibility/ Participants	Timing of steps	Performance indicator
	5.5.2 At least annually, as part of the budget process, review current technology needs and throughout the year seek innovative ways to serve court users, including through the use of video conferencing and electronic filing.	Include in budget review process.	Annual budget team	Usually in April	IT needs are reflected in annual budget.
	5.5.3 Investigate voice recognition software for the production of court transcript.	Conduct web search to determine whether robust software packages exist. Including examine Dragon Naturally Speaking.	Chief Clerk	August 2014 PURCHASED 7/31/14	Software is in use.

Area 6 Affordable and Accessible Court Services

Area 6 Affordable and Accessible Court Services	Action to be undertaken and expected outcome	Steps to achieve action and outcome	Responsibility/ Participants	Timing of steps	Performance indicator
6.1 Judiciary has processes in place that promote affordable court proceedings.	6.1.1 Keep court costs and fees as low as practical and prudent and post the Judiciary's fee schedule and fee waiver policies at the Majuro and Ebeye courthouses and on the Judiciary's website.	Judges and Chief Clerk review fee schedule. Post fee schedule and fee waiver policy on Majuro and Ebeye courthouse bulletin boards and on Judiciary website.	HCT Chief Justice Chief Clerk Webmaster	Biannually at judges meetings review fees and make prudent changes. Maintain up to date fee schedule and fee waiver policy on Majuro and Ebeye courthouse bulletin boards and on Judiciary website.	Current fee schedule and fee waiver policy have been reviewed and is posted at Majuro and Ebeye courthouses and on Judiciary website.
	6.1.2 Investigate the possibility of a fee waiver or lower fee for child support cases particularly those assisted by the MLSC.	HCT Chief Justice to consider this issue	HCT Chief Justice and Associate Justice	Discuss with MLSC by 07.02.14.	Prudent procedure for fee waiver in child support cases DISCUSSED WITH MLSC 07.02.14
	6.1.3 As resources permit, offer continuing legal education to the bar in core areas (including ethics, evidence, trial advocacy, and legal writing). Attendees at a consultation about the Improvement Plan held on May 22, 2014 were very grateful for the continuing legal education provided by the Court.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consult with the Law Society. Prioritize training needs. Source suitable trainer. Organize training. 	HCT Chief Justice and Associate Justice and Chief Clerk with assistance of Law Society	Next training to be conducted in early September 2014 and in early 2015	Increase in the knowledge and efficiency of practitioners in the Marshall Island courts
	6.1.4 Investigate computer and online training courses for legal practitioners (such as the Objection computer program).	Discuss with Law Society, see if they could undertake investigations.	HCT Chief Justice and President of the Law Society	TO BE DETERMINED	Increase in the knowledge and efficiency of practitioners in the Marshall Islands
	6.1.5 Consider instituting mandatory continuing legal	Discuss with Law Society.	HCT Chief Justice and	TO BE DETERMINED	Increase in the knowledge and

Area 6 Affordable and Accessible Court Services	Action to be undertaken and expected outcome	Steps to achieve action and outcome	Responsibility/ Participants	Timing of steps	Performance indicator
	education.		President of the Law Society		efficiency of practitioners in the Marshall Islands
6.2 Judiciary publishes information on court services and access.	6.2.1 Translate specific court forms into Marshallese, English, and other community languages.	See 1.4.3 above.			
	6.2.2 Post the court procedures on the Judiciary's website and make them available at the courthouses.	See 2.4.7 above.			
	6.2.3 Publicize court services, including marriages, delayed registrations of birth, delayed registrations of death, notaries, certified copies of court documents, criminal record checks, corporate litigation record searches, and the like.	Through radio program. See 1.4.1 above. Through newspaper. See 1.4.2 above. Through the annual reports. See 1.4.4 above.			
	6.2.4 Information booklets on elements of DCT jurisdiction would assist court users in understanding what to expect when in Court and thus make the court processes more efficient and effective.	Finalize draft material about small claims. Obtain HCT Chief Justice's sign off. Translate material into Marshallese. Arrange publication and distribution of material. Draft material about traffic citations. Obtain HCT Chief Justice's sign off Translate material.	DCT Presiding Judge and HC AJ HCT Chief Justice Chief Clerk Chief Clerk DCT Presiding Judge HCT AJ HCT Chief Justice Chief Clerk	August 2014 October 2014 December 2014 February 2015 June 2015 August 2015 November 2015	Noticeable improvement in the efficiency of court proceedings when dealing with small claims and traffic citations

