

STRATEGY STATEMENT

2021-2023

International Protection Appeals Tribunal

6/7 Hanover Street East,
Dublin, D02 W320,
Ireland

www.protectionappeals.ie



An Binse um Achomhairc i dtaobh Cosaint Idirnáisiúnta

The International Protection Appeals Tribunal

Strategy Statement

2021 - 2023

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Foreword by the Chairperson

Looking ahead to 2021-2023, this statement sets out the strategic priorities of the International Protection Appeals Tribunal.

Our first responsibility is to provide an effective remedy for applicants for international protection seeking to appeal decisions that affect their lives and families in Ireland and abroad. Our work extends across all aspects of the Irish international protection and wider immigration sphere. In playing our part in working towards a Common European Asylum System, we ensure that applicants are treated equally in an open and fair system.

In the design and delivery of the Tribunal's services, we are motivated to fulfil our statutory functions in a manner that ensures that all applicants are treated with respect for their dignity and with due regard to any vulnerabilities they may have. To do this, the Tribunal strives to actively listen to applicants and fully engage with them throughout their appeal journey.

It is our mission to provide an appeal mechanism of the highest quality and to do so in the most efficient, sustainable and user-focused manner, ensuring compliance with national, EU and international law. In that regard, we will continue to work closely with the Department of Justice in further developing and enhancing the quality of the Tribunal's service delivery and we particularly welcome the opportunity to play a part in realising the *Digital First* agenda, ensuring easier access to the Tribunal's services.

Moreover, we will remain actively engaged in with the ongoing reform process of the international protection system arising from recommendations made in the Report of the Advisory Group on the Provision of Support including Accommodation to Persons in the International Protection Process ('Catherine Day Report') and contained in the White Paper to End Direct Provision and to Establish a New International Protection Support Service ('White Paper to End Direct Provision').

The implementation of our new strategy will be possible because of the professionalism, resilience and innovation of the Tribunal staff and the high level of commitment and expertise of the Members of the Tribunal. I am grateful to you all and look forward to leading the Tribunal into the next phase, as we strive to deliver excellence and be a model appellate decision-making authority.



Hilikka Becker

Hilikka Becker
Chairperson

Introduction by the Registrar

The Tribunal's plan outlines its strategic direction for the period 2021 to 2023. The Tribunal's senior management team, in formulating this plan, has worked to underpin the Tribunal's mission under the five key strategic priorities.

Respect for the dignity of appellants is a primary consideration of the Tribunal in developing its strategy, and in all its work. In developing this plan, the Tribunal prioritised a strong focus on user experience to ensure respect of applicants and all other stakeholders throughout the appeal process.

The Tribunal has succeeded in increasing efficiencies since its establishment four years ago, on the 31st December 2016. In 2020, the Tribunal was on track for its most productive year yet until the effects of the COVID pandemic began to make an impact. The Tribunal's operations, with a heavy dependence on a paper-based system and a high level of on-site oral hearings, were severely impacted in 2020 with the emergence of COVID-19. This strategy statement was developed in a period when the impact of COVID-19 is dominating the lives of everyone in the State.

In reacting to a new working environment, the Tribunal adapted quickly to a balance of on site and remote working and introduced a nascent system of audio video hearings which has proven most successful. In many ways the Tribunal's COVID-19 contingency planning has accelerated modernisation planning and highlighted the need to move to digital systems and this is reflected in this strategy statement.

I must take this opportunity to thank the Chairperson and Deputies for the collegiate manner in which they interact with me and the staff of the Tribunal. I must acknowledge the dedication of the staff of the Tribunal, who never failed to meet the challenges that are presented, particularly the major ones that COVID-19 imposed. They always carry out their duties enthusiastically.

I also, especially, thank the Members of the Tribunal for their support, patience and understanding as we endeavoured to maintain the delivery of our essential services in exceptional circumstances.

The support of the Department of Justice in assisting the Tribunal to adapt its facilities and operations to meet the needs of the Tribunal, its staff and users is also gratefully acknowledged.



A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Pat Murray". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Pat Murray
Registrar

The Tribunal's Vision and Mission

Vision

A model appellate decision-making authority delivering excellence.

Mission

To provide an effective remedy within the international protection system that is of the highest quality and to do so in the most efficient, sustainable and user-focussed manner, ensuring compliance with national, EU and international law

