



State Solicitor's
Office

Annual Report

2024-25

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

At the State Solicitor's Office, we acknowledge the Aboriginal peoples as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of Western Australia. We recognise the Whadjuk Noongar people on whose land our office is situated. As the longest continuing culture, whose knowledge, traditions, and connection to Country have been passed through generations, we value their significant contributions and extend our respect to Elders past and present. We stand with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, striving towards reconciliation through mutual understanding and collaboration.

Statement of Compliance

For the year ended 30 June 2025

Hon Dr Tony Buti BPE DipEd MIR LLB DPhil MLA

Attorney General, Minister for Commerce; Tertiary and International Education;
Multicultural Interests.

In accordance with section 63 of the *Financial Management Act 2006* (WA), I hereby submit for your information and presentation to Parliament, the Annual Report for the State Solicitor's Office, for the financial year ended 30 June 2025.

The Annual Report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions of the *Financial Management Act 2006* (WA).

The financial statements comply with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board.



Dr Graham Hill
State Solicitor

1 September 2025

About the State Solicitor's Office

For over 180 years, the State Solicitor's Office (SSO) has been Western Australia's leading legal adviser to the State Government. While our legacy is one of trusted expertise and unwavering commitment to the rule of law, we continue to focus firmly on working in partnership with our clients to deliver smarter, faster, and more innovative legal solutions.

As the preeminent provider of public sector legal services, we provide clear, strategic legal counsel that enables government action, protects public interest, and supports Western Australia's long-term growth. Our legal advice is underpinned by deep public sector knowledge, an understanding of complex regulatory environments, and a commitment to ensuring government decisions are legally sound and socially responsible.

We are evolving to become a modern client-focused and efficient legal service. We work collaboratively with agencies to understand their needs, embrace

digital transformation to streamline our services, and promote legal thinking that is both rigorous and practical.

Led by State Solicitor Dr Graham Hill, our team of more than 260 legal professionals and support staff bring deep expertise across civil and public litigation, commercial law, native title, advice and legislative reform and public law.

Whether advising on major infrastructure, resolving complex legal disputes, or helping shape legislation, we are committed to excellence and integrity in everything we do.

We remain proud of our heritage, but we are even more excited about what lies ahead, because delivering a great legal service today means not only protecting the State's interests, but helping to build a better, more agile and future-ready government.

OUR VISION

To be the preeminent legal service provider for the State of Western Australia.

OUR MISSION

To support and protect the State of Western Australia by providing the highest quality legal services and assisting the Attorney General to uphold the rule of law.

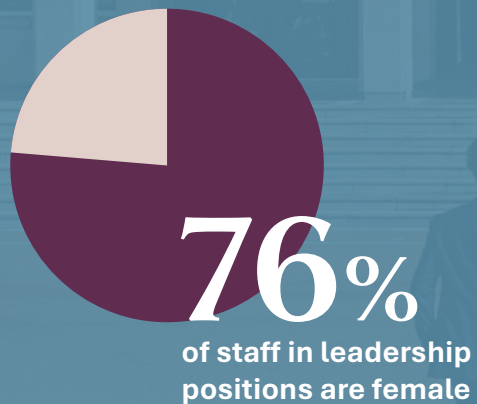
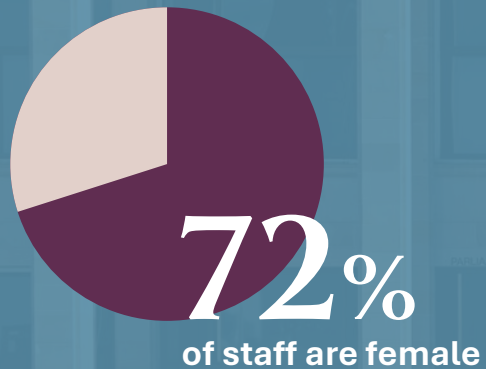
WHAT WE VALUE

Excellence / Integrity /
Impartiality / Collaboration /
Our People

2024-25

At a Glance

95% client
satisfaction



74
government
agencies assisted

200
lawyers

8,544
new and active matters

“Excellent and practical advice.”

Heather Brayford, Director General, Department
of Primary Industries and Regional Development

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Overview

“I personally have found the State Solicitor’s Office supportive to deal with and would encourage that engagement with officers with WA Police as it will continue to build a productive working relationship.”

Col Blanch, Commissioner Western Australia Police Force

State Solicitor's Overview

At the State Solicitor's Office, we work together across all practice areas to support the State in delivering its programs, addressing legal complexities, managing risk, and contributing to a strong future for Western Australia.

As the State's leading law firm, we are committed to enabling and supporting public sector action as a centre of excellence in the areas of law that matter most to government.

We keep impressive company. Our clients include talented public administrators, forward-looking leaders, innovative policy makers, and experienced crisis managers, who deliver valuable services to our community. Being surrounded by the best inspires and challenges us to meet the evolving needs of the public sector.

We strive for remarkable results and are passionate about our work and the public value it creates.

What sets us apart from other law firms is our deep understanding of public administration. We build long-term relationships with government clients by being accessible, trustworthy, and dependable. We never act against the State.

The 2024-25 year

This report showcases the work of the SSO over the past financial year.

In 2024-25, we delivered 8,544 services to over 74 different agencies, with a client satisfaction rating of 95%.

A new Corporate Plan was approved by our Corporate Executive, which will shape our future direction. It outlines our strategic goals to be delivered through 75 specific initiatives, some of which are already taking shape.

We also launched a new legal service to support the *Criminal Law (Mental Impairment) Act 2023 (WA)* reforms that came into effect in September 2024. These reforms aim to reintegrate individuals into the community while maintaining public safety.

Our institutional abuse team implemented a new knowledge management system to streamline work and improve efficiency.

We welcomed a new Attorney General marking a significant leadership transition for the State and drew on the SSO's deep pool of talent to grow our own leadership capability following a series of appointments to judicial and other high-level roles.

In addition to this, we reviewed our highly regarded Junior Lawyer Program and appointed an inaugural Head of Junior Lawyer Program, a key step in strengthening our long-term succession planning.

In June, we completed the procurement of a new Legal Case Management System (LCMS), which will bring advanced technology and enhanced efficiencies to client service delivery.

We took our first steps into generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) through a carefully governed pilot, a significant milestone that sets a bold direction for our future.

Furthermore, to enhance accountability and manage organisational risks, we formally established an Audit and Risk Committee to independently advise the State Solicitor.

Thank you

I thank the dedicated staff of the SSO for their exceptional work throughout the year. Their commitment to our clients and to achieving good public outcomes continues to inspire me. Many of our staff look at what they do as a calling and not just a job. Thanks to their skill, care, and hard work, the State makes demonstrably better decisions, the rule of law is reinforced, and public confidence in our institutions is greater than it would otherwise be.

We are also grateful to the Attorney General, Hon Dr Tony Buti MLA, and his predecessor, Hon John Quigley, for their support. Our thanks also go to the Director General of the Department of Justice, Kylie Maj, and to Michael Andrews, Laura Cook, Giselle Lau, Matthew Keohane and Christine Tay from the Department of Treasury and Finance for their efforts.

The year ahead

As we enter the next financial year, we do so with confidence and a clear commitment to continued excellence.

To enhance efficiency and effectiveness in the legal sector, the SSO is undergoing a transformation into a more agile and future-ready organisation. This year, we'll introduce modern advice templates and deliver plain language training supporting a smarter, more

consistent approach to written communication that reflects contemporary expectations and evolving best practices.

Our legacy systems will begin to be replaced with the new LCMS, significantly enhancing our clients' experience in how we manage matters. Staff will also have access to pilot the latest generative AI tools for legal research, further strengthening our ability to deliver timely, high-quality legal services.

With new budget funding, the SSO will increase capacity in several critical areas, including high-risk serious offender matters, the children in care class action, and State Agreements.

Meeting tomorrow's challenges begins with the steps we take today. In an increasingly complex and unpredictable environment, State Government agencies require a trusted legal partner, one with a deep understanding of public administration. The SSO is proud to provide strategic advice and practical legal solutions to help our clients move forward with certainty.



Dr Graham Hill
State Solicitor

Introductory Message from the Attorney General

The State Solicitor's Office performs a variety of tasks in a complex legal space that is charged with serving the public in a constantly evolving legal environment.

The legal advice provided by the State Solicitor's Office is essential in enabling the Government to comply with its legal obligations, thus ensuring that the State's interests and assets are properly protected.



Hon Dr Tony Buti BPE DipEd MIR LLB DPhil MLA
*Attorney General, Minister for Commerce; Tertiary and
International Education; Multicultural Interests*

As Attorney General, I have already witnessed firsthand the commitment of the State Solicitor, Dr Graham Hill, and the State Solicitor's Office to providing comprehensive, robust and valuable solutions-focused advice.

Over the past 12 months, the State Solicitor's Office has advised on significant reforms and projects including:

Privacy and Responsible Information Sharing Reform

As this reform moves into the critically important implementation phase, the State Solicitor's Office continues to assist government departments by providing strategic advice on compliance and practical application to ensure a successful rollout and establishment of the protection of personal information.

Machinery of Government

The Government's *Machinery of Government* changes commenced on 1 July 2025 with full implementation expected by 1 July 2026. The State Solicitor's Office has worked diligently and continues to work closely with the Government to ensure that the proposed changes occur consistently and in concert with the legislative framework.

New Women and Babies Hospital Project

The State Solicitor's Office has supported the State Government to facilitate the New Women and Babies Hospital Project by providing representation on the Taskforce and Project Control Group, and in ongoing negotiations.

I thank the State Solicitor's Office for its work to date and look forward to it continuing to deliver high-quality legal advice and representation which is exceptional in terms of its legal insights, functionality, and practical guidance to the Government.

Role of the State Solicitor's Office

The SSO plays a pivotal role in supporting the State Government, ensuring decisions are legally sound, well-informed, and aligned with both public interest and legal frameworks. Whether through advising on legislation, supporting the development of major State infrastructure projects, or guiding public sector reforms, the SSO helps government make decisions that have a lasting positive impact on the community.

We have a commitment to upholding the rule of law and provide essential legal support across all areas of government, ensuring that actions are consistent with legal frameworks. The SSO's expertise strengthens the integrity of the legal system, ensuring transparency, fairness, and lawfulness in all government operations.

Our proactive approach to legal guidance helps the State Government navigate complex issues before they become challenges. By offering early legal advice, we identify potential risks and opportunities, saving time, resources, and avoiding costly delays. This proactive support encourages a more efficient government, driving successful outcomes for Western Australia and increasing public confidence in the government's ability to make responsible, just decisions.

Our core services



THE PROVISION
OF LEGAL ADVICE



THE PREPARATION OF
LEGAL DOCUMENTS



THE CONDUCT
OF LITIGATION



REPRESENTATION AS COUNSEL
IN COURTS AND TRIBUNALS

Responsible Minister

The SSO is responsible to the Hon Dr Tony Buti BPE DipEd MIR LLB DPhil MLA, Attorney General, Minister for Commerce; Tertiary and International Education; Multicultural Interests.

Enabling Legislation

The SSO was established as a sub-department of the Department of Justice on 1 October 2021 and is a sub-department for the purposes of the *Financial Management Act 2006* (WA)

Administered Legislation

The SSO assists the Attorney General in the administration of the *Suitors' Fund Act 1964* (WA).



Future Direction

This financial year represents a significant milestone, with the executive team endorsing the SSO Corporate Plan 2024–27 (‘the Plan’). The Plan sets a clear direction for the future of our organisation, aligning our priorities with long-term goals that will shape the way we operate and serve.

Central to the Plan are the values of excellence, integrity, impartiality, collaboration, and respect for our people. These values define our culture, guide our decision-making, and influence how we deliver legal services, engage with clients and stakeholders, and support outcomes that impact the public.

The Plan outlines five key result areas and sets out four strategic goals, which will be delivered through 75 specific initiatives.

Key result areas:

- › Delivering high-quality legal services
- › Achieving client satisfaction
- › Ensuring sustainable finances
- › Being an employer of choice
- › Effectively prioritising our resources

[View the Corporate Plan](#)

Strategic Goals:

- 1 Provide high-quality specialist legal services
- 2 Attract, develop and support our people
- 3 Build strong client and stakeholder relationships
- 4 Strengthen our systems, structures, and capability

We have already commenced key initiatives. Notably, we engaged the Plain English Foundation to develop user-friendly legal advice templates, improving the clarity and accessibility of our advice. This included a Continuing Professional Development (CPD) featuring former Australian Government Solicitor Michael Kingston, who demonstrated how structure, layout, and font impact comprehension and decision-making.

We are also close to implementing a new digital case management system, moving us toward a paper-light environment that is compatible with emerging technologies such as generative AI.

These efforts reflect our commitment to innovation, accessibility, and public service. We aim to enhance trust, strengthen relationships, and remain responsive to the evolving needs of government and the community.

Goal 1: high-quality specialist legal services

To accomplish our goal to provide high-quality specialist legal services, the SSO is committed to delivering clear, practical, and responsive legal services that support informed decision-making across government. To achieve this, we are reviewing and refining our legal service delivery model to prioritise sensitive, complex, and high-value matters. Updated core and non-core guidelines will support our clients in determining which matters should be referred to SSO, while a redesigned advice process will streamline workflows and improve the client experience. A major focus over the life of the Plan is improving the clarity and usability of our legal advice. Our collaboration with the Plain English Foundation has resulted in the development of user-friendly legal templates and training for staff.

This idea was launched at a CPD event with former Australian Government Solicitor Michael Kingston, who highlighted how better structure and presentation can significantly improve client comprehension and decision-making. We are also ensuring continuity of legal services through improved succession planning, knowledge-sharing between senior and junior lawyers, and better systems for managing legal opinions and precedents.

Goal 2: attract, develop and support our people

To achieve our goal to attract, develop and support our people we recognise our team is central to everything we do, and the Plan reflects a strong commitment to creating a workplace that is safe, inclusive, supportive, and high performing. We are investing in a range of initiatives to improve wellbeing, boost staff engagement, and encourage a culture where learning and leadership are actively supported. New and expanded wellbeing programs, increased training, and stronger staff engagement mechanisms are already underway. We are also improving the way we welcome and integrate lateral hires, particularly those new to government, with a more comprehensive induction program. The introduction of a formal performance development process and the design of a leadership program will help staff grow in their roles and prepare for future opportunities. A leadership succession framework will also help identify and develop the next generation of leaders across the organisation. These investments will support our goal of being an employer of choice and help us attract and retain the talent needed to meet future demands.

Goal 3: build strong client and stakeholder relationships

To reach our goal of building strong client and stakeholder relationships we recognise our relationships with clients and stakeholders are critical to the success of our work. The Plan prioritises more meaningful and structured engagement with agency leaders, client legal teams, and key partners across government. This includes building trust through regular communication, targeted training, and collaboration on complex or whole-of-government legal issues. We have commenced work on a stakeholder engagement and communications strategy that will help ensure clients have timely access to relevant legal resources, advice, and guidance. We will also review how we collect and respond to client feedback and develop a client management model to better tailor services to needs.

Goal 4: strengthening our systems, structures, and capabilities

To deliver on our goal of strengthening our systems, structures, and capabilities we are modernising the systems, tools and frameworks that underpin our work. Central to this is the development of a new Legal Case Management System with generative AI capabilities, which will support a paper-light environment and streamline legal workflows. Staff are currently participating in a LexisNexis AI pilot program to explore how this technology can improve legal research, productivity, and the overall quality of our services. We are also improving our strategic business and financial planning capabilities to ensure that we allocate resources effectively and operate sustainably. This includes documenting key business

processes, improving our use of data and analytics, and enhancing decision-making through more rigorous planning and prioritisation. As part of our commitment to good governance, we have formally established an Audit and Risk Committee (ARC), which reports directly to the State Solicitor. The ARC plays a vital role in supporting financial accountability, risk management, and compliance with key legislative frameworks. Its inaugural meeting in November 2024 marked an important milestone in strengthening oversight and transparency across the SSO.

Impact and outcome

By the end of 2027, the SSO will be a modern, agile law firm, with the best legal minds in the state supported by technology and guided by strong governance and strategy. Our work will not only strengthen legal and governance frameworks across government, but also contribute to the social, economic, and infrastructure development that shapes Western Australia's future.

As trusted legal advisors, we play a vital role in enabling responsible decision-making for major projects and public initiatives. Our clients benefit from services that are clear, consistent, and accessible. At the same time, the WA community can have confidence in our strong commitment to integrity ensuring that government outcomes are both legally sound and socially responsible.

We will be well equipped to deliver trusted legal services in a changing environment, while our team thrives in a workplace that champions wellbeing, inclusion, and professional growth.

Client Outcomes

Case Studies



2025

New Women and Babies Hospital Project

In May this year the SSO assisted in appointing a managing contractor to the \$1.8 billion New Women and Babies Hospital Project in Western Australia. Since project inception, the SSO has advised government across all procurement stages, from expressions of interest and request for proposal, to contract negotiation and finalisation, and has contributed legal oversight through key governance groups. The team worked with the Departments of Finance, Health, Transport, and Treasury (as formerly named) to achieve the results. SSO continues to provide ongoing legal support for the major project, which will replace the 100-year-old King Edward Memorial Hospital with a modern, purpose-built facility at the Fiona Stanley Hospital precinct in Murdoch, and expand services at Osborne Park Hospital. The SSO also assisted with the separate procurement of a multi-deck car park and continues to advise as both projects progress through delivery.

2024**Environmental Protection
Amendment Bill 2024**

The SSO played a key role in developing the Environmental Protection Amendment Bill 2024. Collaborating closely and efficiently with the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, the Minister for the Environment, and other key agencies, the SSO successfully navigated tight timeframes to deliver critical legislative improvements. This Bill is designed to accelerate government approvals for major projects by empowering statutory decision-makers to conduct parallel decision-making during Environmental Protection Authority assessment processes. Additionally, it introduces important technical and administrative enhancements, including provisions that enable the Minister to take more proactive and flexible actions, thereby streamlining environmental governance and supporting sustainable development.

2024**Hague Convention Matters**

In 2024, the SSO proposed a series of improvements to the way international child abduction cases are handled in the Family Court of Western Australia. Following consultation, the Court adopted several changes, including early involvement of a family consultant and the introduction of court ordered mediation. The first matter under the new process was successfully resolved after the parents reviewed the preliminary Hague Report and reached agreement through mediation. These changes aim to improve outcomes for children and make better use of court resources.

2024**Land Tax Recovery**

In October 2024, the SSO led a successful pilot case for the Commissioner of State Revenue to recover unpaid land tax from de-registered companies. Although land tax continues to accrue on land held by these companies, their de-registration prevents the Commissioner from using standard recovery methods. To address this, the SSO commenced proceedings in the Supreme Court of Western Australia to reinstate a de-registered company and have it wound up. This process places the company's affairs in the hands of a liquidator, who can sell assets and distribute proceeds to creditors. The Court granted the orders as sought, marking a successful outcome. The case has provided RevenueWA with a valuable new legal pathway for recovering outstanding land tax.

