



the  
**way ahead**

# CICA's aims and objectives

The Authority's aim is:

**to provide an efficient and fair service to innocent victims of violent crime.**

To achieve this, we will:

- process applications as quickly as possible while investigating claims fairly;
- treat applicants with sensitivity and courtesy at all times;
- help people understand the service we provide and keep applicants informed;
- support our staff to perform to their full potential; and
- be accountable for the service we provide and the public funds we spend.





## Chief Executive's introduction

From having personal responsibility for front line service delivery to setting performance standards for others, delivering an excellent standard of service has been the underlying theme of my career. So improving the CICA's service, both for victims of violent crime and our key stakeholders, was my top priority when I became the organisation's Chief Executive in September last year. I already knew that the National Audit Office were about to publish a highly critical report on the Authority but I also knew that we had the backing of our sponsor department and some very committed staff who were ready to embrace the change necessary.

There were already major changes being tested before I took over. However, working with the newly established management board, we identified other processes which could make a difference to the way we work. By January 2008 the CICA board had a significant amount of information on which to base its forward strategy including; the outcome of pilot and other special exercises; staff surveys and forums; and applicant surveys, which could be added to the National Audit Office's findings. At the end of that month, we announced to our staff the model we believe will deliver real change for our organisation, and real improvement in the services we provide for our applicants and for you, the stakeholders on whom we rely.

What follows is a summary of the changes being rolled out across our organisation over the course of this year. We think these changes will make dealing with CICA easier and provide a better service to innocent victims of violent crime. At this point we have only set out how the Authority will change internally to provide a better level of service; the next stage is to engage with our key stakeholders to see what more we can do together. Over the course of the year it is our intention to hold a stakeholders' conference and to meet up with individual stakeholders to discuss how we can work more effectively in the future.

If you have any views on our proposals, or you would like to ensure that we will include you further as we roll out our change programme, please get in touch.



CICA's new management, from left: Prakash Bachoo, Director of Legal Services and Policy; Carole Oatway, Chief Executive; Carole Lyons, Director of Finance; Tilly Loughborough, Director of Corporate Services; George Connor, Director of Operations

# Why we're changing

Our performance has not been at the level we would like to see in recent years. Although our staff were performing well in that time, the system in which they were working was no longer up to the job.

An interim team of directors was appointed in late 2006 to look at the Authority with fresh eyes as a response to the performance difficulties that had been identified. Their dual role was to recruit a new senior management team and to prepare the way for that team to make a fresh start at CICA.

During this period CICA was also the main subject of a critical National Audit Office report into

compensating victims of violent crime. The report said that we took too long to process applications, that our communications with our applicants were not good enough, that our processes were too repetitive and that we didn't make the best use of the information we gathered from third parties.

The new management board has now had time to reflect on the NAO report's findings and to add these to our experience since joining the organisation. We have started the process of changing the way we work to help meet the Government's objective of putting victims at the heart of the UK justice system.

# What we're changing in finance



Carole Lyons, left, is Director of Finance, responsible for risk and assurance, business planning, secretariat, finance and IT support.



The finance directorate's key function is to provide basic financial control and management. We compile and publish our annual accounts as well as providing monthly returns to the Ministry of Justice and furnishing the Board and any other governing committees with financial information.

As well as acting as the guardian of budgets, in future our finance team will provide key management information. The team will ensure that our financial reporting is up to date with technical accounting requirements and will provide detailed cost modelling to improve our understanding of the cost implications of business processes. Naturally, the finance team itself will also strive to improve its own efficiency and effectiveness.

The directorate, however, deals with more than just money. As well as being responsible for our finances, the directorate handles our risk and assurance, IT support, business planning and secretariat functions. As part of our current restructuring, many of these functions are either new to CICA or undergoing radical change. The key objective, therefore is to set up and structure each function, embed them into our business and ensure adequate controls are in place throughout the organisation.

Our new structure will help ensure we are governed effectively. Our teams will work together to ensure that the plans and project groups are in place to deliver our objectives. Throughout each year they will monitor our performance against our published targets to keep our management and sponsoring departments fully aware of how we are performing and to enable corrective action if it appears unlikely that a target will be met.

Our secretariat provides a single point of contact for our sponsoring bodies and Parliament. They will act as our communications hub with these bodies, including taking responsibility for answering Parliamentary questions.