The Tribunal's Values

Fairness

Independence

Impartiality

Integrity

Justness

Efficiency

Productivity

Timeliness

Expertise

Value for money

Transparency

Clarity

Openness

Understanding

Responsiveness

Respectfulness

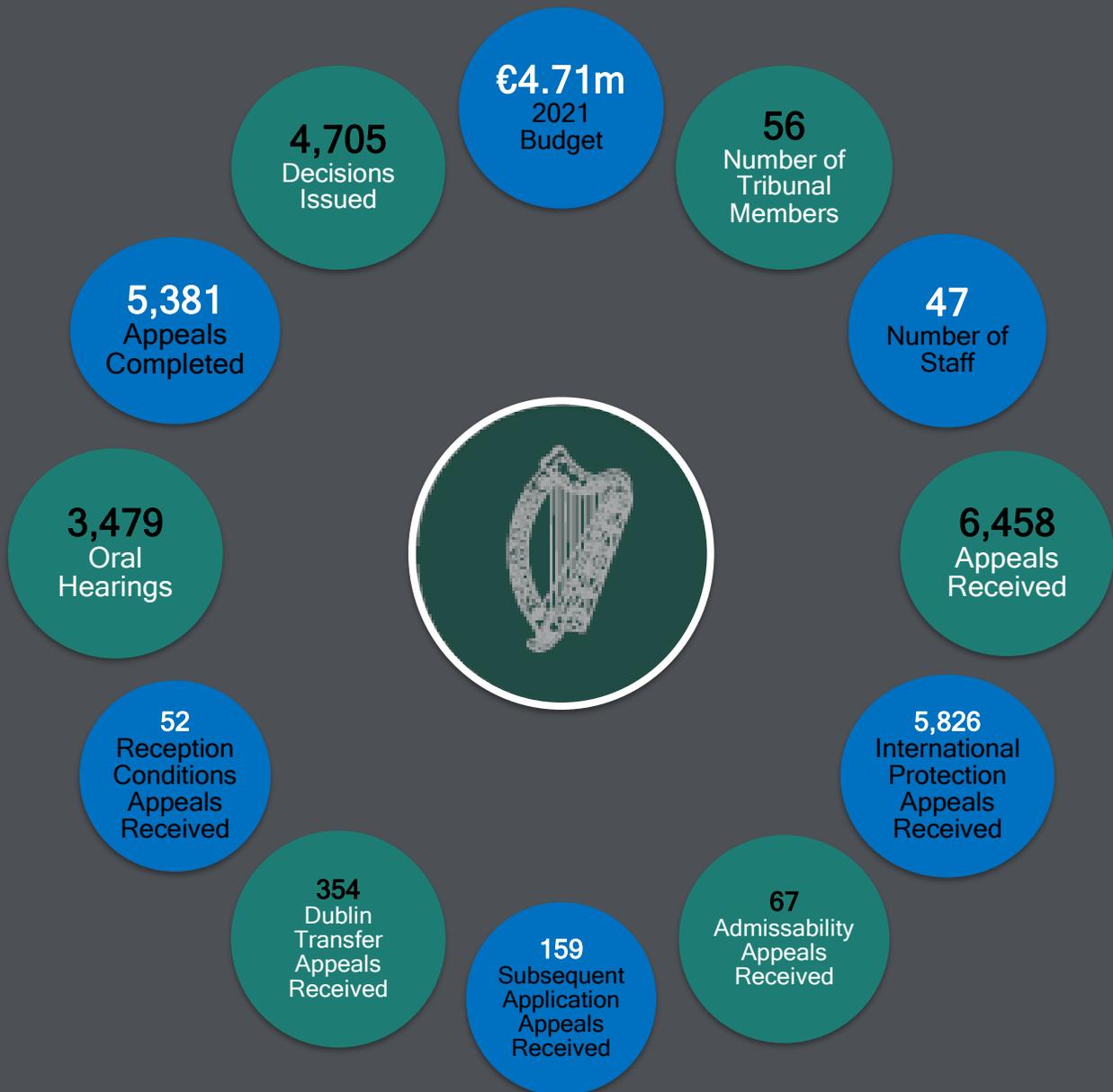
Dignity

Courteousness

Consideration

User-focus

The Tribunal... in Numbers



Appeal numbers are for appeals received from 31 December 2016 to 31 December 2020.

Oral hearings may be for multiple appellants where appeals are joined, e.g., in family cases.

Governance Oversight

The Tribunal falls under the Vote of the Department of Justice. The Department's Secretary General is the Accounting Officer for the Tribunal.

The Tribunal Chairperson makes an annual report to the Minister for Justice not later than three months after the end of each year, which the Minister shall cause to be laid before each House of the Oireachtas not more than 30 days after he or she receives it. Moreover, the Minister may request a report in relation to any function that the Chairperson performs under the International Protection Act 2015. Additionally, the Chairperson may report to the Minister if it is considered appropriate to do so.

The Chairperson agrees periodical Oversight and Performance Delivery Agreements with the Department of Justice in accordance with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies.

The Oversight Agreement (OA) sets out the broad governance and

accountability framework within which the Tribunal operates, and defines the key roles and responsibilities that underpin the relationship between the Tribunal and the Department. The OA relates to the administration and management of the workload of the Tribunal. It does not affect the functions of the Tribunal in its decision-making roles. The current OA is for the period 2020 - 2022. A Performance Delivery Agreement (PDA) is agreed annually between the Tribunal and Governance Unit in the Department of Justice.

The current OA was instigated under the Tribunal and Department's previous strategy statements. It is agreed within the OA that the Tribunal and Department will review and update it and the PDA each year. In that context, the current PDA has been drafted in collaboration with the Department in light of this Strategy Statement, as well as the Department's Statement of Strategy 2021–2023.

