

Review of Waitangi Tribunal Legal Aid

Progress as at end of October 2012

Ref	Issue	Progress at end of October 2012
1	Resources in Waitangi Team - immediate	<p>Team was increased early September to 6.5 staff (from 2.5), plus a team leader, by bringing in four seconded granting staff. A new permanent recruit started in late October and two additional permanent staff will begin in November.</p> <p>All seconded staff will remain until the end of November by which time we expect the historical invoice processing to be completed and current work on hand to be up to date. Three of the four seconded staff will remain until 21 December to ensure timeliness is maintained.</p> <p>A dedicated project manager is overseeing the implementation of the review recommendations.</p>
2	Resources in Waitangi Team - ongoing	<p>After backlog invoices are cleared, we will retain sufficient staff to maintain timeliness. With new recruits, there would be 5.5 permanent grants staff, plus a team leader, but final requirements will be determined as part of a planned business process review starting in December. We will also consider the best way to access additional trained staff as and when required, given the need for some flexibility to cover uneven workflow.</p>
3	LSMS support for event reporting	<p>A number of changes to LSMS have been identified and will be implemented. Timing of these changes has still to be finalised.</p>
4	Provider guide to invoicing	<p>The current guide on how to complete and submit invoices will be reviewed in December following the business process review which will include consideration of changes to simplify forms and information required.</p>
5	LSMS support for granting	<p>Quick fixes to LSMS have been made and/or are scheduled for March next year.</p>
6	Business process mapping	<p>Business processes will be reviewed and mapped in December, with the aim of reducing and simplifying transactions wherever feasible.</p>
7	Staff training in current granting process	<p>Seconded and new staff are being trained in processes that reduce unnecessary compliance and delays.</p>
8	Finance Policy	<p>The review of business processes in December will consider alternative ways to manage incorrect invoices. If required, Finance policy changes will be pursued.</p>

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 Waitangi Tribunal
8 Nov 2012
 Ministry of Justice
 WELLINGTON

M. Jones

This is the exhibit marked "4MM-A" referred to in the annexed affidavit of MICHELE MCCREADIE affirmed at Wellington this 8th day of November 2012 before me:

Raewyn Dempsey
 Deputy Registrar
 District Court

A Solicitor of the High Court of New Zealand

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9	Legal Services Act	The business process review in December will consider processes for approval of aid and whether a change is required to Legal Services Act to provide for interim legal aid in Waitangi Tribunal matters.
10	Finance Policy	The business process review in December will consider processes for part payment of invoices. If required, Finance policy changes will be pursued.
11	Processing of invoices dating from January 2009 to October 2011	<p>Processing to date indicates that the vast majority of the 3000 invoices had been appropriately assessed at the time, but there was insufficient recording of completions and so all 3000 invoices are being fully checked and any payments made as required.</p> <p>2000 invoices (dating from January 2009 to October 2011) had been checked by the 25 October 2012. A small number of additional payments have been made. We are on target to complete checking of the remaining 1000 invoices by the end of November 2012.</p> <p>At the same time, resources have been focused on bringing all current work up to date, which we expect to be achieved by the end of November 2012. At present, invoices from late August and September are under review.</p> <p>NB The business process review to consider improved processes is scheduled to take place in December once historical invoices are finalised and current invoices are up to date.</p>
12	File management	We will consider the most appropriate approach to file management as part of the business process review in December.
13	Stakeholder engagement and provider support plan	<p>A stakeholder engagement plan has been developed to include further targeted workshops for firms needing support with invoices as well as regular communication with providers and other stakeholders.</p> <p>The plan proposes new initiatives for provider management and support. Proposals are currently under consideration.</p> <p>A workshop with Tribunal staff is scheduled for late November, specifically to consider how 'interested parties' are managed from a legal aid perspective. It has been agreed that similar workshops will be held as needed to ensure good understanding between the Tribunal staff and Legal Aid of issues as these arise.</p>
14	Risk management	Risks are reported monthly.

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15	Provider consultation	Formal consultation and communication will be undertaken over proposed business process and provider engagement changes.
16	Legal Services Regulations	The business process review in December will consider whether amendments to Legal Services Regulations are required.

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