Area 6 Affordable and Accessible Court Services	Action to be undertaken and expected outcome	Steps to achieve action and outcome	Responsibility/ Participants	Timing of steps	Performance indicator
		Arrange publication and distribution of material.	Chief Clerk	January 2016	
	6.2.5 Increase community awareness of the TRC arranging for the judiciary's radio program to feature the TRC.	See 1.4.1A above.			Information about the TRC and its processes are more widely available
	6.2.6 Develop a brief information flyer about the TRC.	Flyer to be drafted Flyer to be distributed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to relevant organisations in both hard and soft copy placed on website hard copies available at court houses 	TRC judges to draft Court clerk to assist with formatting and distribution	Drafted by end 2014 Finalized and distributed first quarter 2015	Information about the TRC and its processes are more widely available.
6.3 Physical access to court buildings is easy.	Maintain clear signs at the courthouses and a central information point. Arrange replacement signage for the Court building.	Chief Clerk to discuss with HCT Chief Justice signage required.	Chief Clerk	December 2014	New signage installed
6.4 Judiciary provides support for people with disabilities to ensure easy access to its services.	Maintain the Judiciary's courtrooms to ensure easy access to public areas for seniors and others who may be physically challenged.	Ensure downstairs courtroom is used when such matters are listed.	Chief Clerk	Ongoing	Responses to biennial court users surveys reflect satisfaction with accessibility to court facilities.
6.5 Judiciary has policies to ensure equal treatment for all court users.	6.5.1 Review the legal needs of non-citizen groups. Feedback from attorneys at meeting of May 22, 2014 indicated interpreters for Chinese and Korean speakers were needed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify main languages. Develop list of interpreters. Investigate other options such as telephone or online interpreting services. Develop a policy and procedures for assisting these groups. 	Chief Clerk (or delegate)	July 2015	Interpreters for Chinese and Korean speakers have been identified.
	6.5.2 Renew efforts to fill existing Community Court vacancies (a few communities have not recommended candidates for	Continuously check terms of Community Court judges and contact Local Governments re impending vacancies.	Travis	Ongoing	Community Court vacancies at 5 or less and the number of women judges

Area 6 Affordable and Accessible Court Services	Action to be undertaken and expected outcome	Steps to achieve action and outcome	Responsibility/ Participants	Timing of steps	Performance indicator
	appointment as judges). Encourage the appointment of qualified women.				increases beyond one or two to 5 to 10 out of 30.
	6.5.3 Seek legislation to lengthen the terms of Community Court judges.	Legislation was drafted and submitted in 2013 and is pending with the Committee.	HCT Chief Justice	Follow up August 2014	Community Courts have longer terms.
	6.5.4 Review the operation of Community Courts and require periodic reports.		Chief Clerk	TO BE DETERMINED	Greater transparency and accountability in Community Court operations
	6.5.5 Examine ways to create a greater judicial presence on outer islands in coordination with other stakeholders (including political and community leaders, the Attorney-General, the Public Defender, and the Micronesia Legal Services Corporation).	Meet with other stakeholders to discuss this issue to be convened by HCT Chief Justice. Further steps to be determined at that meeting.	HCT Chief Justice	TO BE DETERMINED	HCT, TRC, and DCT get to the outer islands as needed.
6.6 Judiciary provides information to assist those who are unrepresented.	6.6.1 Maintain and publicize a glossary of legal terms in Marshallese. Update the glossary to include additional terms such as medical terms.	Review and update glossary.	Chief Clerk	November 2014	Up to date Marshallese glossary of legal terms is available at the courthouses and on the Judiciary's website.
	6.6.2 Create and publicize plain-language forms and checklists for self-represented to use in prosecuting or defending their cases (including forms for confirmation of customary adoptions or divorces, legal divorces, guardianships, changes of name, and domestic violence complaints).	Review existing forms and add forms based upon requests from court users and perceived need.	HCT Associate Justice and Chief Clerk	November 2014	Enhance access to justice by self-represented litigants.
	6.6.3 Continue to appoint counsel to represent litigants who cannot afford to hire counsel to assist them in difficult matters, including land cases and criminal cases,		HCT Chief Justice	Ongoing	People who need representation receive it.

Area 6 Affordable and Accessible Court Services	Action to be undertaken and expected outcome	Steps to achieve action and outcome	Responsibility/ Participants	Timing of steps	Performance indicator
	compensating counsel with funds appropriated by the Nitijela or, if necessary, appointing counsel to serve pro bono, as the people have a constitutional right to legal services.				
6.7 Judiciary uses plain language to assist all court users.	Issue plain-language decisions based upon the facts presented and the applicable rules of law, including customary law and traditional practice, to ensure court users understand what happened and why.	Participate in judgment writing workshop September 2014 to assist in developing skills.	All judges	September 2014	Decisions are written in plain language. Media do not require explanation of decisions as they are easily understood to the lay person.
6.8 Judiciary has electronic and remote access available.	Maintain an up-to-date and easily accessible website.		Web Master	Ongoing	Highly informative and user-friendly website
6.9 Judiciary uses technology and innovation to improve access for all court users.	Explore the use of Internet and videoconferencing technology to expand court access including to the outer islands. At least annually, as part of the budget process, review current technology needs and throughout the year seek innovative ways to serve court users, including through the use of video conferencing and electronic filing.		Budget Team	Prior to the Cabinet's annual budget review process	IT needs included in annual budget request