What the Tribunal Does

The Tribunal's Legislative Mandate

Part 10 of the International Protection Act 2015 provided for the establishing of the Tribunal as an appellate body providing an effective remedy for applicants for international protection in respect of recommendations of international protection officers. The functions of the members and staff of the Tribunal are also set out in Part 10 of the 2015 Act.

The Act, especially Parts 2, 3 (as amended), 4 and 6, set out the various legal rules within which the Tribunal operates when dealing with the appeals that are its predominant concerns.

These legal rules have been supplemented by the Dublin System Regulations 2018, in respect of appeals concerning transfer orders made by an international protection officer under the Dublin Regulation.

The Tribunal's jurisdictional mandate has also been added to by the Reception Conditions Regulations 2018, under which the Tribunal is the judicial authority for determining appeals from decisions made by officials of the Department of Justice,

Department of Social Protection, or Department of Children, Disability, Equality, Integration and Youth, as the case may be.

All in all, the Tribunal's current legislative mandate is to determine appeals from first instance decisions in respect of:

- International protection;
- Inadmissibility of an application for international protection;
- Consent to make a subsequent application for international protection;
- Transfer orders under the Dublin Regulation; and
- Reception conditions in the international protection process, including labour market access.

The legislation provides that the Tribunal is independent in its functions, and that the Members of the Tribunal must ensure that the business assigned to them is managed efficiently and disposed of as expeditiously as is consistent with fairness and natural justice.

The Tribunal's Role as an Effective Remedy

Each of the jurisdictions of the Tribunal relates to a requirement in EU law that the State provide an effective remedy on the matter for the purposes of specific secondary EU law as well as Article 47 of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. In respect of reception condition appeals the Tribunal is also the relevant judicial authority as mandated by EU law.

As a 'court or tribunal', for the purposes of EU law, the Tribunal may make a preliminary reference under Article 267 TFEU to the Court of Justice of the EU in the event that the validity of an EU legal measure or the interpretation of a provision of EU law is not clear, and requires clarification in order for the Tribunal to make its decision. In the light of the doctrine of supremacy of EU law, the Tribunal is required to dis-apply any national legal measure that obstructs the full operation of EU law.



The Tribunal Team and Resources

Tribunal Leadership

The Chairperson

The key statutory functions of the Chairperson is to ensure the functions of the Tribunal are performed efficiently and that the business assigned to each member is disposed of as expeditiously as may be consistent with fairness and natural justice.

Deputy Chairpersons

Two Deputy Chairpersons perform such functions of the Chairperson as the Chairperson might assign to them. Currently, the key functions of the Deputies are to facilitate the efficiency of decision making consistent with fairness and natural justice through leadership in relation to (a) the quality of decision-making and (b) the training and mentoring of Members.

The Registrar

The key statutory functions of the Registrar are to manage and control the staff of the Tribunal, and to assign appeals to Members. The Registrar is also responsible for the day-to-day control of the Tribunal's administrative and operational functions.

Assistant Principal

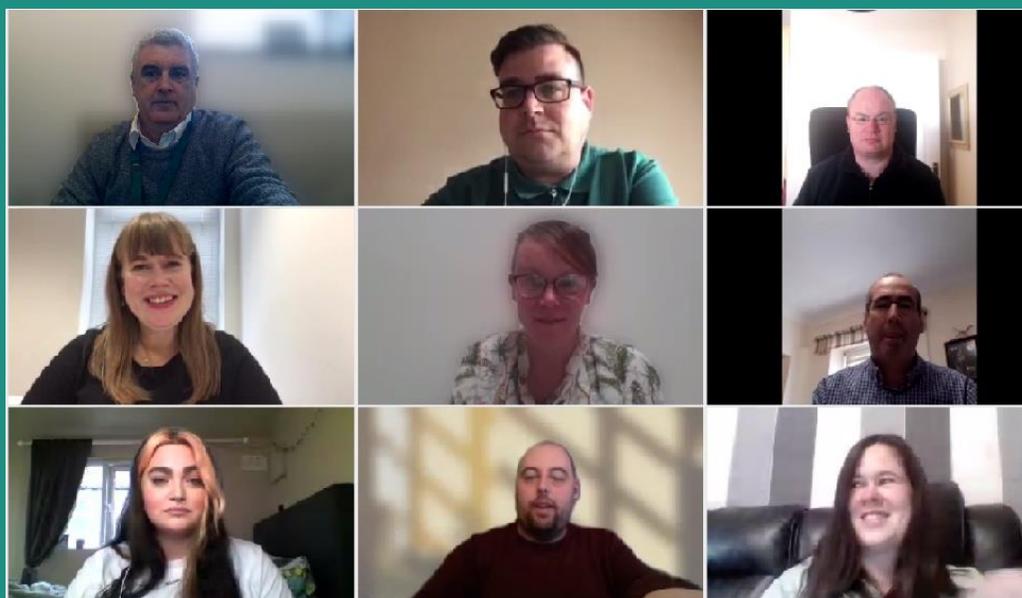
The Assistant Principal assigned to the Tribunal performs such functions as the Registrar might assign to him. Currently, the key functions of the assigned Assistant Principal is to oversee and manage the Tribunal's processes and secretariat and to provide support to the Registrar with day-to-day operations.