Case Studies

2024

Nicheliving

In July 2024, the Building Services Board did not renew the building contractor registration of Projex Management & Construction Pty Ltd, trading as Nicheliving. Nicheliving commenced review proceedings in the State Administrative Tribunal (SAT), which had implications for homeowners with Nicheliving home building contracts. The SSO represented the State in respect of the SAT proceedings and successfully facilitated an outcome resulting in Nicheliving accepting the Building Services Board's July decision. The proceedings attracted significant public interest, and the outcome provided more contract options, and much needed clarity and certainty for the impacted homeowners.

"Hundreds of people stuck in limbo waiting for embattled builder Nicheliving to complete their homes have been thrown another lifeline, with the WA government brokering a deal with the company. Commerce Minister Sue Ellery announced the deal on Friday morning, saying it would bring customers one step closer to completing their homes, in exchange for the company's insurance liability being waived."

(ABC News)



2025

Machinery of Government changes

In March 2025, the State Government announced major structural changes to the public sector, including the redesign and division of several departments and the creation of a new one. The SSO worked closely with the Public Sector Commission to ensure these changes complied with the relevant legislative frameworks. The SSO provided detailed legal advice across a range of complex issues, including statutory obligations, procurement and commercial matters, industrial relations, and the drafting of legal orders to give effect to the changes.

This work required collaboration across multiple SSO teams highlighting the breadth and depth of the Office's expertise.


Case Studies

2024

Privacy and Responsible Information Sharing

The SSO played a crucial role in the development of the Privacy and Responsible Information Sharing legislation in Western Australia. From the earliest stages of drafting, the SSO provided legal and policy advice to ensure the Bill balanced privacy protections with the need for efficient information sharing across government agencies. As the *Privacy and Responsible Information Sharing Act 2024 (WA)* moves into the implementation phase, the SSO continues to support government departments by advising on compliance and practical application, ensuring the Act's successful rollout and the protection of personal information.



A photograph of four people standing in a warehouse or industrial setting. On the left, two men are wearing yellow high-visibility vests over white shirts and ties. The vest on the left has a 'magellan power' logo. On the right, two women are also wearing yellow high-visibility vests; one is over a purple blazer and the other over a black blazer. They are standing in front of large orange and grey industrial cabinets. The background shows warehouse shelving and equipment.

2025

WA Residential Battery Scheme

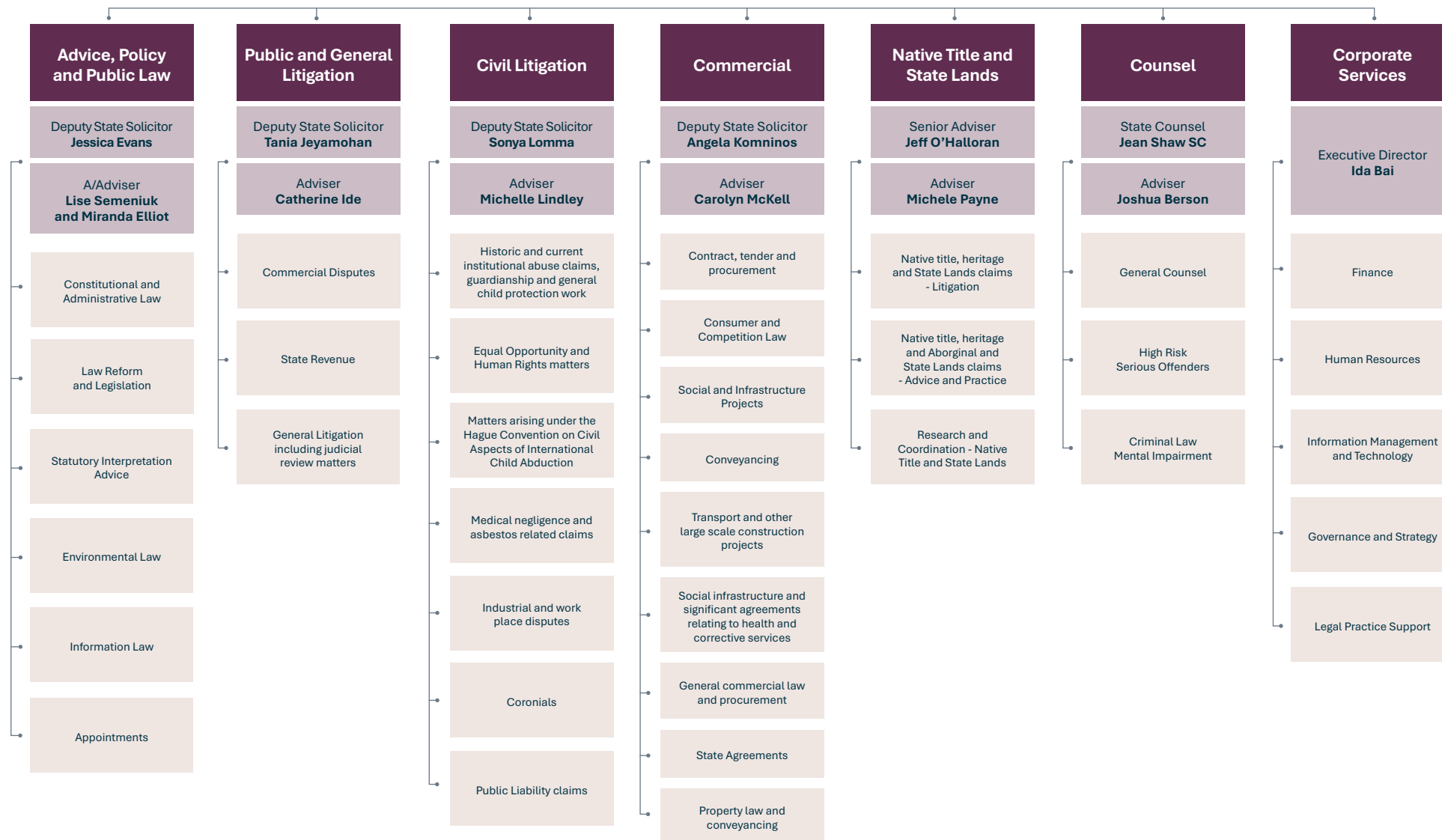
The WA Residential Battery Scheme is a major new State Government initiative to support clean energy adoption and help households reduce electricity costs. Announced in February 2025 as a \$337 million election commitment, the Scheme will provide eligible Western Australian households with access to rebates and, where applicable, no-interest loans for residential battery systems. The SSO has played a vital role working with Energy Policy WA, under the former Department of Local Government, Industry Regulation and Safety, to support the development and implementation of the Scheme from its earliest stages. This has included advising on the most appropriate legal structure to establish and administer the Scheme and providing end-to-end legal support throughout the procurement process. The SSO's contributions have helped ensure the Scheme is underpinned by strong legal and governance frameworks.

Organisational Structure

The structure of the SSO is detailed in the following chart. There are six legal sections that each focus on areas of law of significance to the State. The Corporate Services section provides operational and strategic support to the legal sections. A summary of the functions of each section are outlined on pages 26-39.



STATE SOLICITOR Dr Graham Hill



Advice, Policy, and Public Law

Advice, Policy and Public Law (APPL) plays a crucial role in ensuring that the State Government operates within a robust legal framework, achieving its policy objectives while maintaining legal compliance, integrity, and transparency. APPL provides specialist advice on a range of core executive and government matters, with expertise in statutory interpretation, legislative reform, environmental law, information access law and other areas of public law.

APPL provides advice on matters relating to the administration of justice, Parliament, judicial officers, Royal Commissions, intergovernmental arrangements and relations with the Commonwealth or other states and territories. Advice and assistance are provided for matters of urgency, sensitivity or significance that have implications across government, including technically complex, legal and policy matters. Through strategic legal advice and involvement in high-profile matters, the section ensures that the government's actions are legally sound. APPL's work is instrumental in fostering a well-governed State. When the SSO is engaged early in the decision-making process, it can help identify potential legal issues before they escalate, reducing legal risks and costly delays. This proactive approach not only saves taxpayer money by preventing expensive litigation, but also ensures that government objectives and policies are achieved effectively and efficiently.

Key Functions

Exercise of prerogative powers

APPL provides guidance on the legal use of executive powers, including the making of ex gratia payments, ensuring these powers are exercised within the appropriate legal framework and are consistent with established principles of public law.

Operation of executive government

The section supports government operations by reviewing legal documents, providing advice on Cabinet submissions, and ensuring that policy decisions are legally sound and effectively implemented. APPL regularly reviews Cabinet submissions, including those related to proposed legislation and statutory reviews of existing laws.

Constitutional powers and privileges

APPL advises on constitutional matters, particularly the division of powers between the State and Commonwealth, ensuring government actions comply with constitutional law and preventing jurisdictional conflicts. APPL also provides advice on whether proposed legislation raises constitutional risks and provides support to the Solicitor-General in relation to constitutional matters, upon request.

Legal professional privilege and public interest immunities

APPL helps the Government assess when to withhold information under legal professional privilege or public interest immunity, to ensure sensitive documents are protected while maintaining transparency, where appropriate.

Legislative reform

The section advises on legislation under development, ensuring new laws align with policy goals and comply with existing laws. APPL's early involvement in legislative reform enables the Government to achieve its policy objectives while addressing legal risks.

Environmental matters and approvals

APPL provides legal advice on environmental, conservation, and water law matters, particularly in relation to significant projects. The section supports the Government in ensuring compliance with state and federal environmental laws and helping to avoid costly legal challenges.

Integrity and accountability

The section advises on maintaining ethical standards and preventing corruption within government agencies, helping establish transparency and accountability in government operations.

Information sharing, privacy, and freedom of information

The section guides government agencies on information-sharing, privacy rights, and compliance with freedom of information laws, to ensure transparency while protecting sensitive information.

Regulatory compliance

APPL supports agencies to comply with regulations in areas like health, safety, and the environment, helping identify and resolve legal issues early to reduce risks.

Health law

The section advises on health-related legal matters, including public health regulations, patient rights, and compliance by healthcare providers, particularly in emergency health situations. APPL frequently provides guidance to public health service providers on their statutory obligations under key health legislation,

such as the *Health Services Act 2016* (WA), the *Public Health Act 2016* (WA), and the *Mental Health Act 2014* (WA). This advice often addresses complex issues, including patient rights, confidentiality of personal medical information, and the balance between public and private interests.

Emergency management and counterterrorism

The Counterterrorism and Emergency Management team, which draws expertise from across SSO, advises the State on a wide variety of counterterrorism and emergency management matters. The team works particularly closely with the Western Australia Police Force (WA Police) and the Department of Fire and Emergency Services. As well as advising on actual incidents, an important function of the team is training senior officers who respond to terrorism and emergencies, in the special legal powers available to them in such situations.

Public and General Litigation

The Public and General Litigation (PGL) section at the SSO plays a critical role in providing expert legal support, advice, and representation to the State Government of Western Australia across a wide array of litigation matters.

The section is involved in some of the most complex and high-profile cases, ensuring that the State's interests are effectively protected in both civil and criminal proceedings. Our PGL team works closely with our Civil Litigation and Counsel teams but has a strong public law focus. It is integral to the legal operations of the Western Australian Government. Whether it is managing complex commercial disputes, representing the State in class actions, defending tax decisions, or providing advice on public interest immunity, we ensure that the State's legal interests are vigorously defended across a wide range of litigation matters. Through expert representation and strategic legal advice, the section plays a crucial role in maintaining the rule of law while protecting the State's financial and regulatory interests.

Key functions

Contractual, construction, and commercial matters

The PGL section provides comprehensive support for all aspects of contentious contractual, construction, and commercial matters. This includes managing disputes related to major projects, such as contract breaches, delays, and performance issues. Counsel in this section represent the State in mediation, expert determination, rapid adjudication, arbitration, and litigation to resolve disputes effectively and ensure that government projects are completed as intended. Their expertise in complex construction and commercial litigation ensures that the State is protected from financial loss, reputational damage, and unnecessary delays in the completion of major infrastructure projects.

Judicial review and disputes

The section also handles judicial review matters, which involve assessing the lawfulness of decisions made by government bodies. This process is crucial for ensuring transparency and accountability in government decision-making. Additionally, the PGL section is involved in a variety of other disputes, including those related to the *Mining Act 1978* (WA), defamation cases, criminal injuries compensation, electoral issues, and tenancy disputes. In these matters, the team defends the State's position, protecting its legal and financial interests.

Class actions

Class actions are the fastest-growing area for the SSO, and the PGL section brings a wealth of experience in managing these cases, especially in the Federal Court. Such cases typically involve intricate litigation on behalf of groups with similar claims. Following the enactment of the *Civil Procedure (Representative*

Proceedings) Act 2022 (WA), the section is now poised to play a pivotal role in class actions heard in the Supreme Court. This new legislation opens the door for class actions in the Supreme Court. Counsel in this section are highly skilled in handling these high-stakes cases, ensuring the State's interests are well-represented throughout the litigation process. Given the significant resources required, the SSO will sometimes engage external law firms that specialise in class actions and will collaborate closely with them to ensure the best outcomes. The SSO navigates these complex cases with a strategic, broader perspective based on its deep understanding of government needs and the far-reaching impacts of class actions.

State revenue and taxation

The PGL section provides critical legal support in all aspects of state revenue and taxation. This includes representing the State in the State Administrative Tribunal and the Supreme Court of Western Australia in relation to applications for the review of various decisions made by the Office of State Revenue. This work is vital for ensuring the proper administration and enforcement of state tax laws, and for defending the State against challenges to tax assessments and decisions that could affect government revenue.

Representation in the State Administrative Tribunal

The section represents the State in the State Administrative Tribunal, both in its original jurisdiction and its review jurisdiction. This includes merits reviews of administrative decisions, such as the granting of licenses or authorisations, and other regulatory decisions made by government agencies. PGL counsel ensure the decisions of government bodies are upheld when challenged, helping to maintain the integrity of the administrative process and ensuring the government's actions are legally sound and fair.

Charitable trusts

The SSO provides legal advice to ensure the public interest in charitable trusts is protected. This includes representing the public interest in court proceedings involving charitable trusts, addressing complaints, and ensuring trustees implement recommendations from the Western Australia Charitable Trusts Commission following investigations. The SSO also assists the Attorney General in reviewing proposed changes to charitable trust deeds, which require approval either from the Attorney General or the Supreme Court.

Debt recovery

The PGL section is responsible for debt recovery on behalf of various government departments. Counsel in this section represent the State in debt recovery matters across a range of jurisdictions, ensuring that public funds are recovered efficiently and in line with legal requirements. This work is essential for maintaining the financial health of government agencies and ensuring that debts owed to the State are properly collected.

Summons, subpoenas, and information management

The section also provides comprehensive legal support regarding summonses and subpoenas in both civil and criminal matters. This includes overseeing the legal process for obtaining and responding to subpoenas, as well as offering guidance on information management and the release of documents. Counsel in this section provide advice on complex issues such as public interest immunity, a crucial legal principle that protects sensitive government information from being disclosed in legal proceedings. The section's expertise ensures that government information is managed with care and that the State's interests are safeguarded throughout the disclosure process.

Civil Litigation

The Civil Litigation section of the SSO is a large and dynamic team, which plays a crucial role in providing expert legal representation and advice to the Government. In today's rapidly evolving legal landscape, civil litigation support is more essential than ever.

The section, with its extensive experience in exclusively representing government interests, safeguards the State by managing a range of complex and sensitive legal matters. Civil litigation against the State often involves claims by individuals seeking to hold the Government to account for actions which are alleged to be negligent and for which the individual has suffered injury. The Civil Litigation team assists agencies to navigate issues relating to liability appropriately and lawfully. By offering strategic counsel and defending the Government in various civil disputes, the section helps protect public resources, and fosters a fair, accountable legal environment. Its work is vital not only in addressing claims against the Government but also in maintaining the public's trust through integrity, diligence, and expert legal knowledge.

Key functions

Historic and current abuse in care claims, guardianship and general child protection

The Civil Litigation section handles cases involving claims of abuse in care, including claims arising out of historical and contemporary incidents. It provides legal advice and representation to the Government in defending allegations of neglect or mistreatment in care, including sexual abuse. The SSO is committed to dealing with these claims in a trauma-informed manner.

The section also advises on matters relating to guardianship, disability and child protection. This work is vital in ensuring the State discharges its responsibility towards children and vulnerable people. The section previously managed the State's response to the Royal Commission into Institutional

Responses to Child Sexual Abuse and to the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability. As a result, the Civil Litigation section brings a wealth of experience and a deep understanding of the issues relevant to the Government in these complex matters.

Equal opportunity and discrimination matters

The Civil Litigation section advises the State on matters related to equal opportunity and discrimination, including cases under the *Equal Opportunity Act 1984* (WA) and Federal discrimination legislation. This encompasses issues of workplace discrimination, public policy disputes and individual rights protections, ensuring that the State of WA adheres to national and international standards of equality and fairness.

The Civil Litigation section has experience in representing the State in discrimination-based class actions in the Federal Court. The section works collaboratively with agencies to effectively manage large scale document discovery, and to understand agency practices to effectively represent the State.

Hague Convention on Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction

The Civil Litigation section also provides legal expertise in matters arising under the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction (Convention). The SSO's role relates to cases where a child has been wrongfully removed from an overseas jurisdiction to Western Australia or wrongfully retained in WA. The section plays a key role in ensuring compliance with the Convention to protect the welfare of children and facilitate their safe return.

Medical negligence and asbestos-related claims

A significant aspect of the Civil Litigation section's work involves defending the State in medical negligence claims and in claims arising from asbestos exposure. These cases often involve complex medical and scientific evidence, requiring a high level of expertise. The section supports the State in managing

litigation related to historical asbestos-related diseases, providing both legal defence and guidance on public health matters. The section also advises the Government on various legislative aspects of public liability for dust diseases.

Industrial and workplace disputes

The Civil Litigation section is actively involved in managing industrial relations and workplace disputes, offering advice to the State Government on employment law matters. This includes defending the State in legal proceedings arising from disputes over workplace conditions, union negotiations, unfair dismissal claims and other employment-related issues.

Coronial inquests

The SSO represents government departments and other agencies in coronial investigations and inquests. Inquests are conducted in a public manner and have the potential to generate significant media interest. Inquests can also impact public officers including directors general and ministers. The SSO takes a whole of government approach, bringing together the sometimes-differing interests of the State. The SSO seeks to facilitate coronial investigations and ensure they are conducted in accordance with

the law. The interests of the State are advanced through representation during the inquest. In some instances, investigation by the SSO can result in recommendations to make proactive concessions and changes to client practice to reduce the contentious nature of inquests.

Public liability claims

The Civil Litigation section represents and defends the State and its agencies in response to public liability claims and litigation. Such claims and litigation arise when people allege they have suffered injury, loss or damage as a result of alleged negligent or otherwise tortious conduct on the part of the State or its agencies or officers.

Counsel

The Counsel section at the SSO plays a vital role in providing high-quality legal representation and expert advice to the State Government of Western Australia across a wide range of complex and significant legal matters.

Whether it's appearing in court on significant civil cases, managing high-risk offender matters, prosecuting regulatory offences, or handling appeals, counsel from this section ensure that the State's legal interests are protected. Through their dedication to the State's legal needs and their duties to the courts, counsel play a crucial role in advancing the State's objectives and the administration of justice. The team represents various State Government clients in both civil and criminal cases, appearing in a diverse array of courts and tribunals. This includes the Coroners Court, Magistrates Court, District Court, Supreme Court, Court of Appeal, Federal Court, High Court, State Administrative Tribunal, and Industrial Relations Commission. The Counsel section is composed of a dedicated team of legal professionals who not only represent the State in high-stakes cases but also provide expert legal advice across numerous areas of law. This advice is essential in ensuring the Government's actions are legally sound and compliant with both state and federal laws. Counsel from the section also work closely with solicitors and junior

counsel from other sections within SSO, as well as a team of paralegals and legal assistants, ensuring that all aspects of legal cases are thoroughly researched, prepared and presented.