Area 7 Public Trust and Confidence

Area 7 Public Trust and Confidence	Action to be undertaken and expected outcome	Steps to achieve action and outcome	Responsibility/ Participants	Timing of steps	Performance indicator
7.1 Judiciary publicly accounts for its role and performance.	Publish annual reports by June 30 of the following year with information on the courts' roles and functions, time and service standards, services and procedures, complaints, professional development, facilities, accounts, new initiatives, survey results, etc.	Collect information for annual report and draft report.	Annual report Team	By June 30	Annual report is published by June 30 of the following year.
7.1a Continue with community education strategy to explain the role and functions of the judiciary.	7.1.1 Encourage Marshallese to enter the legal profession, such as during student tours of the courts.	Respond positively to requests for court tours.	All Judges and Chief Clerk	Ongoing	More Marshallese enter the legal profession
	7.1.2 Encourage Marshallese law students to complete school and return as attorneys.		All Judges and Chief Clerk	Ongoing	More Marshallese enter the legal profession
	7.1.3 Encourage Marshallese attorneys and women to become judges.		All Judges and Chief Clerk	Ongoing	More Marshallese women enter the legal profession
	7.1.4 Accept invitations to attend law society and women's groups meetings to discuss the work of judges and the law.	Respond positively to requests to attend meetings.	All Judges and Chief Clerk	Ongoing	Biennial court user surveys reflect public confidence in the Judiciary.
	7.1.5 Discuss with political, traditional, church, and community leaders the role of the courts and the importance of judicial independence.		All Judges and Chief Clerk	Ongoing	Biennial court user surveys shows public support for judicial independence.
	7.1.6 Subject to funding, develop a community outreach program where court staff visits community centres and other organisations to discuss the role of the Court.			NJPDC	TO BE DETERMINED

Area 7 Public Trust and Confidence	Action to be undertaken and expected outcome	Steps to achieve action and outcome	Responsibility/ Participants	Timing of steps	Performance indicator
	<p>7.1.7 Educate the public on the role and importance of an independent judiciary and the rule of law.</p> <p>Participants at a workshop with attorneys on May 22, 2014 considered this was very important.</p>		All Judges and Chief Clerk	Ongoing	See 7.1.5.
7.2 Judiciary makes information on performance against time and service standards available.	Adopt, implement and publicize clearance rate targets, time goals (SCT, HCT, TRC, and DCT), a continuance policy and backlog reduction procedures.	See 1.2 and 2.4 above.	Judges and Chief Clerk	September 2014	
7.3 Judiciary ensures all court users understand the court's processes, services and any decisions made. See also 6.7 above.	<p>7.3.1 Explore other ways to be more visible, including radio programs, newspaper notices, and posters.</p> <p>7.3.2 Make court opinions available at the courthouses, on the Judiciary's Internet website, and on PACLII.</p> <p>Include a note as to why only selected HCT decisions (rather than all decisions) are published on the website.</p>	See 1.4 above.			
		Website to be updated to include note about selected decisions.	HCT Chief Justice with input from HCT Associate Justice	Ongoing	SCT and TRC decisions are posted on the website with noteworthy HCT and DCT decisions.
7.4 Judiciary has a complaints policy and reports on its handling of complaints.	Continue to report on complaints in annual report.	<p>Keep information on complaints and how they were resolved through the year.</p> <p>Draft information for annual report.</p> <p>Publish information in annual report.</p>	<p>Chief Clerk HCT Chief Justice</p> <p>Annual report team</p>	Ongoing, every year but usually annual report is finalized by June 30	Complaints are transparently reported.
7.5 Judiciary conducts regular independent audits on expenditure.	Secure independent auditing of the Judiciary's accounts as part of	Arrange with Auditor General and Deloitte for annual audit.	Chief Clerk HCT Chief Justice	Arrange for audit in October for the previous	Audit results are published in the annual

Area 7 Public Trust and Confidence	Action to be undertaken and expected outcome	Steps to achieve action and outcome	Responsibility/ Participants	Timing of steps	Performance indicator
	the National Government's annual audits and publicize the results in the Judiciary's annual report.	Publish audit in annual report.		financial year. Cooperate with auditor. . Publish results.	report.