Tribunal Staff

Staff of the Tribunal are civil servants assigned to the Tribunal from the Department of Justice. The number of such staff, including the Registrar, currently is 38. The Tribunal continues to invest in and support the staff and members of the Tribunal, to be a high-performing organisation.

The Tribunal is committed to preventing discrimination, promoting equality of

opportunity, and protecting the human rights of staff and of those to whom we provide services and meet our obligations under the Irish Human Rights and Equality Act 2014. It seeks to ensure the provision of staff training to develop awareness of human rights, equality and supporting those who are vulnerable, in collaboration with the Department of Justice's Human Resources Unit.



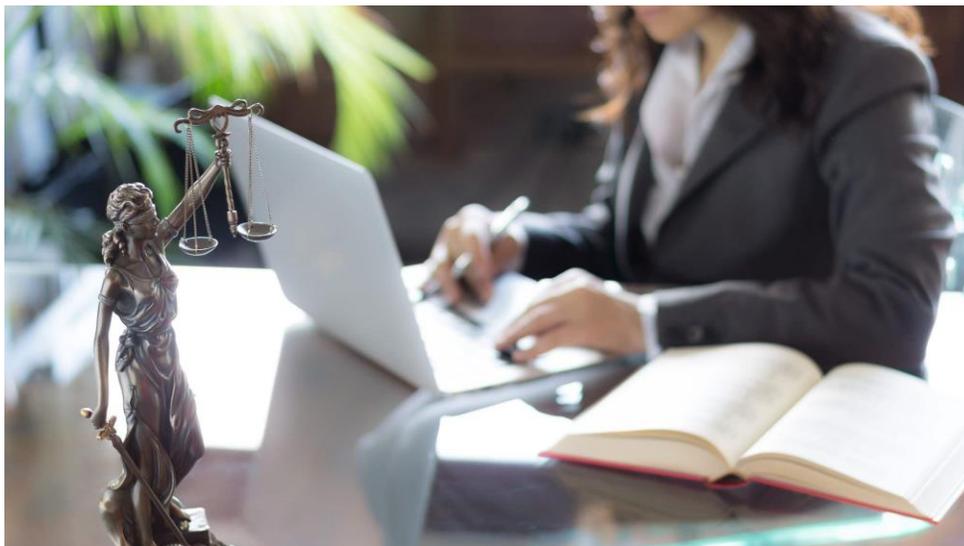
Tribunal Membership

The Tribunal's Membership consists of the Chairperson, the Deputy Chairpersons, whole-time Members, and part-time Members. The latter are engaged on contracts for service to the Minister, whereas the others are engaged on contracts of service to the Minister.

Members consider appeals and make decisions in respect of the various matters that come before the Tribunal.

All Members are either barristers or solicitors with a

minimum of five years' professional experience appointed by the Minister based on selection by the Public Appointments Service, after holding a competition under section 47 of the Public Service Management (Recruitment and Appointments) Act. This process ensures that Members have the required skills and expertise in respect of international protection and human rights law, and decision-making. Moreover, the three whole time members are in a position to focus on decision-making on a full-time basis.