Key functions

High Risk Serious Offender and Criminal Law (Mental Impairment) team

This team is responsible for managing applications on behalf of the State for post-sentence restriction orders in relation to high risk serious offenders under the *High Risk Serious Offenders Act 2020* (WA). It also assists with applications on behalf of the Attorney General for extended custody orders or community supervision orders in relation to supervised persons under the new *Criminal Law (Mental Impairment) Act 2023* (WA). Such applications are made when they are considered necessary to ensure the adequate protection of the community against an unacceptable

risk that the person will commit a serious offence in the future. The Counsel section plays an integral role in this work, which is vital for the protection of the community and requires legal expertise in managing complex cases involving serious offenders.

Departmental prosecutions

The Counsel section supervises and supports the SSO's departmental prosecutions practice. This area involves prosecuting summary offences on behalf of various government departments and agencies, including WorkSafe, the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation, WA Police, the Department of Primary Industry and Regional Development, and the Department of Justice. Counsel provides critical legal support in these prosecutions, ensuring that government agencies can effectively enforce regulatory compliance and address violations that impact public safety and the environment.

Single judge appeals practice

Another key area supervised and supported by the Counsel section is the single judge appeals practice. In this role, counsel represents various State clients, including WA Police, in appeals to the Supreme Court against decisions made by magistrates or other statutory decision-makers. These appeals are conducted pursuant to the *Criminal Appeals Act 2004* (WA) or Order 65 of the Rules of the *Supreme Court 1971* (WA). Counsel ensures that these appeals are managed efficiently and effectively, providing expert legal arguments that aim to achieve the best possible outcome for the State. The SSO lawyers are engaged by client agencies, including WA Police, to assess the viability of appeals brought by individuals dissatisfied with decisions made by magistrates or other statutory decision makers. When it is determined that an appeal should be contested, the SSO represents the client in the Supreme Court.

Mentorship and collaboration across the SSO

In addition to their litigation responsibilities, Counsel play a vital role in the professional development of junior lawyers within the SSO. Through supervision, mentoring, and providing guidance, the Counsel section ensures that high standards of legal practice are consistently upheld.

Commercial

The Commercial section plays a pivotal role in advancing the development of Western Australia. The team supports the State Government's development goals by providing expert legal advice and representation on a broad range of commercial matters.

By working closely with government agencies, the section helps navigate complex legal landscapes, ensuring that key projects are delivered efficiently, and represent value for money to the Western Australia taxpayer. Through its legal expertise, the Commercial section facilitates the successful execution of government initiatives, from large-scale infrastructure projects to vital public-private partnerships. The team's involvement in drafting contracts, managing transactions, and mitigating risks enables State projects to proceed smoothly, minimising costly delays or disputes while securing favourable terms for the State.

Key functions

Advice on procurement strategy and large-scale transactions

Our Commercial section offers critical legal advice on procurement strategies, construction, tenure, financing, outsourcing, and service aspects for

large-scale projects, particularly those involving infrastructure or social development. They assist government agencies in evaluating and selecting the best approach for complex transactions. This includes reviewing, drafting, and negotiating high-value contracts for projects, ensuring terms are favourable to the State and mitigate financial and operational risks. They work collaboratively with agencies on project control groups responsible for the delivery of these projects and provide oversight to ensure strong governance through membership on steering committees and government taskforces.

Preparation, review, and negotiation of commercial documents

The Commercial section supports the State in drafting, reviewing and negotiating a wide array of commercial documents, including agreements, memoranda of understanding, and licenses. Their work ensures that these documents are clear, legally sound, and align with the government's objectives. By managing this process, the team helps to safeguard

the State's interests, mitigate legal risks and streamline the execution of commercial agreements.

Drafting and consideration of contractual agreements

The section is responsible for the drafting and consideration of all contractual agreements entered into by State agencies. This includes ensuring that contracts reflect the requirements of the Government, comply with relevant laws, and manage risk effectively. The section provides detailed legal advice on contract terms and conditions, and ensures that the agreements are balanced, fair and protect the State's position in any commercial dealings.

Conveyancing for State land transactions

The team handles all conveyancing related to Crown land, and the sale and purchase of land required for public works. This involves providing legal advice and preparing documentation for transactions involving land that is needed by the State. The Commercial

section ensures that the sale and purchase processes adhere to statutory requirements and that the State's interests are fully protected during these high-value transactions. The Commercial conveyancing team plays an essential role in the delivery of large-scale infrastructure projects.

Statutory interpretation

Our Commercial section provides expert advice on statutory interpretation, particularly in relation to commercial obligations, powers, and functions of government agencies. The team assists in clarifying the application of laws and regulations in specific contexts, helping government agencies navigate the complex legal landscape and ensuring that their actions comply with legislative requirements.

Contractual disputes and dispute resolution

In the event of contractual disputes, the section provides advice on resolving issues and represents the State in mediations. The team focuses on achieving practical, cost-effective outcomes that protect government interests while maintaining positive working relationships. Their expertise in dispute resolution helps minimise the need for lengthy and costly litigation, promoting efficient and amicable solutions.

Representation on Government Steering Committees and Subcommittees

The Commercial section often represents the State on steering committees and subcommittees established for the delivery of large-scale projects. In these roles, the team provides legal guidance on project governance, risk management and compliance. A steering committee oversees and guides the strategic vision of a project from its inception to the delivery stage. As the members of a steering committee are high-level advisers with a significant stake in the project's success, the SSO representative on a steering committee is usually a deputy state solicitor or an adviser. Senior solicitors from the Commercial team often provide representation in working groups, which work towards achieving specific outcomes as part of the overarching project.

Administration and negotiation of State Agreements

Our Commercial section's State Agreements team provides legal advice on the administration of State Agreements, ensuring compliance with such agreements. The team also supports the Government in negotiating and drafting new State Agreements, variations to existing agreements, and agreements to terminate or amend existing contracts. Their work ensures that State Agreements are aligned with the Government's evolving priorities and objectives, and that any changes to agreements are legally sound and strategically beneficial.

Native Title and State Lands

The Native Title and State Lands (NTSL) section provides legal and strategic advice to the Western Australian Government and its agencies on navigating the complexities of the *Commonwealth Native Title Act 1993* (NTA) and its impact on WA's Crown land estate.

NTSL collaborates with the Department of the Premier and Cabinet (DPC) and other government agencies to develop effective strategies for managing NTA procedures and supporting broader Aboriginal affairs and policies. Additionally, NTSL offers legal advice, represents the State in property and land use litigation, and supports the negotiation of agreements related to Crown land matters.

Key functions

Litigation representation in native title proceedings

NTSL acts for the State in NTA matters before the Federal Court, the Full Court of the Federal Court, and the High Court of Australia. This includes native title claims, native title compensation claims, and related litigation. For example, solicitors in NTSL collaborate with DPC officers to brief Cabinet and ministers' offices on the pipeline of native title compensation claims against the State.

Native Title and Indigenous Land Use Agreements

One of NTSL's significant roles is to facilitate the negotiation, drafting and implementation of Indigenous Land Use Agreements. These agreements are crucial for balancing the needs of native title holders with the Government's land use objectives, ensuring that both parties reach agreements that are legally binding and mutually beneficial.

Advice on Crown land use and tenure

A central responsibility of NTSL is providing legal advice and guidance on native title and land tenure issues associated with Crown land. This encompasses matters involving the assembly of public lands for infrastructure works and projects of economic significance to the State.

Public Lands

In particular, the section advises on how native title interests can be accommodated when Crown land is involved in infrastructure projects or other public works, ensuring that native title rights are properly recognised and managed. Further, where it is asserted that recognised native title has been impaired or extinguished by government action, NTSL represents the State in litigation when a compensation remedy is sought.

Future act matters before the National Native Title Tribunal

The section represents the Government in matters before the National Native Title Tribunal concerning future acts, including approvals for projects that may affect native title rights. The section primarily provides legal advice and representation for the Department of Mines, Petroleum and Exploration (formerly the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety) on issues related to mining and exploration tenure and resource projects, ensuring compliance with Native Title law and facilitating the timely resolution of disputes or negotiations.

Private Lands, including land assembly for infrastructure and other public works

Private Lands, including land assembly for infrastructure and other public works, involves the section focusing on various aspects related to freehold land, primarily in an urban context. Town planning laws and other regulatory frameworks provide mechanisms where State oversight supports development in a way that addresses community needs and safety. These frameworks also ensure consistent application of rules among private owners

and developers. Their purpose is to promote efficient land use, facilitate public works with minimal social disruption, and protect the State's conservation estate.

Advice on reforms to Aboriginal heritage, planning and land laws

The section plays an essential role in advising the Government on legislative reforms and delegated legislation with respect to Aboriginal heritage, land use planning, mining tenure, public works and statutory frameworks related to land administration more broadly, including the provision of guidance for drafting instructions. NTSL works closely with the advising team in a variety of subject matters involving regulatory change, including carbon credits, water and other environmental laws, which have significant overlap in areas of NTSL subject matter expertise.

Whole-of-Government approach

A distinguishing feature of the NTSL section is its commitment to a whole-of-government approach. This means the section works collaboratively with other State departments and agencies, ensuring that all aspects of land management are coordinated and effectively integrated into the broader government policy and legal framework. This approach fosters

consistency in dealing with native title issues and other property related policy priorities across various government sectors, ensuring that Indigenous rights are respected and upheld while facilitating development and public works in Western Australia.

Corporate Services

The Corporate Services section plays a vital role in enabling the State Solicitor's Office to deliver high-quality legal services efficiently and effectively. Operating as a compliance steward, service enabler, and strategic partner, the section provides the foundation for both the operational integrity and strategic direction.

In its compliance role, Corporate Services ensures that the SSO meets its legal, regulatory, and policy obligations. The section manages risk, oversees governance and internal controls, coordinates audit processes, and fulfils reporting requirements. These responsibilities support transparency, accountability, and sound management practices across the SSO.

As a service enabler, the section delivers essential back-office systems and functions that underpin smooth and compliant internal operations. Through responsive and reliable support, Corporate Services empowers front-line legal teams to focus on their core client and legal work. This behind-the-scenes capability strengthens organisational efficiency and resilience, while contributing to risk mitigation, value generation and sustainable performance.

The section also contributes significantly as a strategic partner. It supports organisational planning and transformation through leadership in data analytics, digital capability, and continuous improvement. The team promotes data-driven evidence-based decision making and leads initiatives to enhance performance and foster innovation. Corporate Services also develops robust business cases and supporting submissions to ensure the SSO is adequately resourced to meet future operational requirements.

During the year, Corporate Services led the development of the SSO Corporate Plan 2024-27. This process involved close collaboration across the organisation to ensure the Plan reflected both current and emerging priorities. The Plan outlines a clear path focused on service quality, client satisfaction, organisational sustainability, and workforce capability.

In the year ahead, Corporate Services will continue to align its activities with the broader goals of the SSO and focus on creating value across the organisation. There will be an increased emphasis on using data to guide decision-making, along with a continued commitment to adopting digital solutions that improve efficiency and service delivery. The section will also prioritise better integration of services across teams to support a more connected and coordinated approach to support whole-of-office goals.

Corporate Services is made up of five key teams: Finance, Human Resources, Information Management and Technology, Governance & Strategy, and Legal Practice Support. Together, these teams deliver vital organisational services that enable legal staff to focus on their core responsibilities.

Key functions

Legal Practice Support

This team provides high level paralegal and administrative support to the legal sections at the SSO. They assist with legal tasks, legal files and related project management, as well as system and database management to ensure the timely completion of legal matters, including major litigation, class actions and Royal Commissions.

Finance

This team ensures compliance with the *Financial Management Act 2006* (WA), providing strategic and operational support through budgeting, forecasting, financial reporting, and the business intelligence services. It also manages office facilities, fleet and cost recovery for non-core legal services, contributing to the overall financial stability of the SSO.

The team is also responsible for recovering costs for non-core legal services that are not funded by service appropriations, administering the financial transactions for conveyancing of land transactions on behalf of the State, administering the financial transactions for the Suitor's fund, which could be drawn upon to assist in payment of costs incurred by eligible litigants under the *Suitors' Fund Act 1964* (WA).

Information Management and Technology

Comprising the Information Management and IT Helpdesk teams, this unit ensures efficient data handling, system functionality, and support. It maintains secure data management systems, manages records, and offers technical support, creating an environment where staff can work efficiently.

Human Resources

Human Resources provides strategic and operational support for the workforce. The HR Operations team handles recruitment, onboarding and employee benefits, while the Learning and Development team organises professional growth opportunities for SSO staff. HR is also responsible for strategic leadership in areas such as integrity, work health and safety, and diversity and inclusion.

Governance & Strategy

The Governance & Strategy team ensures the SSO meets all legislative, regulatory, and reporting requirements. They manage risk, procurement, communications, compliance, and internal audits, helping to mitigate risks and align the SSO's operations with public sector standards.

In 2024-25, the team made significant progress in establishing an Audit and Risk Committee (ARC). The team plays a pivotal role in driving the strategic direction of the SSO by formulating and implementing effective strategies. They actively support the 75 initiatives in the Corporate Plan through planning, resource allocation, and continuous monitoring to ensure alignment with organisational goals.

Audit and Risk Committee

In the 2024–25 financial year, the SSO formally established its Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) as an advisory body reporting directly to the State Solicitor.

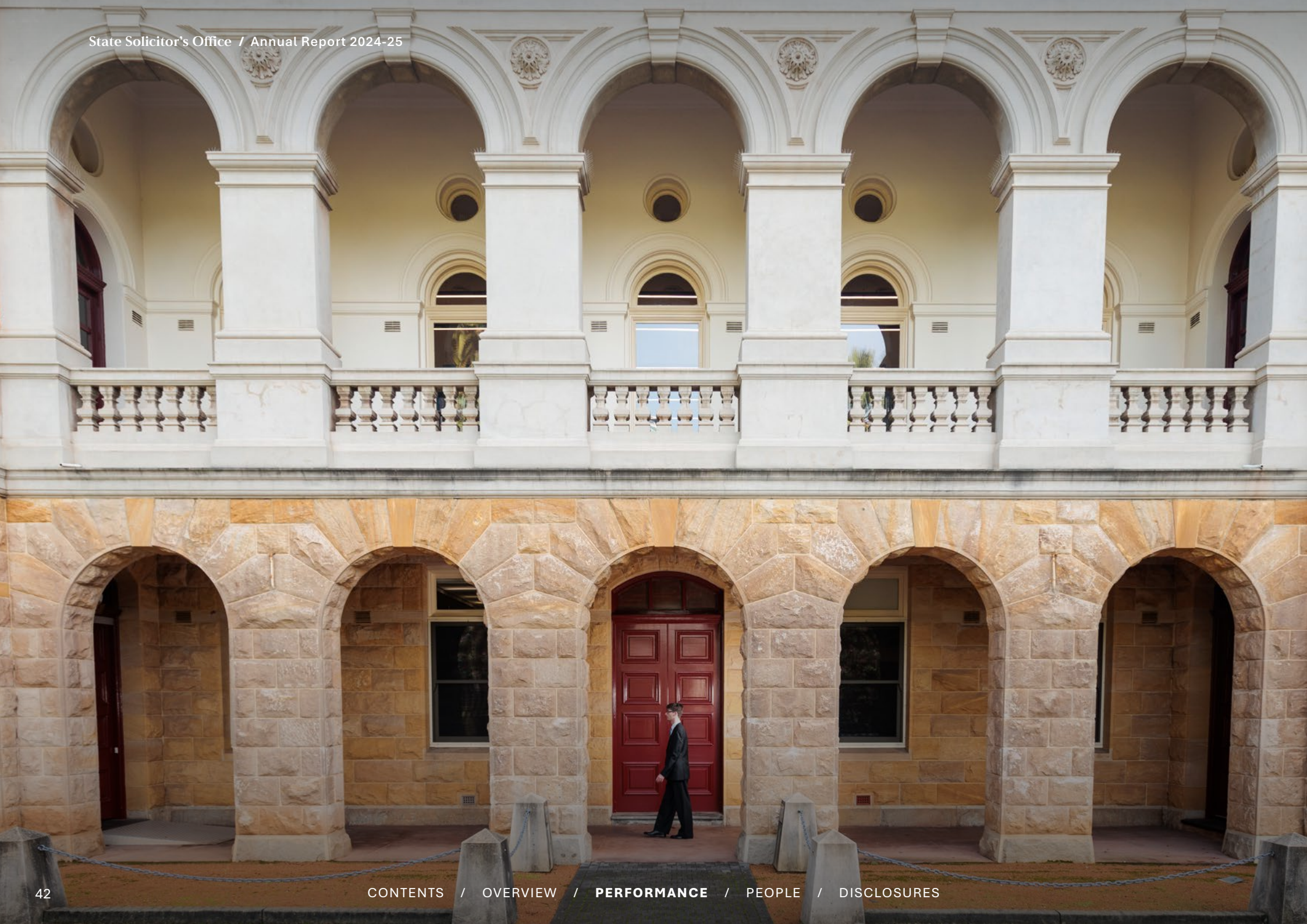
The ARC plays a critical role in supporting the State Solicitor and Corporate Executive in fulfilling their oversight responsibilities across financial reporting, risk management, internal and external audit, and compliance with key legislative frameworks including the *Public Sector Management Act 1994 (WA)*, *Financial Management Act 2006 (WA)* and *Procurement Act 2020 (WA)*.

The ARC is comprised of four external members, including independent Chair Geoff Lotter, and two internal representatives from the SSO's Corporate Executive.

The ARC provides independent, expert advice to the State Solicitor, ensuring that the SSO maintains high standards of governance and transparency. Through its structured oversight and collaborative engagement with internal and external stakeholders, the ARC has laid a strong foundation for ongoing risk management and continuous improvement across the organisation.







Performance

“The level of assurance provided through quality advice and the timeliness of the advice, as well as the willingness to take an unplanned call or meet at short notice is outstanding, commendable and cannot be understated. At times we deal with complex matters and the SSO team are able to (seemingly) effortlessly unpack and explain options, risk and potential impacts.”

Department of Education

Performance Management Framework

Outcome-Based Management Framework

Outcome Based Management is the Western Australian public sector’s framework for the management of the performance of agencies. Broad government goals are supported at agency level by specific outcomes. Agencies deliver services to achieve these outcomes. The following table illustrates the relationship between SSO’s services, the desired outcomes and the Government goal.

GOVERNMENT GOAL	DESIRED OUTCOME	SERVICE
Safe, Strong and Fair Communities: Supporting our local and regional communities to thrive.	Government receives quality and timely legal services.	Legal Services to government.

Changes to Outcome-Based Management Framework

The SSO’s outcome-based management framework did not change during 2024-25.

Shared responsibilities with other agencies

The SSO works closely across the sector to facilitate the efficient operation of government, informed decision-making, and value for money outcomes for Western Australians. This is achieved through providing leadership and strategic advice to government on initiatives to improve the operations and management of services across the public sector.



