

COURT ADMINISTRATION (CHAPTER 6)

- The focus of this chapter is on the administration of State and Territory magistrates', district/county, supreme and coroners' courts, the Federal Court, the Federal Magistrates Court, the Family Court of Australia and the Family Court of Western Australia. Data are presented in the Report for the Australian courts and for each State and Territory.

Selection of results

- The court administration chapter contains 6 performance indicators this year. They are: 'fees paid by applicants' (p. 6.23), 'backlog' (p. 6.27), 'attendance' (p. 6.33), 'judicial officers' (p. 6.34), 'clearance rate' (p. 6.37) and 'cost per finalisation' (p. 6.40).
- Total court administration recurrent expenditure less income (excluding fines) by Australian, State and Territory court authorities (excluding the High Court) was approximately \$831 million in 2003-04. Nationally, the aggregate court administration recurrent expenditure less income for magistrates', district/county and supreme courts was higher in the criminal jurisdiction (\$443 million) than in the civil jurisdiction (\$224 million), and was around \$103 million for the Family Court of Australia and \$30 million for coroners' courts. Across Australia, both electronic courts and probate registries had income which was greater than expenditure (by \$49 million and \$21 million respectively) (pp. 6.10–12). Expenditure by jurisdiction and court level is shown in tables 6A.9–14.
- Nationally, in 2003-04, there were approximately 777 200 defendants in the criminal jurisdiction of the magistrates', district/county and supreme courts. These same courts had 647 700 civil cases lodged. In the Australian court jurisdiction there were approximately 46 900 forms lodged in the Family Court of Australia, 6 000 cases lodged in the Federal Court, and 76 800 forms and cases lodged in the Federal Magistrates Court (pp. 6.14–18). Court lodgments by jurisdiction and court level, are shown on pp. 6.16–17.
- In 2003-04, there were 743 300 finalisations in the criminal jurisdiction of the magistrates', district/county and supreme courts. These same courts had 581 800 civil finalisations (p. 6.20). Finalisations by jurisdiction and court level are contained on pp. 6.19–20. In the Australian court jurisdiction, the Federal Court of Australia finalised 6100 cases and the Federal Magistrates Court finalised around 62 800 matters (a combination of family law forms and federal law cases) (p. 6.20).

Progress since the 2004 Report

The Review this year has modified presentation of the backlog indicator to include the number of pending cases, in addition to information on the timeliness of case processing. Work continues on improving data quality and comparability across jurisdictions.

[END]

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Please do not approach other parties for comment before Thursday, 27 January 2005.

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