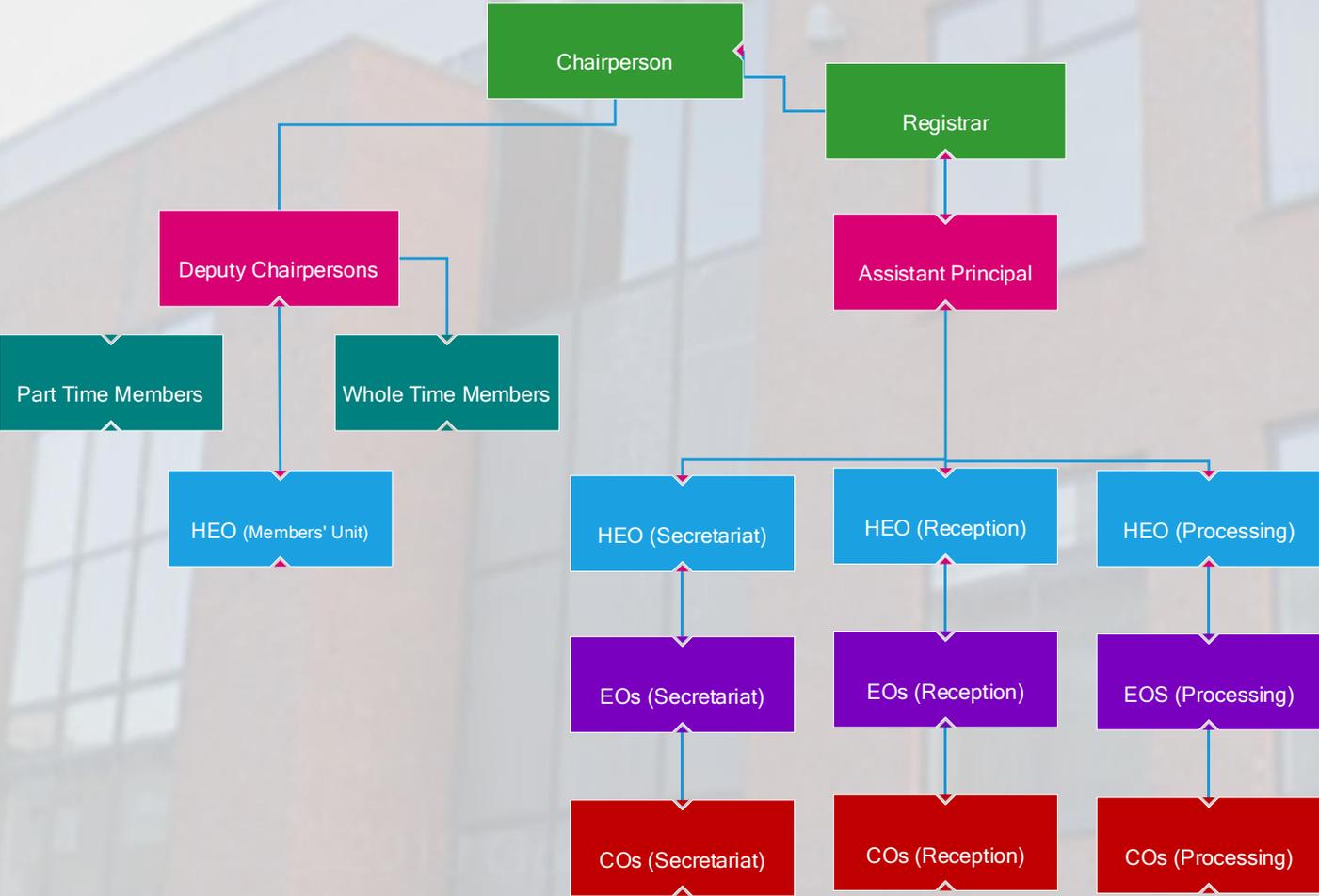
Physical Resources

The Tribunal is located at 6/7 Hanover St. East, Dublin 2, where it currently occupies the first floor. In addition to the workspace for administrative staff and whole-time Members, there are seven on-site hearing rooms, five A/V rooms and a number of consultation rooms for appellants and their legal representatives on the ground floor of the building.

Technological Resources

Based on the Oversight Agreement, the Department of Justice provides the Tribunal with shared services including ICT services as needed. 2020 has seen a marked shift to the use of ICT for home working and oral hearings being conducted via A/V link, requiring significant input, resources and support from the Department.

The Tribunal Organisational Structure



The External Environment in which the Tribunal Operates

Applicants for International Protection

The matters that come before the Tribunal go to the core of applicants' safety and dignity, and arise when applicants may be at their most vulnerable and experiencing trauma and personal crisis. The Tribunal, as an impartial decision-making body, plays a critical role in safeguarding the integrity of the international protection process.

The fundamental role of the Tribunal is to provide an effective remedy for applicants in respect of their claims for international protection and related issues directly impacting them, and their

families, ensuring fairness and natural justice.

The Tribunal listens to appellants, gives all claims full consideration, and ensures fair hearings. The Tribunal ensures that appellants are respected in their dignity at all times in their engagement with the Tribunal. The Tribunal strives to anticipate and, as needs be, solve problems that can arise in the processes before it. Meaningful, authentic engagement with applicants gives the Tribunal valuable insight and leads to better-informed and sustainable outcomes.

The Department of Justice

Operationally, all of the Tribunal's processes interlink with processes in the wider international protection and immigration sphere, which matters generally are under the management and stewardship of the Department of Justice. The Tribunal falls under the Vote of the Department, and is dependent on it for its budget and shared services such as information technology and interpretation. The Tribunal monitors its performance to ensure value for money and is subject to Oversight and Performance Delivery Agreements with the Department.

The Tribunal creates opportunities to listen to the representatives of the Department to ensure the smooth running of the international protection process generally, and in respect of individual cases. Moreover, the Tribunal is actively engaged with the ongoing reform process of the international protection system arising from recommendations made in the [Report of the Advisory Group on the Provision of Support including Accommodation to Persons in the International Protection Process](#) ('Catherine Day Report') and contained in the [White Paper to End Direct Provision and to Establish a New International Protection Support](#)

[Service](#) ('White Paper to End Direct Provision'). In that regard, the Tribunal will continue to participate in the end-to-end review of the process, which is designed to inform legislative change and planning for future staffing, training and resourcing needs to meet increased caseloads and expected outcomes, enabling the Tribunal inter alia to ensure that its processing times remain within the recommended time frame of six months or less.