Report on the Operations

Actual Results versus budget targets

FINANCIAL TARGETS			
	2024-25 Target ⁽¹⁾ (\$000)	2024-25 Actual (\$000)	Variation ⁽²⁾ (\$000)
Total cost of services (sourced from Statement of comprehensive income)	64,441	71,315	6,874 ^(a)
Net cost of services (sourced from Statement of comprehensive income)	63,526	70,683	7,157 ^(a)
Total equity (sourced from Statement of financial position)	4,068	4,237	169
Agreed salary expense level	44,584	45,581	997 ^(b)
Agreed Executive Salary Expense limit	195	198	3

(1) As specified in the Budget Statement for 2024-25.

(2) Further explanations are contained in Note 9.1 to the Financial Statements.

(a) Actuals are higher than the original target primarily due to supplementary funding received to cover legal costs incurred on behalf of the State, additional funding approved for public sector wages increases, and the increase in legal and non-legal resources to meet growing service demand approved by the Department of Treasury, which were funded through cash reserve accumulated in 2023-24 from salary underspending.

(b) Actuals are higher than the original target due to the increase in legal and non-legal resources approved by the Department of Treasury to meet growing service demand. This increase was funded through cash reserve accumulated in 2023-24 salary underspending.

WORKING CASH TARGETS			
	2024-25 Agreed Limit (\$000)	2024-25 Target/ Actual ⁽³⁾ (\$000)	Variation ⁽⁴⁾
Agreed working cash limit (at Budget)	3,062	3,062	N/A
Agreed working cash limit (at Actuals)	3,354	5,456	2,102

(3) The actual working cash balance held at the close of 2024-25 is \$5.456 million. This amount consists of the cash and cash equivalents of \$6.410 million as reported in the Statement of Financial position as at 30 June 2025 less \$0.954 million for the replacement of SSO's legal practice management system.

(4) The variation is largely due to cash committed for the replacement of the SSO's legal practice management system, which was initially expected to be expenses in 2024-25 but has been approved for carry-over to 2025-26 following protracted contract negotiations. It also reflects commitments for several strategic initiatives originally scheduled for completion in 2024-25, now anticipated to be finalised in early 2025-26.

SUMMARY OF KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

	2024-25 Target ⁽¹⁾	2024-25 Actual	Variation	Result ⁽²⁾
Outcome 1: Government receives quality and timely legal services				
Extent to which government agencies are satisfied with legal services	95%	95%	0	✓
Service 1: Legal Services to Government				
Average cost per legal matter	\$6,757	\$8,347	\$1,590	x (a)(b)

(1) Targets for each respective key performance indicator are reported in the State Budget Paper 2024-25.

(2) The following symbols indicate the outcome of the key performance indicators:

- ✓ Performance target achieved or exceeded
- x Performance target not achieved

Explanations for the variations between target and actual results:

- (a) The 2024-25 Actual is higher than the 2024-25 Budget primarily due to legal costs incurred on behalf of the State. These costs were funded through supplementary funding and were not included in the target setting, as the timing and amount of these payments are beyond the SSO’s control.
- (b) The 2024-25 Actual is higher than the 2023-24 Actual due to 2024-25 reflects a higher average cost, driven by increases in public sector wages, greater complexity, and a rise in resource-intensive class actions.

Additional information is provided within the Disclosures section of this report.

Client Survey

Every year the SSO seeks feedback from its clients on their experience when engaging with the SSO. The survey results are used to determine the extent to which government agencies are satisfied with the legal services provided by the SSO during the preceding financial year. The percentage of client satisfaction is reported as a Key Performance Indicator (KPI) (see page 47).

In 2024-25, the SSO reported strong levels of client satisfaction with 95% of clients anonymously surveyed confirming their satisfaction with the legal services provided by the SSO. Comments were largely positive and commonly referred to the quality of the legal advice provided, the experience and subject-matter expertise of SSO lawyers, and the ease of obtaining trusted advice. Highlighted below is a sample of the positive feedback received.

"We had the pleasure of working with the commercial advisory team to assist with the management of complex operational contracts and disputes that proceeded to mediation. The lawyers are all technically accomplished, able to explain the law to non-lawyers, friendly, approachable, genuinely engaged in their work, and were prepared to make time at short notice when critical issues arose. The SSO team is an invaluable asset to government departments who are managing complex contracts, particularly when external pressures and interference is experienced at Department level from other levels of government."

"The quality of the representation at SAT and Court, the quality of the advice given and the professionalism, respect and support given on every occasion that SSO's advice or representation is requested."

"Timely response to requests. Staff always willing to engage, even at short notice. The advice provided by the SSO contributes to continuous improvement of our investigation processes and procedures."

"Always available for urgent advice. Advice is understandable and practical. Representation in Tribunals hearing is exceptional."

"Clear concise practical advice which also extends beyond legal implications to cover corporate and reputational risks."

"The services provided are tailored to the agency's requirements and we have a long-standing relationship with relevant staff at SSO who understand our needs."

"Professional, pragmatic, clear, willing to work with us to understand our needs at all times."

In the client survey, the SSO also asked each government agency to name the worst aspects of the services provided by the SSO. The most commonly cited issues were timeliness of advice, with many identifying this was related to heavy workloads, and not being updated on the progress of matters. A summary of the responses is listed below.

“Recognising SSO is under resourcing constraints like the public sector generally, sometimes advice which is admittedly non-urgent can take months to receive.”

“It takes a long time to receive a response but [when] it's received [it's] high quality.”

“They are spread too thin - there is not enough senior advisors to assist the level of work - their quality is not in question, they do an outstanding job but it is just too much.”

“The advice isn't always as timely as we would like, purely because of the volume of work being managed by our representative from SSO.”

“There is no confirmation that your request for legal services has been received. There is some time before the request is allocated, or before the allocation is communicated. There are often significant delays in receiving legal services. This is understandable; we appreciate how busy the SSO is. However, some communication or updates would be of great value.”

Following an analysis of the client feedback received in the 2023-24 survey, 35 initiatives to improve the client experience were incorporated into the Corporate Plan 2024-27. We have commenced implementing these initiatives to enhance the client experience and improve the efficiency of our services. This includes designing a new digital case management system that will streamline our processes, reduce reliance on paper, and support integration with emerging technologies like generative AI. We have also begun developing a stakeholder engagement and communications strategy, exploring ways to keep clients informed about the progress of their matters, while also providing easier access to helpful information and resources. These efforts reflect our commitment to delivering a more responsive, accessible, and client-focused service.



People

“Expertise and technical quality – legal advice is thorough and practical in my experience. The ability for SSO to help the Department work through significant legal issues with solutions as the focus. SSO solicitors are highly skilled at removing emotion from the situation and working through the legal issues. I have had many time-critical litigation matters, and the guidance that the solicitors have provided to the Department on these matters was brilliant. For the litigation matters in particular, the matters felt collegiate.”

Department of Health

Workforce Profile

As of 30 June 2025, the SSO employed 289.13 FTE.

FUNCTION	FTE	HEADCOUNT
Legal	180.27	200
Paralegal	60.40	68
Corporate	48.47	53

As an accountable authority, the SSO operates as a law firm to the Government and the broader public sector with staff employed across three key functions of legal, Legal Practice Support and Corporate Services. The SSO employs some of the best graduating law students each year as part of our law graduate program and brings in experienced mid entry lawyers to ensure the continuity of public sector legal services.

A focus on our Legal Practice Support over the past 12 months and into the year ahead will ensure skilled and experienced legal support is available to lawyers in the context of an ever-changing environment. A small but multi-skilled Corporate Services section has continued to develop over the past financial year to ensure Human Resources and safety, governance, Finance and Information Technology operations are in place to enable the SSO to stay resolutely focused on public sector legal services.

Approximately 73% of the SSO’s 2024-25 budget went towards employment costs, with 91% of those costs directly providing legal (78%) and paralegal services (13%) to the Government and public sector. Our Corporate Services section accounts for 9% of the overall budget.



Workforce Attraction and Development

Learning and Development Framework

The SSO is developing a comprehensive Learning and Development Framework with the work towards this commencing during 2024-25 for finalisation in 2025-26. This framework will be designed to build capability within the SSO and foster a culture of continuous learning to support legal and non-legal staff through a balanced model of experiential, social and formal learning. Embedded within this framework will be the Leadership Development Plan, which will provide a structured, tiered approach to cultivating leadership across all levels of the Office. Aligned with the Public Sector Commission's Leadership Expectations, this plan will ensure leadership development is integrated into daily practice and supported through mentoring, targeted programs, and strategic development pathways. Together, these initiatives will strengthen the SSO's ability to grow a skilled and future-ready workforce, reinforcing its commitment to excellence in public sector legal service.

Focus on legal training

The SSO has an ongoing focus on training for solicitors to support their continuing professional development (CPD) and maintain their legal practice certificates. In addition to providing membership to the Law Society of Western Australia for the delivery of CPD from across a broad section of law, the SSO runs an in-house CPD program tailored to specialised areas of public sector law. Over 2024-25 the SSO ran 41 in-house CPD sessions. The in-house CPD program is developed and delivered through a combination of in-house expertise shared by SSO's solicitors and covers a range of topics including Mediation in Practice, Duty of Care and Public Authorities, Maritime Security, Managing Vicarious Trauma, and Plain English in Legal Writing.

To support the provision of high-quality legal services across the public sector, the SSO provides opportunities for public sector lawyers to obtain CPD points through the annual SSO Public Sector Lawyers Legal CPD Conference. 214 lawyers attended the event in February of 2025, with sessions delivered on Cross Examination Fundamentals, Drafting Considerations for Government Contracts, Current Issues in AI for Government Lawyers and a panel discussion on ethics.

The annual conference is an opportunity for the SSO leaders to meet with public sector lawyers they work alongside throughout the year.

Junior Lawyer Program refresh

During the financial year the Junior Lawyer Program underwent a comprehensive review. The SSO recognises our junior lawyers are the future of the Office and is committed to ensuring they receive the training, support and experience necessary to thrive in their early years. Following extensive consultation and feedback, a refreshed program was launched in early 2025. Full implementation is expected over the next 12 to 24 months. The overarching goal of the refreshed Junior Lawyer Program is to develop well-rounded government lawyers by adopting a skills-based approach to professional growth. The program introduces enhanced governance and supervision structures, including the appointment of a senior lawyer to oversee its delivery and represent the program at the Corporate Executive level. It also supports the tailored progression of junior lawyers based on their individual interests, suitability, and the evolving business needs of the SSO.

Focus on Legal Practice Support

Aligned to the continued focus of learning and development at the SSO, over the past year, Legal Practice Support teams and Corporate Services participated in targeted training programs designed to enhance technical capability and workplace effectiveness. Key areas included advanced word processing, time management, and prioritisation, supporting improved productivity and service delivery.

Over the coming financial year there will be a significant focus on delivering structured training to this critical function within the SSO to enhance skills in document management and e-discovery databases.

All of SSO training

Over the 2024-25 financial year, whole-of-office training focused on implementing and reinforcing the SSO integrity framework by shining a light on the new SSO Workplace Behaviours Guideline and Complaints Resolution Procedure, with dedicated training for our Corporate Executive and half day workshops for all staff. Staff were also invited to attend workshops on neurodivergence, promoting respectful communication, and inclusive practices. These initiatives have contributed to ensuring a safe and supportive organisational culture.

Legal recruitment strategies

The SSO's Law Graduate Program is the primary avenue for employment of junior solicitors. In 2024-25, the SSO employed seven Law Graduates, with a further seven expected to be engaged in 2025-26.

The SSO provides opportunities for law students to participate in a selection of the SSO programs

during their studies. The SSO participated in the legal vacation clerkship program, employing 24 final year law students drawn from the various tertiary law schools in 2024-25. Each student had the opportunity to work across one legal section for a two-week period to gain a deeper insight into an area of law important to the WA Government.

Streamlining recruitment

In 2024-25, the SSO continued to advance digital transformation of its recruitment and onboarding processes. The Recruitment and Advertising Management System (RAMS), launched in 2024, is now central to recruitment operations, supporting 27 external campaigns and 15 internal expressions of interest, resulting in 46 appointments.

A major milestone in 2024-25 was the launch of the e-onboarding system in March 2025. Since its launch, 28 new employees have been successfully onboarded through the system, receiving tailored welcome packages, automated compliance documentation, and access to essential resources prior to their start date, improving engagement from day one.

Ongoing improvements such as digital selection reports and integrated recruitment data are set to further enhance decision-making and candidate experience in the coming year, reinforcing the SSO's commitment to modern and efficient workforce management.





Disclosures

“Agile advice, technical accuracy, explanations are clear to understand which are relevant to the stage of a case. Prompt responses whether by phone, telephone or personally, highly practical advice, absolutely approachable each and every time, easy to engage with.”

Department of Transport

Certificate

Land Settlement Trust

STATE SOLICITOR'S OFFICE

SPECIAL PURPOSE STATEMENT (ADMINISTERED)

LAND SETTLEMENTS TRUST ACCOUNT

NAME	An account titled the Land Settlements Trust Account (the Account) shall be established and maintained as a special purpose account pursuant to section 16(1)(d) of the <i>Financial Management Act 2006</i> by the State Solicitor's Office (the SSO).
PURPOSE	To hold and disburse moneys for and on behalf of State Government departments and authorities pending finalisation of property acquisitions (including compulsory acquisitions) and disposals.
RECEIPTS	There shall be credited to the Account such moneys as received by the SSO for the purposes of property acquisitions and disposals by State Government departments and authorities.
PAYMENTS	<div>Moneys standing to the credit of the Account may be used to:</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ meet all expenditures associated with property acquisitions and disposals by State Government departments and authorities;▪ pay to the State Government department or authority any funds received in respect of a property disposal; and▪ refund to the State Government department or authority any funds remaining upon settlement of the property acquisition and disposal.
ACCOUNTABILITY AND GOVERNANCE	The Account shall be administered, accounted for and reported on by the State Solicitor as the accountable authority of the SSO in accordance with the <i>Financial Management Act 2006</i> , <i>Financial Management Regulations 2024</i> and Treasurer's instructions.
REVIEW	A detailed review of the Account is to be undertaken on an annual basis. This is to include an assessment of the payments and receipts to ensure compliance with the purpose outlined above.

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DISPOSAL OF FUNDS ON CESSATION

Upon closure of the Account, any balance standing to the credit of the Account shall be returned to the relevant State Government department or authority.

I have examined and agree to the provisions of this special purpose statement

Approved (under delegated authority)


Dr Graham Hill
State Solicitor
State Solicitor's Office


Pauline Burton
Director Financial Policy and Operations
Department of Treasury

Date: 25 Feb 2025

Date: 4 March 2025


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Independent Auditor's Opinion



Auditor General

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT
2025
State Solicitor's Office

To the Parliament of Western Australia

Report on the audit of the financial statements

Opinion

I have audited the financial statements of the State Solicitor's Office (the Office) which comprise:

- the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2025, the statement of comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows for the year then ended
- administered schedules comprising the administered assets and liabilities as at 30 June 2025 and administered income and expenses by service for the year then ended
- notes comprising a summary of material accounting policies and other explanatory information.

In my opinion, the financial statements are:

- based on proper accounts and present fairly, in all material respects, the operating results and cash flows of the State Solicitor's Office for the year ended 30 June 2025 and the financial position as at the end of that period
- in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards (applicable to Tier 2 Entities), the *Financial Management Act 2006* and the Treasurer's Instructions.

Basis for opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of my report.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

Responsibilities of the State Solicitor for the financial statements

The State Solicitor is responsible for:

- keeping proper accounts
- preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards (applicable to Tier 2 Entities), the *Financial Management Act 2006* and the Treasurer's Instructions
- such internal control as it determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

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7th Floor Albert Facey House 469 Wellington Street Perth MAIL TO: Perth BC PO Box 8489 Perth WA 6849 TEL: 08 6557 7500

Independent Auditor's Opinion

In preparing the financial statements, the State Solicitor is responsible for:

- assessing the entity's ability to continue as a going concern
- disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern
- using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Western Australian Government has made policy or funding decisions affecting the continued existence of the Office.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

As required by the *Auditor General Act 2006*, my responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial statements. The objectives of my audit are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists.

Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the financial statements. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations or the override of internal control.

A further description of my responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Auditing and Assurance Standards Board website. This description forms part of my auditor's report and can be found at https://www.aasb.gov.au/auditors_responsibilities/ar4.pdf

Report on the audit of controls

Opinion

I have undertaken a reasonable assurance engagement on the design and implementation of controls exercised by the State Solicitor's Office. The controls exercised by the State Solicitor's Office are those policies and procedures established to ensure that the receipt, expenditure and investment of money, the acquisition and disposal of property, and the incurring of liabilities have been in accordance with the State's financial reporting framework (the overall control objectives).

In my opinion, in all material respects, the controls exercised by the State Solicitor's Office are sufficiently adequate to provide reasonable assurance that the controls within the system were suitably designed to achieve the overall control objectives identified as at 30 June 2025, and the controls were implemented as designed as at 30 June 2025.

The State Solicitors' responsibilities

The State Solicitor is responsible for designing, implementing and maintaining controls to ensure that the receipt, expenditure and investment of money, the acquisition and disposal of property and the incurring of liabilities are in accordance with the *Financial Management Act 2006*, the Treasurer's Instructions and other relevant written law.

Auditor General's responsibilities

As required by the *Auditor General Act 2006*, my responsibility as an assurance practitioner is to express an opinion on the suitability of the design of the controls to achieve the overall control objectives and the implementation of the controls as designed. I conducted my engagement in accordance with Standard on Assurance Engagements ASAE 3150 *Assurance Engagements on Controls* issued by the Australian Auditing and Assurance Standards Board. That standard requires that I comply with relevant ethical requirements and plan and perform my procedures to obtain reasonable assurance about whether, in all material respects, the controls are suitably designed to achieve the overall control objectives and were implemented as designed.

An assurance engagement involves performing procedures to obtain evidence about the suitability of the controls design to achieve the overall control objectives and the implementation of those controls. The procedures selected depend on my judgement, including an assessment of the risks that controls are not suitably designed or implemented as designed. My procedures included testing the implementation of those controls that I consider necessary to achieve the overall control objectives.

I believe that the evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

Limitations of controls

Because of the inherent limitations of any internal control structure, it is possible that, even if the controls are suitably designed and implemented as designed, once in operation, the overall control objectives may not be achieved so that fraud, error or non-compliance with laws and regulations may occur and not be detected. Any projection of the outcome of the evaluation of the suitability of the design of controls to future periods is subject to the risk that the controls may become unsuitable because of changes in conditions.

Report on the audit of the key performance indicators

Opinion

I have undertaken a reasonable assurance engagement on the key performance indicators of the State Solicitor's Office for the year ended 30 June 2025 reported in accordance with the *Financial Management Act 2006* and the Treasurer's Instructions (legislative requirements). The key performance indicators are the Under Treasurer-approved key effectiveness indicators and key efficiency indicators that provide performance information about achieving outcomes and delivering services.

In my opinion, in all material respects, the key performance indicators report of the State Solicitor's Office for the year ended 30 June 2025 are in accordance with the legislative requirements, and the key performance indicators are relevant and appropriate to assist users to assess the State Solicitor's Office's performance and fairly represent indicated performance for the year ended 30 June 2025.