Risk mitigation is crucial to our effectiveness. Risk and assurance will provide a framework to monitor risk throughout the organisation and will continually assess the adequacy of these controls.

IT support is a key enabler for the whole organisation. We will restructure our IT functions following development of an IT strategy designed to meet our needs. This will be comprehensive, taking into account operating systems, desktop requirements, telecommunications and more.

Our goal is to make our finance directorate a model of efficiency and effectiveness, providing our staff and stakeholders with first-rate service.

# What we're changing in operations



Change will affect all of our organisation. In terms of how we interact with stakeholders, however, the major change will be the reorganisation of our caseworking teams.

We want to spend more time talking with our applicants rather than communicating through standard letters. We have therefore established an in-house, freephone support service to offer a more personal service to victims.

Among other things, our new support service will allow customers to apply over the phone, allowing our support staff to guide them through the process. Of course, the option of providing a written application will still be available for those who prefer this.

We intend to make our processes easier to follow and minimise the number of ineligible applications from people who do not understand the scheme.

We have moved to a system of geographically-based

caseworking teams. The map on the left shows the teams and the areas they will cover. This change will allow us to build and maintain effective relationships with the organisations we rely on - your organisations - in those areas through frequent personal contact. The move to a geographically-based operation was part of our pilot process over the last year and results show there is a real benefit to be gained.

We're also bringing together our currently separate first decision, review and appeal teams. This means that, if an applicant is unhappy with our decision in their case and wants us to conduct further investigation, the people who gathered the information for that case the first time around will be able to make sure that we don't duplicate the work. It will also provide a much better feedback loop in our decision-making process.

As well as building better stakeholder relationships locally, we also want to talk to our stakeholders more often and more productively at the strategic level. We will hold a stakeholder conference this year, which we hope will merely be the opening of a series of workshops and other contact, at which we want to listen to your concerns and find ways of making our working relationship more productive for all of us.

## Geographical teams

- Team 1: Scotland and Wales
- Team 2: North-West England
- Team 3: North-East England
- Team 4: Midlands
- Team 5: South
- Team 6: London

# What we're changing in applicant support



George Connor, left, is Director of Operations, responsible for casework operations, specialist casework and applicant support.



One of our biggest changes is the expansion of our applicant support team. This team was relatively small and its main function was to input the data from paper applications for compensation onto our computer system. The new applicant support team will do much more.

We want to make ourselves much more accessible to customers. One of the key changes we have made is to establish a single, freephone telephone number for all incoming calls. This replaced the four routes previously available for telephoning us (standard rate calls to our switchboard, individual caseworkers, or customer liaison, or the outsourced freephone number) and is manned by part of our applicant support team. Once we have recruited the full complement of staff for the telephone service, we will contact applicants and, where appropriate, representatives to phase out any remaining use of individual caseworkers' phone numbers.

This service will extend our opening hours. This means that you will be able to contact us from 08:00 to 20:00 during the week, and between 09:00 and 13:00 on Saturdays.

There will be a phased approach to adding telephone services while we recruit staff. Phase one has already been implemented and we now offer general scheme advice and send out paper applications to callers. We are increasingly moving into phase two, in which we will answer queries about existing cases through the central telephone

service, rather than routing such calls through to caseworkers, which can be time-consuming and annoying for customers.

In the final stage, we will move towards completing more and more applications over the phone with customers directly. This will allow us to guide people through the application process, making it less stressful, and also to give them early guidance on whether their claim is likely to be successful.

In our recent applicant survey, many customers stressed how important they felt it was to get this kind of guidance. Currently, around 50 per cent of the cases we handle are deemed ineligible for compensation. We recognise that it can be very frustrating for people to go through an application process, sometimes a lengthy one, only to be rejected. That's why we will give people completing telephone applications clear advice, where we can, about whether their case is likely to be eligible.

If, for example, somebody tells us that the incident they want to claim for occurred while they were on holiday in Spain, then we know they can't apply to the British scheme. We will say this at the application stage once our new approach is rolled out, while also offering assistance in the customer's application to the Spanish scheme. We believe this will save many people needless distress and allow us to concentrate on giving a faster, better service to those people who are eligible.

# What we're changing in corporate services



Tilly Loughborough, left, is Director of Corporate Services, responsible for office services, human resources, learning and development, customer liaison and communications.