This Strategy Statement is designed to complement the Department of Justice Strategy Statement 2021 - 2023, while enriching common strategic aims with the particular independent voice and expertise of the Tribunal.



An Roinn Dlí agus Cirt
Department of Justice

Other Key Stakeholders

Beyond the Department, under whose aegis the Tribunal operates, and the applicants, whose appeals it determines, the Tribunal has critical working relationships with many important stakeholders, including:

- Government Departments, and especially the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, and the Department of Social Protection;
- The Office of the Attorney General and the Office of the Chief State Solicitor;
- The Courts Service, and Irish courts and other tribunals;
- Asylum courts and tribunals in other countries, especially in other EU Member States and the UK;
- The Legal Aid Board and other members of the legal profession;
- The Law Society, the Bar Council, and the Honourable Society of King's Inns;
- Providers of interpretation services, and other relevant service providers;
- The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR);
- National non-governmental organisations representing and supporting applicants for international protection;
- EU institutions, especially the European Asylum Support Office (EASO);
- The International Association of Refugee and Migration Judges (IARMJ);
- Judicial and legal training providers, including the European Academy of Law (ERA) and the European Judicial Trainers Network (EJTN).

Technological Developments

Digital technologies create new opportunities to re-imagine service delivery, enhancing user experience, and enabling better knowledge management. The Department's strategic focus on investing in ICT systems in the international protection and immigration sphere is timely and the Tribunal will endeavour to use this opportunity to further improve its delivery of an excellent service.

In 2020 the Tribunal moved towards the introduction of a programme to facilitate the holding of oral hearings by way of audio-video link (AV hearing). Following a consultation process with legal representatives and training for Tribunal Members, AV hearings have been held since November 2020 with success. The Tribunal is designated under the Civil Law and Criminal Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2020 (Section 31) (International Protection Appeals Tribunal) (Designation) Order 2020 (S.I. 715/2020) to hold

hearings remotely, which is to say by means of electronic communications.

The Tribunal views AV hearings as a means of enabling it to make its service much more accessible and user-friendly, particularly from the appellant's perspective, as it will enable it hear appeals sooner which will in turn lead to increased output, while improving the user experience overall.

COVID-19

This strategy statement is being published as efforts to combat the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the work of the Tribunal continues. Delays in case-processing and backlogs in issuing appeal decisions are just two of the consequences of the pandemic. While the longer-term effects of this global pandemic have yet to be determined, it has changed permanently how we work, and is prompting carefully considered innovative and positive change.

EU Developments in the areas of International Protection and Immigration

The Tribunal is committed to ensuring that its decisions and procedures are in line with the latest EU developments, most importantly the case law of the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU). In that regard, the Tribunal engages actively with the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) Network of Courts and Tribunals, and Tribunal Members benefit from EASO's Professional Development Workshops for judges and tribunal members, covering all aspects of the Common European Asylum System. The Tribunal is an active participant in and contributor to training and networking opportunities provided through the EASO, the International Association of Refugee and Migration Judges (IARMJ) as well as the European Judicial Training Network (EJTN).

The EU's New Pact on Migration (2020) builds on the previous EU reforms by adding elements to ensure a balanced, common framework bringing together all aspects of asylum and migration policy. Throughout the period of this statement, the Tribunal will actively engage with the Department of Justice and other stakeholders with regard to any future legal and procedural changes that may be necessitated should Ireland participate in the New Pact.



The Tribunal's Strategic Priorities

1. Ensure quality and consistency of decision-making.
2. Optimise efficiency of appeal processing.
3. Deliver a user-focused appeal service.
4. Communicate effectively with service users and other stakeholders.
5. Engage and strengthen the Tribunal's synergies across the international protection ecosystem.

Strategic Priority 1

Ensure quality and consistency of decision making

As its fundamental task, the Tribunal provides an effective remedy for applicants in respect of their claims for international protection. This allows applicants and their families to move beyond the international protection process and plan, and live, the rest of their lives. It allows the State to strengthen and deliver a fair international protection and wider immigration system.

The Tribunal is independent in its functions and enables its Members to manage their work efficiently and expeditiously. The Tribunal uses its expertise in all relevant Irish, EU and international human rights law, and makes decisions with integrity and of the highest quality. The Tribunal's appellate decisions are impartial and just, while also being clear and easily understandable, and respectful of the dignity of appellants.

To give effect to this strategic priority the Tribunal will:

- Provide appropriate training to the administrative staff of the Tribunal to support the Tribunal in delivering its objectives in the performance of its statutory functions.
- Provide appropriate training and mentoring to Members of the Tribunal to equip them with the knowledge and skill to deliver high quality, fair, consistent and legally robust decisions.
- Continue to develop resources and tools for Members of the Tribunal, including decision templates and guidance notes.
- Continue the implementation and development of its quality review of Members' decisions and its learning from judicial review outcomes.
- Further contribute to the development of Members'

expertise through participation in training and networking opportunities provided by relevant bodies at European and international level.

- Consult and communicate clearly with Tribunal Members on the development of measures to ensure quality and consistency of decision-making.