The State Solicitors' responsibilities for the key performance indicators

The State Solicitor is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the key performance indicators in accordance with the *Financial Management Act 2006* and the Treasurer's Instructions and for such internal controls as the State Solicitor determines necessary to enable the preparation of key performance indicators that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Independent Auditor's Opinion

In preparing the key performance indicators, the State Solicitor is responsible for identifying key performance indicators that are relevant and appropriate, having regard to their purpose in accordance with Treasurer's Instruction 3 Financial Sustainability – Requirement 5: Key Performance Indicators.

Auditor General's responsibilities

As required by the *Auditor General Act 2006*, my responsibility as an assurance practitioner is to express an opinion on the key performance indicators. The objectives of my engagement are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the key performance indicators are relevant and appropriate to assist users to assess the entity's performance and whether the key performance indicators are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. I conducted my engagement in accordance with Standard on Assurance Engagements ASAE 3000 *Assurance Engagements Other than Audits or Reviews of Historical Financial Information* issued by the Australian Auditing and Assurance Standards Board. That standard requires that I comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to assurance engagements.

An assurance engagement involves performing procedures to obtain evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the key performance indicators. It also involves evaluating the relevance and appropriateness of the key performance indicators against the criteria and guidance in Treasurer's Instruction 3 - Requirement 5 for measuring the extent of outcome achievement and the efficiency of service delivery. The procedures selected depend on my judgement, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the key performance indicators. In making these risk assessments, I obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the engagement in order to design procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances.

I believe that the evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

My independence and quality management relating to the report on financial statements, controls and key performance indicators

I have complied with the independence requirements of the *Auditor General Act 2006* and the relevant ethical requirements relating to assurance engagements. In accordance with ASQM 1 *Quality Management for Firms that Perform Audits or Reviews of Financial Reports and Other Financial Information, or Other Assurance or Related Services Engagements*, the Office of the Auditor General maintains a comprehensive system of quality management including documented policies and procedures regarding compliance with ethical requirements, professional standards and applicable legal and regulatory requirements.

Other information

The State Solicitor is responsible for the other information. The other information is the information in the entity's annual report for the year ended 30 June 2025, but not the financial statements, key performance indicators and my auditor's report.

My opinions on the financial statements, controls and key performance indicators does not cover the other information and accordingly I do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with my audit of the financial statements, controls and key performance indicators my responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements and key performance indicators or my knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

If, based on the work I have performed, I conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, I am required to report that fact. I did not receive the other information prior to the date of this auditor's report. When I do receive it, I will read it and if I conclude that there is a material misstatement in this information, I am required to communicate the matter to those charged with governance and request them to correct the misstated information. If the misstated information is not corrected, I may need to retract this auditor's report and re-issue an amended report.

Matters relating to the electronic publication of the audited financial statements and key performance indicators

This auditor's report relates to the financial statements and key performance indicators of the State Solicitors' Office for the year ended 30 June 2025 included in the annual report on the Office's website. The Office's management is responsible for the integrity of the Office's website. This audit does not provide assurance on the integrity of the Office's website. The auditor's report refers only to the financial statements, controls and key performance indicators described above. It does not provide an opinion on any other information which may have been hyperlinked to/from the annual report. If users of the financial statements and key performance indicators are concerned with the inherent risks arising from publication on a website, they are advised to contact the entity to confirm the information contained in the website version.



Grant Robinson
Assistant Auditor General Financial Audit
Delegate of the Auditor General for Western Australia
Perth, Western Australia
27 August 2025

Certification of financial statements

For the financial year ended 30 June 2025

The accompanying financial statements of the State Solicitor's Office have been prepared in compliance with the provisions of the *Financial Management Act 2006* (WA) from proper accounts and records to present fairly the financial transactions for the financial year ended 30 June 2025, and the financial position as at 30 June 2025.

At the date of signing, we are not aware of any circumstances which would render the particulars included within the financial statements misleading or inaccurate.



Yu Zhi Zhou
Chief Finance Officer
26 August 2025



Dr Graham Hill
State Solicitor
26 August 2025

Financial Statements

Statement of comprehensive income

For the year ended 30 June 2025

	Notes	2025 (\$000)	2024 (\$000)
COST OF SERVICES			
Expenses			
Employee benefits expenses	2.1(a)	51,163	41,957
Supplies and services	2.3	6,052	5,041
Depreciation and amortisation expenses	4.1 and 4.2	224	271
Finance costs	6.2	20	10
Accommodation expenses	2.3	7,819	7,259
Grants and subsidies	2.2	4,892	4,152
Other expenses	2.3	1,145	981
Total cost of services		71,315	59,671
Income			
Other income	3.2	632	897
Total income		632	897
Net cost of services		70,683	58,774

	Notes	2025 (\$000)	2024 (\$000)
Income from State Government			
Service appropriation	3.1	52,955	49,158
Income from other public sector entities	3.1	5,696	9,246
Resources received	3.1	2,366	2,335
Total income from State Government		61,017	60,739
Surplus/(deficit) for the period		(9,666)	1,965
Other comprehensive income			
Other comprehensive income		-	-
Total other comprehensive income		-	-
Total comprehensive income for the period		(9,666)	1,965

The Statement of comprehensive income should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Statement of financial position

As at 30 June 2025

	Notes	2025 (\$000)	2024 (\$000)
ASSETS			
Current Assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	6.3	6,410	13,533
Receivables	5.1	2,011	1,548
Other current assets	5.3	1,710	1,697
Total Current Assets		10,131	16,778
Non-Current Assets			
Receivables	5.1	1,368	1,120
Amounts receivable for services	5.2	10,126	9,806
Property, plant and equipment	4.1	307	407
Right-of-use assets	4.2	302	246
Total Non-Current Assets		12,103	11,579
Total assets		22,234	28,357
LIABILITIES			
Current Liabilities			
Payables	5.4	2,491	2,035
Lease liabilities	6.1	102	93
Employee related provisions	2.1(b)	13,225	9,949
Other current liabilities	5.5	191	282
Total Current Liabilities		16,009	12,359

	Notes	2025 (\$000)	2024 (\$000)
Non-Current Liabilities			
Lease liabilities	6.1	210	160
Employee related provisions	2.1(b)	1,778	2,051
Total Non-Current Liabilities		1,988	2,211
Total liabilities		17,997	14,570
Net assets		4,237	13,787
Equity			
Contributed equity		3,552	3,436
Accumulated surplus		685	10,351
Total equity		4,237	13,787

The Statement of financial position should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Statement of changes in equity

For the year ended 30 June 2025

	Notes	Contributed equity (\$000)	Accumulated surplus (\$000)	Total equity (\$000)
Balance at 1 July 2023		3,305	8,386	11,691
Surplus		-	1,965	1,965
Other comprehensive income		-	-	-
Total comprehensive income for the period		-	1,965	1,965
<i>Transactions with owners in their capacity as owners:</i>				
Capital appropriation		131	-	131
Total		131	-	131
Balance at 30 June 2024		3,436	10,351	13,787
Balance at 1 July 2024		3,436	10,351	13,787
Surplus / (deficit)		-	(9,666)	(9,666)
Other comprehensive income		-	-	-
Total comprehensive income for the period		-	(9,666)	(9,666)
<i>Transactions with owners in their capacity as owners:</i>				
Capital appropriation		116	-	116
Total		116	-	116
Balance at 30 June 2025		3,552	685	4,237

The Statement of changes in equity should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Statement of cash flows

For the year ended 30 June 2025

	Notes	2025 (\$000)	2024 (\$000)
Cash flows from the State Government			
Service appropriation		52,635	48,880
Capital appropriation		116	131
Funds from other public sector entities		5,173	9,442
Net cash provided by the State Government		57,924	58,453
Utilised as follows:			
Cash flows from operating activities			
Payments			
Employee benefits		(47,672)	(40,918)
Supplies and services		(3,532)	(3,140)
Finance costs		(20)	(10)
Accommodation		(7,907)	(7,295)
Grants and subsidies		(4,867)	(4,065)
GST payments on purchases		(1,432)	(1,291)
GST payments to taxation authority		(17)	(3)
Other payments		(1,266)	(1,073)
Receipts			
GST receipts on sales		628	757
GST receipts from taxation authority		704	504
Other receipts		703	842
Net cash provided by / (used in) operating activities		(64,678)	(55,692)

	Notes	2025 (\$000)	2024 (\$000)
Cash flows from investing activities			
Payments			
Purchase of non-current assets		-	(45)
Net cash provided by / (used in) investing activities		-	(45)
Cash flows from financing activities			
Payments			
Principal elements of lease payments		(121)	(129)
Payment to accrued salaries account		(248)	(151)
Net cash provided by / (used in) financing activities		(369)	(280)
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents		(7,123)	2,436
Adjustment for the reclassification of accrued salaries account		-	(969)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period		13,533	12,066
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period	6.3	6,410	13,533

The Statement of cash flows should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Administered income and expenses

For the year ended 30 June 2025

	2025 (\$000)	2024 (\$000)
Income		
Land Trust receipts	189,461	227,033
Suitors' fund levy	163	159
Total administered income	189,624	227,192
Expenses		
Land Trust payments	194,279	217,613
Suitor's fund payments	340	224
Total administered expenses	194,619	217,837

Administered assets and liabilities

As at 30 June 2025

	2025 (\$000)	2024 (\$000)
Current assets		
<u>Restricted cash and cash equivalents</u>		
Suitor's Fund	436	613
Land acquisitions	16,960	21,778
Total administered current assets	17,396	22,391
Current liabilities		
Treasurer's Advance	2,500	2,500
Total administered current liabilities	2,500	2,500

Notes to the financial statements

1. Basis of preparation

The State Solicitor's Office (SSO) is a sub-department of the Department of Justice and a not-for-profit entity controlled by the State of Western Australia, which is the ultimate parent.

A description of the nature of its operations and its principal activities have been included in the **State Solicitor's Overview** which does not form part of these financial statements.

These annual financial statements were authorised for issue by the accountable authority of the SSO on 26 August 2025.

Statement of compliance

The financial statements are general purpose financial statements which have been prepared in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures, the Conceptual Framework and other authoritative pronouncements issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB) as modified by Treasurer's instructions. Some of these pronouncements are modified to vary their application and disclosure.

The *Financial Management Act 2006* (WA) and Treasurer's instructions, which are legislative provisions governing the preparation of financial statements for agencies, take precedence over AASB pronouncements. Where an AASB pronouncement is modified and has had a significant financial effect on the reported results, details of the modification and the resulting financial effect are disclosed in the notes to the financial statements.

Basis of preparation

These financial statements are presented in Australian dollars applying the accrual basis of accounting and using the historical cost convention. Certain balances will apply a different measurement basis (such as the fair value basis). Where this is the case, the different measurement basis is disclosed in the associated note. All values are rounded to the nearest thousand dollars (\$'000).

Accounting for Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Income, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of goods and services tax (GST), except that the:

- (a) amount of GST incurred by the Agency as a purchaser that is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) is recognised as part of an asset's cost of acquisition or as part of an item of expense; and
- (b) receivables and payables are stated with the amount of GST included.

Cash flows are included in the Statement of cash flows on a gross basis. However, the GST components of cash flows arising from investing and financing activities which are recoverable from, or payable to, the ATO are classified as operating cash flows.

Contributed equity

Interpretation 1038 *Contributions by Owners Made to Wholly-Owned Public Sector Entities* requires transfers in the nature of equity contributions, other than as a result of a restructure of administrative arrangements, to be designated as contributions by owners (at the time of, or prior to, transfer) before such transfers can be recognised as equity contributions. Capital appropriations have been designated as contributions by owners by TI 8 – Requirement 8.1(i) *Contributions by Owners made to Wholly Owned Public Sector Entities* and have been credited directly to Contributed Equity.

Administered items

The SSO administers, but does not control, certain activities and functions for and on behalf of Government that do not contribute to the SSO's services or objectives. It does not have discretion over how it utilises the transactions in pursuing its own objectives.

Transactions relating to the administered activities are not recognised as the SSO's income, expenses, assets and liabilities, but are disclosed in the accompanying schedules as 'Administered income and expenses', and 'Administered assets and liabilities'.

The accrual basis of accounting and applicable Australian Accounting Standards have been adopted.

Notes to the financial statements

1. Basis of preparation (Cont)

Comparative information

Except when an Australian Accounting Standard permits or requires otherwise, comparative information is presented in respect of the previous period for all amounts reported in the financial statements. AASB 1060 provides relief from presenting comparatives for:

- Property, Plant and Equipment reconciliations;
- Intangible Asset reconciliations; and
- Right-of-Use Asset reconciliations.

Judgements and estimates

Judgements, estimates and assumptions are required to be made about financial information being presented. The significant judgements and estimates made in the preparation of these financial statements are disclosed in the notes where amounts affected by those judgements and/or estimates are disclosed. Estimates and associated assumptions are based on professional judgements derived from historical experience and various other factors that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances.

2. Use of our funding

Expenses incurred in the delivery of services

This section provides additional information about how the SSO's funding is applied and the accounting policies that are relevant for an understanding of the items recognised in the financial statements. The primary expenses incurred by the SSO in achieving its objectives and the relevant notes are:

	Notes
Employee benefits expenses	2.1 (a)
Employee benefits provisions	2.1 (b)
Grants and subsidies	2.2
Other expenditure	2.3

2.1 (a) Employee benefits expenses

	2025 (\$000)	2024 (\$000)
Employee benefits	46,064	37,546
Termination benefits	-	192
Superannuation - defined contribution plans	5,099	4,219
Employee benefits expenses	51,163	41,957
Add: AASB 16 Non-monetary benefits (not included in employee benefits expense)	243	261
Less: Employee contributions (per note 3.2 Other income)	(84)	(89)
Total employee benefits provided	51,322	42,129

Employee benefits include wages, salaries and social contributions, accrued and paid leave entitlements and paid sick leave, and non-monetary benefits recognised under accounting standards other than AASB 16 (such as medical care, housing, cars and free or subsidised goods or services) for employees.

Termination benefits are payable when employment is terminated before normal retirement date, or when an employee accepts an offer of benefits in exchange for the termination of employment. Termination benefits are recognised when the Agency is demonstrably committed to terminating the employment of current employees according to a detailed formal plan without possibility of withdrawal or providing termination benefits as a result of an offer made to encourage voluntary redundancy. Benefits falling due more than 12 months after the end of the reporting period are discounted to present value.

Notes to the financial statements

Superannuation is the amount recognised in profit or loss of the Statement of comprehensive income comprises employer contributions paid to the Gold State Scheme (concurrent contributions), the West State Scheme, other Government Employees Superannuation Board schemes or other superannuation funds.

AASB 16 non-monetary benefits are non-monetary employee benefits predominantly relating to the provision of vehicle benefits that are recognised under AASB 16 which are excluded from the employee benefits expense.

Employee contributions are contributions made to the SSO by employees towards employee benefits that have been provided by the SSO. This includes both AASB 16 and non-AASB 16 employee contributions.

2.1 (b) Employee related provisions

	2025 (\$000)	2024 (\$000)
Current		
<u>Employee benefits provisions</u>		
Annual leave	5,468	4,017
Long service leave	7,253	5,918
<u>Other provisions</u>		
Employment on-costs	504	14
Total current employee related provisions	13,225	9,949
Non-current		
<u>Employee benefits provisions</u>		
Long service leave	1,662	2,045
<u>Other provisions</u>		
Employment on-costs	116	6
Total non-current employee related provisions	1,778	2,051
Total employee related provisions	15,003	12,000

Provision is made for benefits accruing to employees in respect of wages and salaries, annual leave and long service leave for services rendered up to the reporting date and recorded as an expense during the period the services are delivered.

Annual leave liabilities are classified as current, as there is no right at the end of the reporting period to defer settlement for at least 12 months after the reporting period.

The provision for annual leave is calculated at the present value of expected payments to be made in relation to services provided by employees up to the reporting date.

Long service leave liabilities are unconditional long service leave provisions are classified as current liabilities as the SSO does not have the right at the end of the reporting period to defer settlement of the liability for at least 12 months after the reporting period.

Pre-conditional and conditional long service leave provisions are classified as non-current liabilities because the SSO has the right to defer the settlement of the liability until the employee has completed the requisite years of service.

Assessments indicate that actual settlement of the liabilities is expected to occur as follows:

The provision for long service leave is calculated at present value as the SSO does not expect to wholly settle the amounts within 12 months. The present value is measured taking into account the present value of expected future payments to be made in relation to services provided by employees up to the reporting date. These payments are estimated using the remuneration rate expected to apply at the time of settlement, and discounted using market yields at the end of the reporting period on national government bonds with terms to maturity that match, as closely as possible, the estimated future cash outflows.

Notes to the financial statements

2.1 (b) Employee related provisions (Cont)

Employment on-costs involve settlements of annual and long service leave liabilities giving rise to the payment of employment on-costs including workers' compensation insurance. The provision is the present value of expected future payments.

Employment on-costs, including workers' compensation insurance premiums, are not employee benefits and are recognised separately as liabilities and expenses when the employment to which they relate has occurred. Employment on-costs are included as part of 'Other expenses, Note 2.3 (apart from the unwinding of the discount (finance cost))' and are not included as part of the SSO's 'employee benefits expense'. The related liability is included in 'Employment on-costs provision'.

	2025 (\$000)
Employment on-costs provision	
Carrying amount at start of period	20
Additional provisions recognised	600
Carrying amount at end of period	620

Key sources of estimation uncertainty – long service leave

Key estimates and assumptions concerning the future are based on historical experience and various other factors that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amount of assets and liabilities within the next reporting period.

Several estimates and assumptions are used in calculating an agency's long service leave provision. These include:

- › expected future salary rates;
- › discount rates;
- › employee retention rates; and
- › expected future payments.

Changes in these estimations and assumptions may impact on the carrying amount of the long service leave provision. Any gain or loss following revaluation of the present value of long service leave liabilities is recognised as employee benefits expense.

2.2 Grants and subsidies

	2025 (\$000)	2024 (\$000)
Recurrent		
Legal costs on behalf of the State	1,704	1,579
Mesothelioma settlements	2,688	1,379
Act of grace and Ex-gratia payments	500	1,194
Total grants and subsidies	4,892	4,152

Transactions in which the SSO provides services to another party without receiving approximately equal value in return are categorised as 'Grant or subsidy expenses'. These payments or transfers are recognised at fair value at the time of the transaction and are recognised as an expense in the reporting period in which they are paid.

They include transactions such as personal benefit payments made in cash to individuals as part of settlement, their legal representatives or other payments made on behalf of the State.

The SSO is not responsible for administering a government subsidy scheme.

Notes to the financial statements

2.3 Other expenditure

	2025 (\$000)	2024 (\$000)
Supplies and Services		
Communications	49	63
Consultants and contractors	1,961	815
Resources received free of charge	2,366	2,335
Consumables	881	1,115
Software licences	789	688
Travel	6	25
Total supplies and services expenses	6,052	5,041
Accommodation expenses		
Office rental	7,506	6,953
Electricity and water	89	95
Repairs and maintenance	20	17
Cleaning	204	194
Total accommodation expenses	7,819	7,259
Other expenses		
Equipment repairs and maintenance	8	1
Employee on-costs	81	56
Other staffing costs	656	577
Motor vehicle expenses	98	122
Insurance	124	114
Other	137	89
Advertising and promotion	41	22
Total other expenses	1,145	981
Total other expenditure	15,016	13,281

Supplies and services expenses are recognised as an expense in the reporting period in which they are incurred.