**W**e want to deliver first-class services for our customers and stakeholders. That means we need to communicate with them effectively and to give our staff first-class support.

We have already started refreshing the way we communicate with customers. Last year we established our customer liaison team to engage with dissatisfied customers and lead our relationships with members of Parliament. This year we will develop that team into a single point of contact for key stakeholder feedback on our standard of service. We will redefine our processes to provide the high standards of service to which we aspire and we will produce a customer charter to define clearly what all of our customers can expect of us.

We will also have a central point of contact for all data protection and freedom of information requests. Our information officer will lead the co-ordination of responses and ensure our processes comply with the terms of the law.

To provide this level of service we are restructuring to meet our needs as a business and, more importantly, the needs of our customers. We have a new, dedicated HR team who will help us retain and recruit staff with the skills and experience necessary to deliver our aims and objectives.

New staff and existing staff will be given the training they need to interact effectively with our customers and stakeholders. Our learning and development team have already produced a comprehensive plan to deliver well-targeted training.

**“We will produce a customer charter to define clearly what all of our customers can expect of us...”**

Finally, we want to project the right image to our customers. The 2008 Public Accounts Committee hearing found that some of our key documents were difficult to understand. As a result, we have developed a style manual to give clear guidelines on how to make our documents as accessible as possible. We will use these principles to redesign our documents and work with stakeholders to ensure the information we provide to customers suits their needs.

# What we're changing in legal services and policy



Prakash Bachoo, left, is Director of Legal Services and Policy, responsible for all scheme policy, pre-tariff casework and legal advice.



Our legal services and policy directorate provides guidance, support and advice to the organisation and its staff. The directorate ensures that the actions we take are legally defensible, fair and within the terms of the criminal injuries compensation scheme.

We will be expanding our policy section to give it central responsibility for all CICA scheme policy work. This means that any changes in the way we work will undergo a strict vetting procedure to ensure that we are fully aware of the wider impact of our decisions, and have considered the likely ramifications.

As stakeholders, your input on scheme policy interpretations is valued and we will seek out your views when it is appropriate. We also want to facilitate joint training between CICA staff and key stakeholders to allow a better shared understanding of the scheme. Similarly, the legal services and policy directorate will become more involved in training other CICA staff to improve the consistency of our decision making and to ensure that all staff have access to current and clear scheme policy guidance.

We want to develop our relationship with all of our stakeholders so that we can assist each other as much as possible. Ultimately we want to draw up service level agreements between us and all of our stakeholders who provide third party information. This will ensure that our respective staff know exactly how best to meet each others' needs.

The victims that we all serve must have access to the best possible information about us. That is why we will ensure that all of our documentation is consistent with the terms of the criminal injuries compensation schemes.

In addition to being a central resource for all legal and policy guidance, the directorate is also responsible for handling our 'pre-tariff' cases.

**“We want to develop our relationship with you so that we can assist each other as much as possible...”**

These cases pre-date the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme of 1996 and are assessed on a common law basis. Many of these remaining cases relate to injuries sustained by infants, where we often cannot be certain of the level of disability until the child reaches adulthood. This year we will build a strategy to finalise each remaining case as soon as we can.

The improvements in our legal services and policy directorate should make case decision-making easier and faster.



# How this affects you

Over the coming year, and beyond, you will notice big changes in the way that CICA interacts with your organisation. We want to make our forms and letters easier to read and complete, we want to build better relationships with stakeholders at the local and national level by engaging in more frequent personal conversation, and we want to spend more time talking with our applicants rather than communicating through standard letters.

Some of these changes have already rolled out.

More will be on the way soon and we want to ensure that we take every opportunity to improve our interaction with applicants and stakeholders.

We know that you share our commitment to improving services for victims of violent crime. That's why we want to hear your ideas for how we can make it easier for your organisations to communicate with us quickly and effectively, and for what you can offer us to make our work faster. Together, we can help put victims at the heart of the Criminal Justice System.

# Our aspirations

We want to:

- register new applications within three working days of receipt
- reduce the number of ineligible applications reaching the later stages of our process by five per cent
- reduce our active caseload by 20,000
- reduce the cycle time for active tariff cases by four months
- reduce the number of appeals resulting in a changed decision by two per cent
- increase our overall customer satisfaction rating by two per cent
- reduce our unit cost by five per cent



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