Specific actions under this Strategic Priority are stated in yearly Action Plans.

This Strategic Priority supports Goal 4 of the Statement of Strategy 2021 - 2023 of the Department of Justice: the delivery of a fair immigration and international protection system, and objectives 179 and 183 of the 2021 Action Plan of the Statement of Strategy 2021 - 2023 of the Department of Justice, and the related objectives in the Department's future Action Plans.

Strategic Priority 2

Optimise efficiency of appeal processing

The Tribunal's appeal processes are efficient and timely. This is required by law, and is a critical way in which the Tribunal shows respect for its users.

The Tribunal protects the fairness, and enhances the efficiency, of the State's international protection system.

As well as ensuring that applicants have an effective remedy that is fair and just, the Tribunal respects applicants in their dignity in their particular circumstances and with any vulnerabilities they may have.

The Tribunal does this in a manner that is timely and sustainable for the State, and that facilitates and strengthens the delivery of a productive and fair international protection system that provides good value for money

Tribunal planning is flexible and takes account of the consequences for its caseload of the COVID-19 pandemic through the design and implementation of contingency plans and forward looking resource management.

To give effect to this strategic priority the Tribunal will:

- Collaborate with the Department of Justice to complete the end-to-end process arising from the [Advisory Group Report](#).
- Implement agreed recommendations, taking on board the key lessons from the end-to-end process and organisational structural review.
- Collaborate with the Department in implementing a productive and effective process for international protection-related applications.
- Ensure optimum productiveness and effectiveness of individual business units within the Tribunal in achieving efficient outcomes and avoiding or reducing any backlogs, including those brought about by the COVID-19 Pandemic.
- Ensure staff members' goal, tasks, training and development are in line with the Tribunal's strategy, in particular this strategic priority, and monitored under PMDS.
- Continually review and improve efficiencies, including based on stakeholder feedback and guidance from litigation outcomes.
- Consult and communicate clearly with Tribunal Members on the development of measures to ensure optimisation of appeal processing.

Specific actions under this Strategic Priority are stated in yearly Action Plans.

This Strategic Priority supports objectives 209 to 212 of the 2021 Action Plan of the Statement of Strategy 2021 - 2023 of the Department of Justice, and the related objectives in the Department's future Action Plans.

Strategic Priority 3

Deliver a user-focused appeal service

The Tribunal delivers appeal processes that are personalised, courteous, respectful, timely and responsive. To provide such a service the Tribunal listens to and seeks to understand the needs of its users, and give them full and proper consideration in a timely manner. Thus, in addition to making its services more efficient, the Tribunal ensures that all individuals, the legal profession and statutory bodies, are recognised and respected at all times when engaging with it.

In the context of wider reforms in the international protection and general immigration spheres, the Department of Justice has begun to transition from paper-based and labour intensive processes to efficient, robust and user-focussed services, in line with its Digital First policy and arising from the Advisory Group Report. Digital technologies and machine learning create new opportunities for the Tribunal to reimagine its service delivery models, enhancing the experience for all users of the Tribunal's services, whether applicants, their legal representatives, the representatives of government departments, or any other stakeholders.

Accordingly, the Tribunal will:

- Review and strengthen the Tribunal Customer Service Action Plan for the period of this Strategy Statement, including clear mechanisms for customer feedback.
- Make its services easier to understand by simplifying its processes and providing information in plain and accessible language.
- Engage with applicants and their legal representatives and other relevant stakeholders to better understand and respond to applicants' needs in all processes before the Tribunal.
- Engage with representatives of the Department of Justice and other government departments and stakeholders working on behalf of the State to better understand and respond to their needs in operating appeal processes and in managing the international protection system as a whole.
- Engage openly with applicants and their legal representatives, and with representatives of the Department of Justice, in ensuring the effectiveness and efficiency of AV hearings, and ensuring that they are accessible and respectful of applicants while maintaining the integrity of the appeal process.
- Work with the Department of Justice to establish and implement a plan for further digitisation of all Tribunal appeal processes.

Specific actions under this Strategic Priority are stated in yearly Action Plans.

This Strategic Priority supports objectives 68, and 170 to 172, and 175 and 176 of the 2021 Action Plan under the Statement of Strategy 2021 - 2023 of the Department of Justice, and the related objectives in the Department's future Action Plans.

Strategic Priority 4

Communicate effectively with service users and other stakeholders

The Tribunal is clear and open in conveying to its users what it does, how its processes work, and how the Tribunal and its users can engage with each other effectively and in a timely manner. Understanding and responding well to the needs of its users enables the Tribunal to better ensure and safeguard procedural fairness for all those appearing before it.