Resources received free of charge represent value of services received from Department of Justice under Service Level Agreement and value of leasing and fit out depreciation provided by Department of Finance.

Office rental is expensed as incurred as the Memorandum of Understanding Agreements between the SSO and the Department of Finance for the leasing of office accommodation contain significant substitution rights.

Other operating expenses generally represent the day-to-day running costs incurred in normal operations.

Repairs and maintenance costs are recognised as expenses as incurred, except where they relate to the replacement of a significant component of an asset. In that case, the costs are capitalised and depreciated.

2.3 Other expenditure

Employee on-cost includes workers' compensation insurance and other employment on-costs. The on-costs liability associated with the recognition of annual and long service leave liabilities is included at note 2.1(b) Employee related provisions. Superannuation contributions accrued as part of the provision for leave are employee benefits and are not included in employment on-costs.

Notes to the financial statements

3. Our funding sources

How we obtain our funding

This section provides additional information about how the SSO obtains its funding and the relevant accounting policy notes that govern the recognition and measurement of this funding. The primary income received by the SSO and the relevant notes are:

	Notes
Income from State Government	3.1
Other income	3.2

3.1 Income from State Government

	2025 (\$000)	2024 (\$000)
Appropriation received during the period		
- Service appropriation	47,317	43,969
- Salaries and Allowances Act 1975 (WA)	5,607	5,158
- Suitor's Fund 1964 (WA)	31	31
Total service appropriation received	52,955	49,158
Income received from other public sector entities during the period		
- Legal services	5,505	5,863
- National Redress Scheme	-	3,114
- Cost recoveries	191	269
Total income from other public sector entities	5,696	9,246
Resources received from other public sector entities during the period		
- Department of Finance (Accommodation - fitout depreciation)	355	356
- Department of Justice (Corporate Support)	2,011	1,979
Total resources received	2,366	2,335
Total income from State Government	61,017	60,739

Service Appropriations are recognised as income at the fair value of consideration received in the period in which the SSO gains control of the appropriated funds. The SSO gains control of the appropriated funds at the time those funds are deposited in the bank account or credited to the holding account held at Treasury.

Legal services provided to other public sector agencies are recognised over time as the services are performed. Revenue is measured at the transaction price agreed under service arrangements, which are based on time-cost or fixed fee arrangements. The stage of completion is determined by reference to hours worked at agreed rates, or the proportion of services provided to date under fixed fee arrangements.

National Redress Scheme is in response to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. The Western Australian Government's participation in the National Redress Scheme will recognise and provide support to Western Australians who have experienced child sexual abuse in institutions.

Resources received from other public sector entities is recognised as income equivalent to the fair value of services received that can be reliably determined and which would have been purchased if not donated.

Notes to the financial statements

Summary of consolidated account appropriations

	2025 Budget (\$000)	2025 Section 25 Transfers (\$000)	2025 Additional Funding (*) (\$000)	2025 Revised Budget (\$000)	2025 Actual (\$000)	2025 Variance (\$000)
<u>Delivery of Services</u>						
Item 69 Net amount appropriated to deliver services	42,024	1,244	4,065	47,333	47,317	(16)
Amounts Authorised by Other Statutes						
- <i>Salaries and Allowances Act 1975 (WA)</i>	5,607	-	-	5,607	5,607	-
- <i>Suitors' Fund Act 1964 (WA)</i>	31	-	-	31	31	-
Total appropriations provided to deliver services	47,662	1,244	4,065	52,971	52,955	(16)
<u>Capital</u>						
Item 145 Capital appropriation	127	-	-	127	116	(11)
Total consolidated account appropriations	47,789	1,244	4,065	53,098	53,071	(27)

(*) Additional funding includes supplementary funding and new funding authorised under section 27 of the *Financial Management Act 2006 (WA)* and amendments to standing appropriations.

Notes to the financial statements

3.2 Other income

		2025 (\$000)	2024 (\$000)
Employee contributions	2.1 (a)	84	89
Legal services		150	333
Legal cost recoups		398	475
Total other income		632	897

Employee contributions relate to payments made by employee participants of the Department of Finance's Senior Officer Vehicle Scheme (SOVS). Contributions are recognised as income when they are received.

Legal services relate to cost recoups from Federal government agencies.

Legal cost recoups relate to costs awarded to the SSO on the finalisation of matters and are recognised when the funds are transferred to the SSO's operating account.

4. Key assets

This section includes information regarding the key assets the SSO utilises to gain economic benefits or provide service potential. The section sets out both the key accounting policies and financial information about the performance of these assets:

	Notes
Property, plant and equipment	4.1
Right-of-use assets	4.2

4.1 Property, plant and equipment

	Leasehold improvements (\$000)	Office equipment (\$000)	Total (\$000)
Year ended 30 June 2025			
1 July 2024			
Gross carrying amount	393	327	720
Accumulated depreciation	(113)	(200)	(313)
Carrying amount at the start of period	280	127	407
Additions	-	-	-
Depreciation	(44)	(56)	(100)
Carrying amount at 30 June 2025	236	71	307
Gross carrying amount	393	327	720
Accumulated depreciation	(157)	(256)	(413)

Initial recognition

Items of property, plant and equipment, costing \$5,000 or more are measured initially at cost. Where an asset is acquired for no cost or significantly less than fair value, the cost is valued at its fair value at the date of acquisition.

Items of property, plant and equipment costing less than \$5,000 are immediately expensed direct to the Statement of comprehensive income (other than where they form part of a group of similar items which are significant in total).

The cost of a leasehold improvement is capitalised and depreciated over the shorter of the remaining term of the lease or the estimated useful life of the leasehold improvement.

Notes to the financial statements

Subsequent measurement

Property, plant and equipment are stated at historical cost less accumulated depreciation and accumulated impairment losses.

Useful lives

All property, plant and equipment having a limited useful life are systematically depreciated over their estimated useful lives in a manner that reflects the consumption of their future economic benefits.

Depreciation is generally calculated on a straight-line basis, at rates that allocate the asset's value, less any estimated residual value, over its estimated useful life. Estimated useful lives for the different asset classes for the current period are included in the table below:

Asset	Useful life
Office equipment	5 - 10 years
Leasehold improvements	10 years or remaining lease term, whichever is lower

The estimated useful lives, residual values and depreciation method are reviewed at the end of each annual reporting period.

Impairment

Non-financial assets, including items of plant and equipment, are tested for impairment whenever there is an indication that the asset may be impaired. Where there is an indication of impairment, the recoverable amount is estimated. Where the recoverable amount is less than the carrying amount, the asset is considered impaired and is written down to the recoverable amount and an impairment loss is recognised.

Where an asset measured at cost is written down to its recoverable amount, an impairment loss is recognised through profit or loss.

Where a previously revalued asset is written down to its recoverable amount, the loss is recognised as a revaluation decrement through other comprehensive income to the extent that the impairment loss does not exceed the amount in the revaluation surplus for the class of asset.

If there is an indication that there has been a reversal in impairment, the carrying amount shall be increased to its recoverable amount. However, this reversal should not increase the asset's carrying amount above what would have been determined, net of depreciation or amortisation, if no impairment loss had been recognised in prior years.

4.2 Right-of-use assets

	Motor Vehicles (\$000)
Year ended 30 June 2025	
Carrying amount at start of period	246
Additions	219
Disposals	(39)
Depreciation	(124)
Net carrying amount at end of period	302

The SSO has leased motor vehicles with the Department of Finance (State Fleet).

The SSO has also entered into a Memorandum of Understanding Agreements (MOU) with the Department of Finance for the leasing of office accommodation. These are not recognised under AASB 16 because of substitution rights held by the Department of Finance and are accounted for as an expense as incurred.

Notes to the financial statements

4.2 Right-of-use assets (Cont)

Initial recognition

At the commencement date of the lease, the SSO recognises right-of-use assets measured at cost comprising of:

- › the amount of the initial measurement of lease liability;
- › any lease payments made at or before the commencement date less any lease incentives received;
- › any initial direct costs; and
- › restoration costs, including dismantling and removing the underlying asset.

The corresponding lease liabilities in relation to these right-of-use assets have been disclosed in note 6.1 Lease liabilities.

The SSO has elected not to recognise right-of-use assets and lease liabilities for short-term leases (with a lease term of 12 months or less) and low value leases (with an underlying value of \$5,000 or less). Lease payments associated with these leases are expensed over a straight-line basis over the lease term.

Subsequent measurement

The cost model is applied for subsequent measurement of right-of-use assets, requiring the asset to be carried at cost less any accumulated depreciation and accumulated impairment losses and adjusted for any re-measurement of lease liability.

Depreciation and impairment of right-of-use assets

Right-of-use assets are depreciated on a straight-line basis over the shorter of the lease term and the estimated useful lives of the underlying assets.

If ownership of the leased asset transfers to the SSO at the end of the lease term or the cost reflects the exercise of a purchase option, depreciation is calculated using the estimated useful life of the asset.

Right-of-use assets are tested for impairment when an indication of impairment is identified. The policy in connection with testing for impairment is outlined in note 4.1.

5. Other assets and liabilities

This section sets out those assets and liabilities that arose from the SSO's controlled operations and includes other assets utilised for economic benefits and liabilities incurred during normal operations:

	Notes
Receivables	5.1
Amounts receivable for services (Holding Account)	5.2
Other assets	5.3
Payables	5.4
Other current liabilities	5.5

5.1 Receivables

	2025 (\$000)	2024 (\$000)
<u>Current</u>		
Trade receivables	647	530
Accrued revenue	875	665
Other debtors	116	90
GST receivable	373	263
Total current	2,011	1,548
<u>Non-current</u>		
Accrued salaries account ^(a)	1,368	1,120
Total non-current	1,368	1,120
Total receivables at end of the period	3,379	2,668

(a) Funds transferred to Treasury for the purpose of meeting the 27th pay in a reporting period that generally occurs every 11 years. This account is classified as non-current except for the year before the 27th pay year.

Notes to the financial statements

Trade receivables are initially recognised at their transaction price. The SSO holds the receivables with the objective to collect the contractual cash flows and therefore subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method, less an allowance for impairment.

The SSO recognises a loss allowance for expected credit losses (ECLs) on a receivable not held at fair value through profit or loss. The ECLs based on the difference between the contractual cash flows and the cash flows that the SSO expects to receive, discounted at the original effective interest rate. Individual receivables are written off when the SSO has no reasonable expectations of recovering the contractual cash flows.

For trade receivables, the SSO recognises an allowance for ECLs measured at the lifetime expected credit losses at each reporting date. The SSO has established a provision matrix that is based on its historical credit loss experience, adjusted for forward-looking factors specific to the debtors and the economic environment. Please refer to note 7.1 for the amount of ECLs expensed in this financial period.

For 2024-25 there was no recognition of impairment or ECL. The SSO's clients comprise of other WA State Government departments and agencies and are therefore considered to represent a low credit risk.

Accrued salaries consist of amounts paid annually into a Treasurer's special purpose account to meet the additional cash outflow for employee salary payments in reporting periods with 27 pay days instead of the normal 26. No interest is received on this account.

5.2 Amount receivable for services (Holding Account)

	2025 (\$000)	2024 (\$000)
Non-current	10,126	9,806
Total amounts receivable for services at end of period	10,126	9,806

Amounts receivable for services represent the non-cash component of service appropriations. It is restricted in that it can only be used for asset replacement or payment of leave liability.

The amounts receivable for services are financial assets at amortised cost, and are not considered impaired (i.e. there is no expected credit loss of the holding accounts).

5.3 Other current assets

	2025 (\$000)	2024 (\$000)
<u>Current</u>		
Prepayments	1,710	1,697
Total current	1,710	1,697
Total other assets at end of period	1,710	1,697

Prepayments relate to ICT, insurance, practising certificates for lawyers and July lease costs.

Notes to the financial statements

5.4 Payables

	2025 (\$000)	2024 (\$000)
<u>Current</u>		
Accrued expenses	1,021	1,003
Accrued salaries	1,470	1,032
Total payables at end of period	2,491	2,035

Accrued expenses represent the amount due to service providers for services provided during the reporting period that have yet to be invoiced to the SSO.

Accrued salaries represent the amount due to staff but unpaid at the end of the reporting period. Accrued salaries are settled within a fortnight after the reporting period. The SSO considers the carrying amount of accrued salaries to be equivalent to its fair value.

5.5 Other liabilities

	2025 (\$000)	2024 (\$000)
<u>Current</u>		
Income in advance	191	282
Total other liabilities at end of period	191	282

Income in advance represent funds received from clients before the SSO has met its performance obligation to receive those funds. The liability is unwound as Legal services fee revenue once the SSO performs its performance obligations through the Statement of comprehensive income.

6. Financing

This section sets out the material balances and disclosures associated with the financing and cashflows of the SSO.

	Notes
Lease liabilities	6.1
Finance costs	6.2
Cash and cash equivalents	6.3

6.1 Lease liabilities

	2025 (\$000)	2024 (\$000)
Not later than one year	102	93
Later than one year and not later than five years	208	154
Later than five years	2	6
	312	253
Current	102	93
Non-current	210	160
	312	253

Initial measurement

At the commencement date of the lease, the SSO recognises lease liabilities measured at the present value of lease payments to be made over the lease term. The lease payments are discounted using the interest rate implicit in the lease. If that rate cannot be readily determined, the SSO uses the incremental borrowing rate provided by Western Australia Treasury Corporation.

Notes to the financial statements

Lease payments included by the SSO as part of the present value calculation of lease liability include:

- › fixed payments (including in-substance fixed payments), less any lease incentives receivable;
- › variable lease payments that depend on an index or a rate initially measured using the index or rate as at the commencement date;
- › amounts expected to be payable by the lessee under residual value guarantees;
- › the exercise price of purchase options (where these are reasonably certain to be exercised);
- › payments for penalties for terminating a lease, where the lease term reflects the agency exercising an option to terminate the lease; and
- › periods covered by extension or termination options are only included in the lease term by the Agency if the lease is reasonably certain to be extended (or not terminated).

The interest on the lease liability is recognised in profit or loss over the lease term so as to produce a constant periodic rate of interest on the remaining balance of the liability for each period. Lease liabilities do not include any future changes in variable lease payments (that depend on an index or rate) until they take effect, in which case the lease liability is reassessed and adjusted against the right of use asset.

Variable lease payments, not included in the measurement of lease liability, that are dependent on sales are recognised by the SSO in profit or loss in the period in which the condition that triggers those payment occurs.

Subsequent Measurement

Lease liabilities are measured by increasing the carrying amount to reflect interest on the lease liabilities; reducing the carrying amount to reflect the lease payments made; and remeasuring the carrying amount at amortised cost, subject to adjustments to reflect any reassessment or lease modifications.

This section should be read in conjunction with note 4.2.

	2025 (\$000)	2024 (\$000)
Lease expenses recognised in the Statement of comprehensive income		
Lease interest expense	20	10

6.2 Finance costs

	2025 (\$000)	2024 (\$000)
Interest expenses on lease liabilities	20	10
Total finance costs expensed	20	10

Finance cost reflects the interest component of lease liability repayments.

6.3 Cash and cash equivalents

	2025 (\$000)	2024 (\$000)
Cash and cash equivalents	6,410	13,533
Balance at end of period	6,410	13,533

For the purpose of the Statement of cash flows, cash and cash equivalent (and restricted cash and cash equivalent) assets comprise cash on hand and short-term deposits with original maturities of three months or less that are readily convertible to a known amount of cash and which are subject to insignificant risk of changes in value.

Notes to the financial statements

7. Financial instruments and Contingencies

This note sets out the key risk management policies and measurement techniques of the SSO.

	Notes
Financial instruments	7.1
Contingent assets and liabilities	7.2

7.1 Financial instruments

The carrying amounts of each of the following categories of financial assets and financial liabilities at the end of the reporting period are:

	2025 (\$000)	2024 (\$000)
<u>Financial assets</u>		
Cash and cash equivalents	6,410	13,533
Financial assets at amortised cost ^(a)	13,132	12,211
Total financial assets	19,542	25,744
<u>Financial liabilities</u>		
Financial liabilities at amortised cost ^(b)	2,994	2,570
Total financial liabilities	2,994	2,570

(a) The amount of financial assets at amortised cost excludes GST recoverable from the ATO (statutory receivable).
(b) The amount of financial liabilities at amortised cost excludes GST payable to the ATO (statutory payable).

7.2 Contingent assets and liabilities

Contingent assets and contingent liabilities are not recognised in the Statement of financial position but are disclosed and, if quantifiable, are measured at the best estimate.

Contingent assets and liabilities are presented inclusive of GST receivable or payable respectively.

7.2.1 Contingent assets

The SSO has no contingent assets as at the end of the reporting period.

7.2.2 Contingent liabilities

The SSO has no contingent liabilities as at the end of the reporting period.

8. Other disclosures

This section includes additional material disclosures required by accounting standards or other pronouncements, for the understanding of this financial report.

	Notes
Events occurring after the end of the reporting period	8.1
Correction of period errors/changes in accounting policies	8.2
Key management personnel	8.3
Related party transactions	8.4
Related bodies	8.5
Affiliated bodies	8.6
Special purpose accounts	8.7
Remuneration of auditors	8.8
Services provided free of charge	8.9
Supplementary financial information	8.10

Notes to the financial statements

8.1 Events occurring after the end of the reporting period

There have been no adjusting or non-adjusting events occurring between the end of the reporting period and the date in which these financial statements are issued that have a material impact on these disclosures.

8.2 Correction of period errors/changes in accounting policies

There have been no changes in accounting policies during the reporting period.

8.3 Key management personnel

The SSO has determined key management personnel to include cabinet ministers and senior officers of the SSO. The SSO does not incur expenditures to compensate Ministers and those disclosures may be found in the *Annual Report on State Finances*.

The total fees, salaries, superannuation, non-monetary benefits and other benefits for senior officers of the SSO for the reporting period are presented within the following bands:

Compensation band (\$)	2025	2024
\$600,001 - \$650,000	1	-
\$550,001 - \$600,000	1	1
\$450,001 - \$500,000	3	1
\$400,001 - \$450,000	1	3
\$350,001 - \$400,000	1	-
\$300,001 - \$350,000	-	3
\$250,001 - \$300,000	7	3
\$200,001 - \$250,000	1	2
\$150,001 - \$200,000	1	3
\$100,001 - \$150,000	3	1
\$50,001 - \$100,000	1	1
\$0 - \$50,000	-	2
	2025 (\$000)	2024 (\$000)
Short-term employee benefits	6,155	5,378
Other long-term benefits	66	26
Total compensation of senior officers	6,221	5,404

Total compensation includes the superannuation expense incurred by the SSO in respect of senior officers.

Notes to the financial statements

8.4 Related party transactions

The SSO is a wholly owned public sector entity that is controlled by the State of Western Australia.

Related parties of the SSO include:

- › all cabinet ministers and their close family members, and their controlled or jointly controlled entities;
- › all senior officers and their close family members, and their controlled or jointly controlled entities;
- › other departments and statutory authorities, including related bodies, that are included in the whole of government consolidated financial statements (i.e. wholly-owned public sector entities);
- › associates and joint ventures of a wholly-owned public sector entity; and
- › the Government Employees Superannuation Board (GESB).