The Tribunal recognises and considers the diversity and needs of its users and wider stakeholder community and supports them in engaging effectively with the Tribunal

To give effect to this strategic priority the Tribunal will:

- Monitor user service and satisfaction. Identify and resolve user service issues.
- Use plain language in all dealings with users, and promote the use of simple and clear language across all user engagement.
- Ensure information and documentation sharing between government departments and the Tribunal proceeds in a manner that is timely and facilitates the operational needs of both the departments and the Tribunal.
- Communicate openly and regularly with all relevant stakeholders on key procedural innovations and other substantive matters.
- Engage with the wider stakeholder community on future strategy development.
- Treat all Tribunal users with impartiality, respect, courtesy and confidentiality.
- Ensure the visibility and accessibility of the Tribunal for all its users in a manner fit for the digital age.

Specific actions under this Strategic Priority are stated in yearly Action Plans.

This Strategic Priority supports objectives 190 to 195 of the 2021 Action Plan of the Statement of Strategy 2021 - 2023 of the Department of Justice, and the related objectives in the Department's future Action Plans.

Strategic Priority 5

Engage and strengthen the Tribunal's synergies across the international protection ecosystem.

The Tribunal works to strengthen collaborative relationships and, in that regard, proactively engages with government departments, agencies and international institutions involved in the international protection system.

The Tribunal provides observations, based on its experience and expertise, to government departments and other stakeholders on developments in the law and operations relating to risks and efficiency gains in the context of the international protection process.

To give effect to this strategic priority the Tribunal will:

- Provide expert insight relating to its functions to the Department of Justice, including in the context of the implementation of recommendations arising from the [Advisory Group Report](#) and the [White Paper to End Direct Provision](#), including in the end-to-end review exercise, which will shape the period of this strategy, and in any future design of a revised process for the processing of international protection applications.
- Seek out, implement and contribute to best practice initiatives, including for training and CPD, in the area of international protection.
- Provide the Department of Justice with observations on litigation in respect of matters relating to international protection, in particular by providing timely observations in respect of challenges to decisions of the Tribunal, in order to enhance the State's direction of litigation, in cooperation with the Offices of the Attorney General and the Chief State Solicitor, especially in relation to matters of systemic importance to the international protection process or related national policy.
- When requested, provide the Department of Justice and, as might arise, other government departments with observations and information to assist in identifying legislative needs in the area of international protection and in respect of related matters.
- Provide the Department of Justice and, as might arise, other government departments with observations and information to assist in identifying cross-cutting initiatives and to identify risks and efficiency gains in the international protection process and in respect of related matters.
- Share expertise arising from its functions with other stakeholders, such as the UNCHR, the EASO Network of Courts and Tribunals, the European Migration Network (EMN), and the International Association of Refugee and Migration Judges (IARMJ), for mutual benefit in respect of efficiency and good practice in decision-making and appeal-processing.

This Strategic Priority supports objectives 177 to 180, 183, and 188 to 189 of the 2021 Action Plan of the Statement of Strategy 2021 - 2023 of the Department of Justice, and the related objectives in the Department's future Action Plans.

Performance Delivery and Implementation of Strategy

Key to successful implementation of this strategy is:

- Support from the Department of Justice in the context of its Oversight and Performance Delivery Agreements (PDA) with the Tribunal;
- Annual Action Plans setting key actions, ownership, processes, journey mapping, targets and outcomes;
- Annual senior management team business plans translating high-level strategic objectives into key deliverables at all levels of the organisation.
- Ongoing engagement with the reform process of the international protection system arising from recommendations made in the 'Catherine Day Report' and contained in the 'White Paper to End Direct Provision'.
- Building on the Tribunal's success in achieving its target time-frame for delivering decisions prior to COVID-19, and continuing to reduce the processing time of appeals to six months or less, and ensuring optimum productiveness and effectiveness of its individual business units in achieving efficient outcomes and avoiding or reducing any backlogs, including those brought about by the pandemic.

Reporting on implementation with the achievement of milestones will be by:

- Ongoing monitoring of delivery of strategic priorities by Tribunal senior management.
- Quarterly reports by the Tribunal to the Tribunal's Senior Management Team on the implementation of the Action Plan.
- Ongoing regular engagement with the Civil Justice Governance Function of the Department of Justice, including biannual governance meetings to report on implementation of the PDA in the context of the Oversight Agreement with the Department.
- Annual reports to the Minister for Justice in the context of the statutory reporting requirement pursuant to section 63(8) of the International Protection Act 2015.

The Tribunal's Strategy Map

Vision

A model appellate decision-making authority delivering excellence.

Mission

To provide an effective remedy within the international protection system that is of the highest quality and to do so in the most efficient, sustainable and user-focussed manner, ensuring compliance with national, EU and international law.

Strategic Priorities

1. Ensure quality and consistency of decision-making.
2. Maximise efficiency of appeal processing.
3. Deliver a user-focussed appeal service.
4. Communicate effectively with service users and other stakeholders
5. Engage and strengthen the Tribunal's synergies across the international protection ecosystem.

Underpinning Delivery of Priorities

Strong and ambitious leadership by the Chairperson and Registrar.
Dedicated and innovative, collegiate staff.
Experienced and expert Tribunal Members
Strategically focused and supportive Department of Justice.
Experience and support of the UNHCR and other Stakeholders.

Values

Fairness Respect Efficiency Transparency