Material transactions with other related parties

Outside of normal citizen type transactions with the SSO, there were no other related party transactions that involved key management personnel and/or their close family members and/or their controlled (or jointly controlled) entities.

8.5 Related bodies

A related body is a body that receives more than half of its funding and resources from an entity and is subject to operational control by that entity.

The SSO has no related bodies during the financial period.

8.6 Affiliated bodies

An affiliated body is a body that receives more than half its funding and resources from an entity but is not subject to operational control by that entity.

The SSO has no affiliated bodies during the financial period.

8.7 Special purpose account

The Suitors' Fund

Established under section 16(1)(c) of FMA, the purpose of this account is to hold funds, in accordance with section 4 of the *Suitors' Fund Act 1964* (WA) (The Act), to meet the liability for costs of certain litigation and for incidental and other purposes pursuant to the Act.

	2025 (\$000)	2024 (\$000)
Balance at start of period	613	678
Receipts	163	159
Payments	(340)	(224)
Balance at end of period	436	613

8.8 Remuneration of auditors

Remuneration paid or payable to the Auditor General in respect of the audit for the reporting period is as follows:

	2025 (\$000)	2024 (\$000)
Auditing the accounts, financial statements, controls, and key performance indicators	88	81

Notes to the financial statements

8.9 Services provided free of charge

The SSO's key service is to provide timely and quality legal services to Government. Legal services provided to WA State Government entities free of charge during the reporting period were:

	2025 (\$000)	2024 (\$000)
Department of the Premier and Cabinet	5,320	6,149
Department of Communities	4,336	4,343
Other	2,879	2,486
Western Australia Police Force	3,024	2,818
Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage	1,820	2,287
Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety	3,016	2,068
Department of Water and Environmental Regulation	1,355	1,652
Commissioner of Main Roads	685	827
Department of Justice	6,643	4,432
Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation	1,312	1,258
Department of Finance	1,501	1,616
Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries	947	971
Public Transport Authority of Western Australia	481	439
Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development	631	935
Department of Health (including public hospitals)	431	449
Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions	493	613
Insurance Commission of Western Australia	1,535	1,252
Department of Education	1,081	878
Department of Treasury	159	271
East Metropolitan Health Service	200	434
WorkCover Western Australia Authority	250	259
Child and Adolescent Health Service	328	482
North Metropolitan Health Service	262	385
Western Australian Land Information Authority	269	274
WA Country Health Service	227	3
Balance at end of period	39,185	37,581

8.10 Supplementary financial information

(a) Write-offs

During the financial period \$9,378.48 (2024: nil) was written off the SSO's books under the authority of:

	2025 (\$000)	2024 (\$000)
The State Solicitor	9	-
Balance at end of period	9	-

(b) Losses through theft, defaults and other causes

During the financial period there were no losses through theft, defaults or other causes.

(c) Forgiveness of debts

During the financial period there were no forgiveness of debts.

(d) Gifts of public property

During the financial period there were no gifts of public property.

Notes to the financial statements

9. Explanatory Statements

This section explains variations in the financial performance of the SSO.

	Notes
Explanatory statement for controlled operations	9.1
Explanatory statement for administered items	9.2

9.1 Explanatory statement for controlled operations

This explanatory section explains variations in the financial performance of the SSO undertaking transactions under its own control, as represented by the primary financial statements.

All variances between annual estimates (original budget) and actual results for 2025, and between the actual results for 2025 and 2024 are shown below. Narratives are provided for major variances which are more than 10% of the comparative and which are also more than 1% of the following:

1) Estimate and actual results for the current year:

- Total Cost of Services of the annual estimates for the Statement of comprehensive income and Statement of cash flows (i.e. 1% of \$64,441,000), and
- Total Assets of the annual estimates for the Statement of financial position (i.e. 1% of \$18,292,000).

2) Actual results between the current year and the previous year:

- Total Cost of Services of the previous year for the Statements of comprehensive income and Statement of cash flows (i.e. 1% of \$59,671,000), and
- Total Assets of the previous year for the Statement of financial position (i.e. 1% of \$28,357,000).

Notes to the financial statements

9.1.1 Statement of comprehensive income variances

	Variance Note	Estimate 2025 ¹ (\$000)	Actual 2025 (\$000)	Actual 2024 (\$000)	Variance between actual and estimate (\$000)	Variance between actual results for 2025 and 2024 (\$000)
Expenses						
Employee benefits expenses	(a)	50,072	51,163	41,957	1,091	9,206
Supplies and services	(b)	5,481	6,052	5,041	571	1,011
Depreciation and amortisation expenses		331	224	271	(107)	(47)
Finance costs		26	20	10	(6)	10
Accommodation expenses		7,538	7,819	7,259	281	560
Grants and subsidies	(1) (c)	-	4,892	4,152	4,892	740
Other expenses		993	1,145	981	152	164
Total cost of services		64,441	71,315	59,671	6,874	11,644
Income						
Other income		915	632	897	(283)	(265)
Total income		915	632	897	(283)	(265)
Net cost of services		63,526	70,683	58,774	7,157	11,909
Income from State Government						
Service appropriation	(2)	47,662	52,955	49,158	5,293	3,797
Income from other public sector entities	(3) (d)	6,782	5,696	9,246	(1,086)	(3,550)
Resources received		2,807	2,366	2,335	(441)	31
Total income from State Government		57,251	61,017	60,739	3,766	278
Surplus for the period (deficit)		(6,275)	(9,666)	1,965	(3,391)	(11,631)
Other comprehensive income						
Other comprehensive income		-	-	-	-	-
Total other comprehensive income		-	-	-	-	-
Total comprehensive income for the period		(6,275)	(9,666)	1,965	(3,391)	(11,631)

¹ These are estimates published in the 2024-25 budget papers.

Notes to the financial statements

9.1.1 Statement of comprehensive income variances (Cont)

Major estimate and actual (2025) variance narratives:

- (1) Grants and subsidies represent legal costs incurred by the SSO on behalf of the State. The timing and amount of these payments are difficult to predict, and costs are typically recouped through the supplementary funding process when required.
- (2) The service appropriation in 2025 is higher than estimated, primarily due to supplementary funding received to cover legal costs incurred by the SSO on behalf of the State, as well as additional funding provided for public sector wage increases.
- (3) The lower Income from other public sector entities as compared to estimates is due to the SSO providing fewer non-core (billable) services than anticipated. The volume of non-core work varies from year to year, depending on demand.

Major actual (2025) and comparative (2024) variance narratives:

- (a) Employee benefits expenses in 2024 are lower than in 2025, primarily due to significant salary underspending caused by routine staff movements and recruitment delays. Additionally, in 2024-25, the SSO increased both legal and non-legal resources to address the growing demand for services.
- (b) Supplies and services expenses in 2025 are higher than in 2024, mainly due to additional consultancy costs associated with the initial set up of the SSO's risk management framework, the workplace strategy, and the knowledge management initiative for the management of historical institutional abuse cases.
- (c) Grants and subsidies represent legal costs incurred by the SSO on behalf of the State. The timing and amount of these payments are beyond the SSO's control.
- (d) Income from other public sector entities in 2024 was higher than in 2025, primarily due to funding received under the National Redress Scheme in response to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. This funding is now incorporated into the SSO's service appropriations.

Notes to the financial statements

9.1.2 Statement of financial position variances

	Variance Note	Estimate 2025 ¹ (\$000)	Actual 2025 (\$000)	Actual 2024 (\$000)	Variance between actual and estimate (\$000)	Variance between actual results for 2025 and 2024 (\$000)
Assets						
Current Assets						
Cash and cash equivalents	(1) (a)	3,217	6,410	13,533	3,193	(7,123)
Receivables	(2) (b)	1,681	2,011	1,548	330	463
Other current assets	(3)	1,453	1,710	1,697	257	13
Total Current Assets		6,351	10,131	16,778	3,780	(6,647)
Non-Current Assets						
Restricted cash and cash equivalents ²	(4)	1,335	-	-	(1,335)	-
Receivables ²	(5)	-	1,368	1,120	1,368	248
Amounts receivable for services		10,134	10,126	9,806	(8)	320
Property, plant and equipment		262	307	407	45	(100)
Intangible assets		(101)	-	-	101	-
Right-of-use assets		311	302	246	(9)	56
Total Non-Current Assets		11,941	12,103	11,579	162	524
Total assets		18,292	22,234	28,357	3,942	(6,123)

¹ These are estimates published in the 2024-25 budget papers.

² As a result of the 27th pay reclassification from Restricted cash and cash equivalents to Receivables

Notes to the financial statements

9.1.2 Statement of financial position variances (Cont)

	Variance Note	Estimate 2025 ¹ (\$000)	Actual 2025 (\$000)	Actual 2024 (\$000)	Variance between actual and estimate (\$000)	Variance between actual results for 2025 and 2024 (\$000)
Liabilities						
Current Liabilities						
Payables	(6)	1,156	2,491	2,035	1,335	456
Lease liabilities		135	102	93	(33)	9
Employee related provisions	(7) (c)	10,591	13,225	9,949	2,634	3,276
Other current liabilities		131	191	282	60	(91)
Total Current Liabilities		12,013	16,009	12,359	3,996	3,650
Non-Current Liabilities						
Lease liabilities		193	210	160	17	50
Employee related provisions	(8)	2,018	1,778	2,051	(240)	(273)
Total Non-Current Liabilities		2,211	1,988	2,211	(223)	(223)
Total liabilities		14,224	17,997	14,570	3,773	3,427
Net assets		4,068	4,237	13,787	169	(9,550)
Equity						
Contributed equity		3,931	3,552	3,436	(379)	116
Accumulated surplus		137	685	10,351	548	(9,666)
Total equity		4,068	4,237	13,787	169	(9,550)

¹ These are estimates published in the 2024-25 budget papers.

² As a result of the 27th pay reclassification from Restricted cash and cash equivalents to Receivables

Notes to the financial statements

9.1.2 Statement of financial position variances (Cont)

Major estimate and actual (2025) variance narratives:

- (1) Cash and cash equivalents in 2025 are higher than estimated, primarily due to a high opening cash balance at the start of the year. This is resulted from significant salary underspends in 2023-24, which were not foreseen when the 2025 estimates were prepared.
- (2) The increase in receivables in 2025 compared to the estimates is primarily due to higher GST receivables, reflecting a larger than expected expenditure base for the year, and a rise in accrued salary recoup, due to more staff being on external placements than originally expected.
- (3) The increase in other current assets in 2025 compared to the estimates is primarily attributable to a higher than expected level of expenditure being prepaid at year end. This includes higher than expected costs prepaid for insurance premiums, software licences, and office accommodation rentals.
- (4) & (5) Restricted cash and cash equivalents refer to funds designated for an additional payroll cycle (the 27th pay). These funds were reclassified from Restricted cash and cash equivalents to Receivables in 2024.
- (6) The increase in payables as compared to the estimates are mainly due to higher amounts due to service providers and the accrued salaries at the end of the year.
- (7) Current Employee related provisions are higher than estimates, mainly due to the increased staffing levels required to the growing service demand, and the valuation of provisions have incorporated anticipated increase in public sector wages over the three years: 5% in 2024-25, 4% in 2025-26, and 3.5% in 2026-27.
- (8) Non-Current Employee related provisions are lower than estimates, mainly due to staff reaching their required years of service for the liability to be classified as current.

Major actual (2025) and comparative (2024) variance narratives:

- (a) The decrease in cash and cash equivalents in 2025 compared to 2024 is due to the SSO utilising cash reserves accumulated in 2024 to meet and manage increased service demands in 2025.
- (b) The increase in receivables in 2025 compared 2024 is primarily due to higher GST receivables, reflecting a larger expenditure base for the year, and a rise in accrued salary recoup, due to more staff being on external placements than in 2024.
- (c) Employee related provisions in 2025 are higher than in 2024, mainly due to the increased staffing levels required to meet the growing service demand, and the valuation of provisions have incorporated anticipated increase in public sector wages over the three years: 5% in 2024-25, 4% in 2025-26, and 3.5% in 2026-27.

Notes to the financial statements

9.1.3 Statement of cash flow variances

	Variance Note	Estimate 2025 ¹ (\$000)	Actual 2025 (\$000)	Actual 2024 (\$000)	Variance between actual and estimate (\$000)	Variance between actual results for 2025 and 2024 (\$000)
Cash flows from State Government						
Service appropriation	(1)	47,733	52,635	48,880	4,902	3,755
Capital appropriation		127	116	131	(11)	(15)
Funds from other public sector entities	(2) (a)	6,782	5,173	9,442	(1,609)	(4,269)
Net cash provided by State Government		54,642	57,924	58,453	3,282	(529)

Utilised as follows:

Cash flows from operating activities

Payments

Employee benefits	(b)	(49,890)	(47,672)	(40,918)	2,218	(6,754)
Supplies and services	(3)	(2,673)	(3,532)	(3,140)	(859)	(392)
Finance costs		(26)	(20)	(10)	6	(10)
Accommodation		(7,538)	(7,907)	(7,295)	(369)	(612)
Grants and subsidies	(4) (c)	-	(4,867)	(4,065)	(4,867)	(802)
GST payments on purchases	(5)	-	(1,432)	(1,291)	(1,432)	(141)
GST payments to taxation authority		-	(17)	(3)	(17)	(14)
Other payments		(993)	(1,266)	(1,073)	(273)	(193)

Notes to the financial statements

9.1.3 Statement of cash flow variances (Cont)

	Variance Note	Estimate 2025 ¹ (\$000)	Actual 2025 (\$000)	Actual 2024 (\$000)	Variance between actual and estimate (\$000)	Variance between actual results for 2025 and 2024 (\$000)
Receipts						
GST receipts on sales		-	628	757	628	(129)
GST receipts from taxation authority	(6)	-	704	504	704	200
Other receipts		915	703	842	(212)	(139)
Net cash used in operating activities		(60,205)	(64,678)	(55,692)	(4,473)	(8,986)
Cash flows from investing activities						
Payments						
Purchase of non-current assets		-	-	(45)	-	45
Net cash used in investing activities		-	-	(45)	-	45
Cash flows from financing activities						
Payments						
Principal elements of lease payments		(127)	(121)	(129)	6	8
Payment to accrued salaries account ²		-	(248)	(151)	(248)	(97)
Net cash used in financing activities		(127)	(369)	(280)	(242)	(89)
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents		(5,690)	(7,123)	2,436	(1,433)	(9,559)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period		10,242	13,533	12,066	3,291	1,467
Adjustment for the reclassification of accrued salaries account ²		-	-	(969)	-	969
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the period		4,552	6,410	13,533	1,858	(7,123)

¹ These are estimates published in the 2024-25 budget papers.

² As a result of the 27th pay reclassification from Restricted cash and cash equivalents to Receivables

Notes to the financial statements

9.1.3 Statement of cash flow variances (Cont)

Major estimate and actual (2025) variance narratives:

- (1) The service appropriation in 2025 is higher than estimated, primarily due to supplementary funding received to cover legal costs incurred by the SSO on behalf of the State, as well as additional funding provided for public sector wage increases.
- (2) The lower Funds from other public sector entities as compared to estimates is due to the SSO providing fewer non-core (billable) services than anticipated. The volume of non-core work varies from year to year, depending on demand.
- (3) Supplies and services payments in 2025 are higher than estimated, mainly due to additional consultancy costs associated with the initial set up of the SSO's risk management framework, the workplace strategy, and the knowledge management initiative for the management of historical institutional abuse cases.
- (4) Grants and subsidies represent legal costs incurred by the SSO on behalf of the State. The timing and amount of these payments are difficult to predict, and costs are typically recouped through the supplementary funding process when required.
- (5) & (6) GST is payable to and receivable from the Australian Taxation Office. For budget purposes, GST is excluded.

Major actual (2025) and comparative (2024) variance narratives:

- (a) Funds from other public sector entities in 2024 was higher than in 2025, primarily due to funding received under the National Redress Scheme in response to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. This funding is now incorporated into the SSO's service appropriations.
- (b) Employee benefits payments in 2024 are lower than in 2025, primarily due to significant salary underspending caused by routine staff movements and recruitment delays. Additionally, in 2024-25, the SSO increased both legal and non-legal resources to address the growing demand for services.
- (c) Grants and subsidies represent legal costs incurred by the SSO on behalf of the State. The timing and amount of these payments are beyond the SSO's control.

9.2 Explanatory statement for administered items

This explanatory section explains variations in the financial performance of the SSO undertaking transactions as an agent of the government, as detailed in the administered schedules.

All variances between annual estimates and actual results for 2025, and between the actual results for 2025 and 2024 are shown below. Narratives are provided for key major variances which vary by more than 10% from their comparative and that the variation is more than 1% of the Administered Income for the previous year (i.e. 1% of \$227,033,000 for Land Trust transactions, and 1% of the \$159,000 for Suitors' Fund transactions).

Notes to the financial statements

9.2 Explanatory statement for administered items (Cont)

	Variance Note	Estimate 2025 ¹ (\$000)	Actual 2025 (\$000)	Actual 2024 (\$000)	Variance between actual and estimate (\$000)	Variance between actual results for 2025 and 2024 (\$000)
Income from administered items						
Income						
Land Trust receipts	(1)	-	189,461	227,033	189,461	(37,572)
Suitors' fund levy		164	163	159	(1)	4
Total administered income		164	189,624	227,192	189,460	(37,568)
Expenses						
Land Trust payments	(2)	-	194,279	217,613	194,279	(23,334)
Suitors' fund payments	(3)	164	340	224	176	116
Total administered expenses		164	194,619	217,837	194,455	(23,218)

Major estimate and actual (2025) variance narratives:

- (1) & (2) The SSO performs conveyancing of land transactions on behalf of the State. These can not be forecasted.
- (3) Payments made through the Suitor's Fund are subject to accepted applications and cannot be forecasted. The Estimate assumes all funds collected are paid in the same year.

¹ These are estimates published in the 2024-25 budget papers.

Certification of Key Performance Indicators

I hereby certify that the key performance indicators are based on proper records, are relevant and appropriate for assisting users to assess the State Solicitor’s Office performance, and fairly represent the performance of the State Solicitor’s Office for the financial year ended 30 June 2025.



Dr Graham Hill
State Solicitor
26 August 2025



Yu Zhi Zhou
Chief Finance Officer
26 August 2025

Key Performance Indicators

Outcome Based Management Structure

Government Goal 1: Safe, Strong and Fair Communities: Supporting our local and regional communities to thrive

Outcome 1: Government receives quality and timely legal services

The SSO has one Effectiveness KPI to assist with the assessment of agency performance in the achievement of government desired outcomes and one Efficiency KPI to assist with the assessment of agency service delivery. These performance measures give an accurate assessment of the legal services delivered by the SSO within a specified timeframe and the average cost of each legal service, irrespective of complexity, and the length of time taken to resolve each legal matter.

Key Effectiveness Indicator

This KPI measures the extent to which public sector agencies are satisfied with the legal assistance and legal advice provided by the SSO. Satisfaction was measured through an online quantitative survey sent to the Director General/Chief Executive Officers and public sector officers who instructed or sought legal advice from the SSO. Respondents were asked to rate their overall level of satisfaction on a scale of 1 – 100. Overall satisfaction is defined to mean any rating above "60".

Effectiveness KPI	
Extent to which government agencies are satisfied with legal services	
Actual 2024-25^(a)	95.0%
Budget 2024-25^(b)	95.0%
Actual 2023-24^(c)	95.0%

(a) Based on an average rating from 326 respondents.

(b) As per the 2024-25 Budget Papers.

(c) As per the SSO's Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2024. Based on an average rating from 101 respondents.

Key Efficiency Indicators

The KPI is linked to the SSO's Effectiveness KPI and expresses performance as a quantifiable measure. It demonstrates the efficient use of public resources in giving legal services. The KPI is calculated by dividing the total cost of service by the number of recorded matters.

Efficiency KPI	
Average cost per legal matter	
Actual 2024-25^{(a) (b)}	\$8,347
Budget 2024-25^(c)	\$6,757
Actual 2023-24^(d)	\$6,878

(a) The 2024-25 Actual is higher than the 2024-25 Budget primarily due to legal costs incurred on behalf of the State.

These costs were funded through supplementary funding and were not included in the target setting, as the timing and amount of these payments are beyond the SSO's control.

(b) The 2024-25 Actual is higher than the 2023-24 Actual due to 2024-25 reflects a higher average cost, driven by increase in public sector wages, greater complexity, and a rise in resource-intensive class actions.

(c) As per the 2024-25 Budget Papers.

(d) As per the SSO's Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2024.

Ministerial Directions

No ministerial directions were received during the 2024-25 financial year.

Pricing Policies of Services Provided

The SSO provides core legal work free of charge to client agencies. For non-core services provided to client agencies, the SSO charges on a full or partial cost recovery basis. These fees and charges were determined in accordance with the *Costing and Pricing Government Services* published by the Department of Treasury.

Capital Works

No major capital works projects were undertaken in 2024-25.

Governance Disclosures

No insurance premium was paid in 2024-25 to indemnify any director against a liability incurred under section 13 or 14 of the *Statutory Corporations (Liability of Directors) Act 1996* (WA).

Act of Grace Payments

The SSO processes act of grace and ex gratia payments on behalf of the State. During the 2024-25 financial year, two payments totalling \$500,000 were made by the SSO.

Unauthorised Use of Credit Cards

Officers of the SSO hold corporate credit cards where their functions warrant the usage of this facility. Despite each cardholder being reminded of their obligations annually under the SSO's credit card policy, one employee inadvertently used the corporate credit card to purchase an item that was not for business use. The matter was not referred for disciplinary action as the Chief Finance Officer noted prompt advice and settlement of the personal use amount, and that the nature of the expenditure was immaterial and characteristic of an honest mistake.

Disclosure required by Treasurer’s Instruction 8(3.2) (ii)	2024-25
Number of instances the Western Australian Government Purchasing Cards have been used for personal purposes	1
Aggregate amount of personal use expenditure for the reporting period	\$27.00
Aggregate amount of personal use expenditure settled by the due date (within 5 working days)	\$27.00
Aggregate amount of personal use expenditure settled after the period (after 5 working days)	nil
Aggregate amount of personal use expenditure remaining unpaid at the end of the reporting period	nil
Number of referrals for disciplinary action instigated by the notifiable authority during the reporting period	nil

Advertising, Market Research, Polling, and Direct Mail

In accordance with section 175ZE of the *Electoral Act 1907* (WA), the SSO incurred no expenditure for advertising, market research, polling, direct mail, and media advertising during 2024-25.

Category	Amount (\$)
Advertising Agencies	nil
Market Research Organisations	nil
Polling Organisations	nil
Direct Mail Organisations	nil
Media Advertising Organisations	nil
Total	nil

Board and Committee Remuneration

The SSO is responsible for the administration of the *Suitors Fund Act 1974* (WA). The Act establishes the Appeal Costs Board, consisting of three members appointed by the Governor, of which one shall be appointed as Chairman of the Board, one shall be nominated by the Law Society of Western Australia (Inc.) and one shall be nominated by the Legal Practice Board.

Position	Member	Type of Remuneration	Period of Membership	Term of Appointment	Base Salary/ Sitting Fees (\$)	Amount (\$)
Chair	David Edward Leigh	n/a	First year	3 years	-	n/a
Member	Peter David Lochore	per meeting	First year	3 years	1,270	3,555
Member	Michael Lawrence Tudori	per meeting	First year	3 years	1,270	3,555
Total	nil					\$ 7,110

Employment and Industrial Relations

Staff Profile (as of 30 June 2025)

Staff profile	2025	2024
Full-time permanent	160	140 (additional two on secondment)
Full-time contract	71	60
Part-time measured on a FTE basis	58	84
Total	289	286

Staff Development

The SSO has a commitment to the development of its employees. A summary of the training provided to staff is outlined in the Workforce Attraction and Development section of the report (pages 54 - 55).

Workers Compensation

The SSO works in partnership with the Workers' Compensation and Injury Management team from the Department of Justice (DoJ), injured worker, managers, injury management consultants and insurer to implement early intervention strategies and support a safe return to work.

There has been a 66.7% reduction in lost time injury and incidence rate and a 100% reduction in lost time injury and severity rate. Compliance with mandatory Work Health and Safety Manager training remains steady, exceeding the target of 80%, with a total of 84% of managers trained.

Industrial Relations

A dedicated SSO consultation committee continues to provide an important forum that enables timely consultation between the SSO and the CPSU/CSA. The group meets every six weeks and is attended by the SSO CSA Delegates, the State Solicitor and the Executive Director Corporate Services, in addition to members of the Human Resources Branch.

Disability Access and Inclusion Plan Outcomes

The SSO is committed to ensuring that our services, facilities, employment, and information are accessible. We have demonstrated our commitment by achieving the objectives of the DoJ's Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) 2024-29. During 2024-25, the SSO was proud to have made the following achievements and progress:

- › Development of legal advice templates in plain English has commenced in collaboration with the Plain English Foundation, with project completion anticipated by the end of 2025. As part of building staff understanding and support of this initiative, a CPD session was delivered in early June 2025 covering the importance of plain English writing.
- › In recognition of the International Day of People with Disability, the SSO hosted a 'Neurodivergence in the Workplace' workshop in December 2024. The training enhanced staff understanding of the needs and barriers faced by people with disability. It aimed to build disability confidence among staff, helping to improve client experiences and foster a more inclusive workplace.'
- › Accessibility needs were captured during the 2025 SSO Public Sector Lawyers Legal CPD Conference to ensure all participants were able to fully participate.
- › The SSO has developed Individual Emergency Response Plans (IERPs) for staff experiencing injury, illness or disability that may require emergency support in the workplace.
- › New leave provisions including disability leave was promoted to all staff through internal communications.
- › The SSO supported disability employment by continuing to seek and provide reasonable adjustments to applicants as part of the recruitment process.

Compliance with Public Sector Standards and Ethical Codes

The SSO strives to meet all requirements of the Public Sector Standards in Human Resource Management and the Public Sector Code of Ethics.

Our Human Resources team provides advice, support and guidance to managers and staff on the human resources standards and codes. The right to lodge breach of standard claims was provided to staff in accordance with the *Public Sector Management (Breaches of Standards) Regulations 2005 (WA)*. Two breaches were lodged in 2024-25 with no referrals to the Public Sector Commission.

The SSO currently operates under the DoJ's Code of Conduct.

Workforce Inclusiveness

The SSO is committed to ensuring our workplace is safe, respectful and inclusive of all staff. As a trusted legal service provider for the public sector, we are dedicated to meeting our clients' expectations and needs by upholding strong values and demonstrating a genuine commitment to diversity and inclusion. Beyond fulfilling our obligations as a public sector body, we recognise that an inclusive workplace and a diverse workforce that truly reflects the community we serve strengthens service delivery, improves staff morale, drives innovation, and is essential to long-term growth and success.

Our commitment is supported through our Diversity and Inclusion Framework and the development of our Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2025-29. Through careful consideration and consultation, the strategy development has progressed to finalisation, with the anticipated release to occur in September 2025.

We have also made progress with the development of our second Multicultural Plan and Reconciliation Action Plan. These plans will include effective strategies and actions that support our commitment. All staff will be consulted as part of the development of the plans to ensure meaningful engagement and diverse perspectives are captured.

The SSO actively seeks staff feedback and delivers actions that improve inclusion at the SSO. Through the Wellbeing and Inclusion Sub-Committee, staff are empowered to discuss inclusion and deliver initiatives that foster connection and collaboration.

As we progress through our diversity and inclusion journey, the SSO remains committed to delivering impactful actions. The SSO has made the following key achievements during 2024-25:

- › Joined the Diversity Council Australia as a member to access resources, latest research and tools to enhance learning and encourage staff engagement.
- › Recognised and celebrated key diversity and inclusion events:
- › For R U OK? Day, a seminar was delivered to our lawyers to increase awareness of mental health.
- › In November 2024, a workshop was delivered to improve staff understanding of diversity and inclusion including practical tools to build connection and respectful relationships.
- › As part of building understanding on delivering authentic and personalised Acknowledgement of Country, the SSO sponsored 15 staff to complete the Acknowledge This! workshop in 2025.
- › In March 2025, for the Close the Gap Day, a CPD seminar was delivered to our lawyers covering critical and often overlooked issues in our justice system: the barriers to accessing justice in remote Indigenous communities.
- › During National Reconciliation Week, we held a watch party of the WA National Reconciliation Breakfast, hosted an afternoon tea featuring key guest speakers who shared their personal insights on this year's theme "Bridging now to next", and sponsored a banner for the Street Banner Program initiative by Reconciliation Australia.
- › Onboarded seven law graduates in February 2025, reinforcing our focus on building a strong talent pipeline through targeted youth employment strategies.
- › Hosted two international student interns through the University of Western Australia (UWA) McCusker Centre for Citizenship Internship Program.
- › Hosted one Aboriginal full-time trainee through the Public Sector Commission's Solid Future's Traineeship Program in our Records team. The trainee will be supported to progress their Cert III in Government and will be given opportunities to learn new skills on the job over the 12 months.

Workplace Health, Safety and Injury Management

As part of the SSO's continued commitment to fostering a safe, healthy and supportive work environment and building organisational capability in enhancing health and safety culture, a comprehensive Work Health and Safety (WHS) Framework has been established. Structured around nine foundational pillars: Commitment and Obligations; Consultation and Participation; Risk Management; Safe Working and Wellbeing; Emergency Management; Incident Management; Injury Management; Capability; and Compliance. The WHS Framework is supported by a central WHS policy, along with training, resources, and reporting tools that strengthen systems and drive continuous improvement in managing health and safety. This new framework forms the SSO's Health and Safety Management System (HSMS).

Focus on vicarious trauma

Given the inherent psychological risk associated with the work of the SSO, including the potential for exposure to trauma, an annual training program on vicarious trauma has been established. Over the last two years 48% of legal and legal practice support staff attended Vicarious Trauma training. Comprehensive resources to help identify and manage the impacts of vicarious trauma are readily accessible to all staff on the SSO WHS intranet page.

The SSO has identified the importance of equipping its teams at a higher risk of experiencing vicarious trauma, with specialised training. This initiative reflects the SSO's commitment to fostering a

mentally healthy workplace and enhancing staff capability in delivering compassionate and effective support. A tailored half-day workshop will be delivered to deepen participants' understanding of trauma and its impacts, and to embed the six core principles of trauma-informed practice into their daily work. This training builds on prior learning and aims to strengthen organisational resilience and client outcomes through practical, evidence-based strategies.

Focus on psychological safety

Embedding a culture of empathy, compassion and psychological safety remains a key priority, with open, respectful and supportive conversations about mental health actively encouraged. To reinforce this commitment, a Mental Health First Aider (MHFAider) network was established. The SSO now has 23 trained MHFAiders, who offer confidential, non-judgmental support, guidance and access to resources. The MHFAider network is intentionally flexible, allowing individuals to opt in or out at any time, with additional counselling support available to ensure MHFAiders feel equipped and supported in their roles. The presence of this network plays a meaningful role in promoting psychological wellbeing and contributing to a workplace culture where employees feel respected, supported and empowered to seek help when needed.

Psychological safety is a priority at the SSO. Employees can report safety hazards and incidents confidentially through SSO's internal incident reporting system. Additionally, a complaints resolution process, which includes anonymous and confidential reporting mechanisms, has been implemented as part of a commitment to psychological safety. This confidential system is included in the SSO's internal MHFAider Network Response Process as part of a commitment to support psychological safety in reporting.

The SSO's Employee Assistance Program (EAP) services are available for personal or work-related issues for employees and their immediate family members. The provider facilitated 102 counselling sessions throughout the year, with an annual utilisation rate of 9.25%. EAP services have expanded to include a suite of wellbeing services including financial, nutrition and exercise initiatives to better support the wellbeing of employees.

The SSO has two Family and Domestic Violence (FDV) contact officers who provide dedicated support to staff experiencing FDV. These officers provide guidance on leave entitlements as well as workplace safety planning. Where workplace safety concerns arise, tailored safety plans are developed in close consultation with the affected employee. In addition, the EAP offers specialised counselling services and referrals to external support agencies, ensuring staff receive confidential support tailored to their individual needs.

Workplace Health, Safety and Injury Management

External agencies, such as the SSO's EAP provider, deliver mental health and wellbeing webinars, available to all employees. Quarterly online magazines featuring articles and resources relating to mental and physical wellbeing are available on the intranet. Key mental health and wellbeing days are actively promoted throughout the year via safety news emails and the WHS intranet page. In October, Safe Work Month 2024 was highlighted across internal channels, with employees given access to a series of targeted webinars covering topics such as psychosocial hazards and risk management fundamentals.

Focus on physical safety

The WHS Committee continues to play an active role in promoting a safe working environment at the SSO. Regular safety audits and ongoing consultation processes are undertaken to identify potential hazards and implement corrective actions. In addition, the WHS Committee contributes to the development, review and implementation of safety policies, procedures and guidelines, reinforcing the SSO's commitment to the health and wellbeing of staff.

All SSO employees complete mandatory WHS Awareness training within the first three months of employment. In-person WHS inductions equip new employees with essential safety information and resources drawn from the WHS Framework pillars. Over the next 12 months, a comprehensive suite of WHS training modules will be developed to align with

the evolving WHS Framework and support continuous learning across the SSO.

The SSO has 11 wardens across five floors. The wardens are trained in evacuation procedures for people with disability, injury or illness that limit their mobility. Each warden is provided with a summary of the Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans for the floors that they service. Wardens complete annual training and building management schedule annual evacuation drills. Reviews of the emergency evacuation process occur after each drill to facilitate and support ongoing improvement. As part of the 2023 -24 review of emergency management systems, including first aid equipment and personnel, the SSO installed its first semi-automated external defibrillator (AED). To build staff confidence in using the AED during an emergency, two AED demonstration workshops were delivered, with a total of 52 staff participating.

Individual Emergency Response Plans are developed to support employees with injury, illness or disability who may require emergency assistance in the workplace. These plans are tailored in collaboration with the employee by the Safety team and Human Resource Business Partners in consultation with relevant managers, first aid officers, wardens and facilities team as appropriate. Additionally, the SSO provides tailored return-to-work planning for employees managing non-work-related injury, illness or disability, ensuring they are supported to safely reintegrate into the workplace. These plans are

collaboratively developed by the Safety team and HR Business Partner, in consultation with the employee and relevant managers.

Ergonomic and workplace assessments are available to all employees through the SSO's qualified ergonomist. Workplace adjustments have been implemented for a total of 38 employees, with 56 ergonomic or assistive equipment/technology items recommended, procured and installed, supporting accessibility, safety and inclusive participation in the workplace.

Workplace Health, Safety and Injury Management Performance Report

The SSO works in partnership with the Workers' Compensation and Injury Management team (DoJ), injured worker, managers, injury management consultants and insurer to implement early intervention strategies and support a safe return to work.

There has been a 66.7% reduction in Lost Time Injury (LTI) and Incidence Rate and a 100% reduction in LTI and severity rate. Compliance with mandatory WHS Manager training remains steady, exceeding the target of 80%, with a total of 84% of managers trained.

Workplace Health, Safety and Injury Management

Health, safety and injury management performance reporting 2022-23 to 2024-25					
Measures	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	Targets	Comments about targets
Number of fatalities	0	0	0	0	Achieved
LTI and disease incidence rate	0.44	1.05	0.35	0 or 10% reduction in incidence rate	Achieved 66.7% reduction
LTI and severity rate	100	100	0	0 or 10% reduction in severity rate	Achieved 100% reduction
Percentage of injured workers returned to work (i) within 13 weeks (ii) within 26 weeks	0%	50%	0%	Greater than or equal to 80%	One LTI was recorded during the 2024–25 financial year, with a 0.35% LTI and severity rate. The worker resigned within the 13-week benchmark period, and as a result, no Return-to-Work (RTW) outcome was achieved. This is recorded as a 0% RTW rate for the 2024 calendar year, in line with reporting conventions.
Percentage of managers trained in work health and safety injury management responsibilities, including refresher training within 3 years	25%	93%	84%	Greater than or equal to 80%	Achieved

WA Multicultural Policy Framework

The SSO is committed to building cultural diversity and inclusion. We strive to empower culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD) staff, ensuring they have the opportunities and support to participate fully, contribute meaningfully and achieve their goals.

This year, the SSO commenced development of our second Multicultural Plan. The plan is set to launch by 30 September 2025.

The following table outlines our key achievements against our current Multicultural Plan 2022-2025.

Policy Priority	Key achievements
Harmonious and inclusive communities.	In celebration of Harmony Week, the SSO's Wellbeing and Inclusion Subcommittee delivered a morning tea celebration inviting all staff. Staff were encouraged to bring a dish to share, representing their cultural background. Throughout the week, staff were also encouraged to wear orange in support of Harmony Week.
Culturally responsive policies, programs and services.	<p>All staff were encouraged to increase understanding and appreciation of CaLD communities through online training to ensure we deliver culturally responsive services and contribute to an inclusive workplace. As of 30 June 2025, 105 staff have completed the DiverseWA online training.</p> <p>In June 2025, the SSO formally registered an account with Translating and Interpreting Services National to provide communication assistance to non-English speaking clients and other stakeholders that we engage with.</p>
Economic, social, cultural and political participation.	<p>In February 2025, the SSO participated in the Jambo Africa Festival and held a stall to share information about the SSO and promote job opportunities and careers in law and corporate roles to the local community.</p> <p>The SSO also hosted three CaLD interns this year. Two international students through the UWA McCusker Centre for Citizenship Internship Program, and one CaLD university student from overseas who is undertaking a three-month HR placement.</p> <p>The intern has been working on an HR project from June 2025.</p>



Recordkeeping Plans

The SSO's Recordkeeping Plan sets out the matters about which records are to be created and how they are to be kept. It also provides an accurate reflection of the recordkeeping program within the SSO, including information regarding our recordkeeping system(s), disposal arrangements, policies, practices, and processes.

The SSO's Recordkeeping Plan was signed by the State Solicitor on August 26, 2024, and submitted to the State Records Commission the following day, where it received final approval. The Retention and Disposal Schedule was initially endorsed in March 2021 and later amended in May 2022. A full review and update of the schedule is planned for the 2025–26 period, in alignment with broader initiatives focused on Privacy and Responsible Information Sharing.







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This annual report is available in alternative formats upon request.



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