



***Summary Technical and Baseline Report
on the Lord Chancellor's Department's
SR2000 PSA Targets 5 and 6***

*Report to the Lord Chancellor's Department and
Legal Services Commission, 2002*

Legal Services Research Centre

VERSION 1.03 (01.12.04)

1. One of the main aims of the LSRC survey was to measure and provide baseline data for the Lord Chancellor's Department's SR2000 PSA targets 5 and 6. For both PSA targets, multiple indicators have been developed. The principal indicator is derived from screen section data; other explanatory indicators are provided from main section data. These allow principal indicators to be contextualised. So, the screen section data indicators are representative, while the main section data indicators are explanatory in nature. Due to differences between questions in the two sections, principal and other indicators will sometimes appear different.
2. PSA target 5 is defined as being 'to reduce the proportion of disputes which are resolved by resort to the courts'. The indicator used to measure the target is the number of disputes resolved by resort to the courts divided by the number of disputes resolved (resolved being defined as concluded through a process to which all parties have subscribed or by court, tribunal or ombudsman's adjudication). This target relates only to disputes in priority areas of law, so neighbourhood problems have been removed from our analysis.
3. When populated with data from the LSRC survey, the formula for the principal indicator for PSA 5 produces a measure of 0.0897. This means that 9% of disputes were resolved by resort to court or tribunal processes. Through the main section of the questionnaire respondents reported that 20% of disputes resolved in such a manner involved tribunal as opposed to court processes.
4. Inconsistencies between the screen and main survey data in relation to PSA 5 lead us to believe that respondents had more difficulty than expected understanding questions relating to court and tribunal processes. Having investigated the matter and examined the form of questions we regard the measure derived from the main section as

more likely to be reliable. We recommend that the screen question be altered for the first follow up survey, and therefore also recommend that the corresponding main section derived measure be used as the main target indicator until after the first follow up survey. This formula for this measure, when populated with data from the LSRC survey yielded a figure of 0.1376 or 13.8%.¹ This figure relates only to courts.

5. PSA target 6 is defined as being 'to increase the number of people who receive suitable assistance in priority areas of law, involving fundamental rights or social exclusion, by 5% by 2004'. The indicator used to measure this target is the number of people receiving suitable assistance. For this purpose, 'suitable assistance' is defined as appropriate support from an advice-giving organisation. It does not include advice obtained from self-help guides, libraries or the internet. The target relates to disputes only in priority areas of law.
6. When populated with provisional data from the LSRC survey, the formula for the principal indicator for PSA 6 produces a measure of 0.11032. This means that suitable assistance was obtained in respect of the equivalent of 110.3 problems per 1000 population over the survey reference period (around 31 per annum). For information, a second, proportional screen indicator for PSA 6 was also created. When it is populated with provisional data from the LSRC survey, the alternative proportional screen indicator produces a measure of 0.3236. This means that suitable assistance was obtained in respect of 32.4% of problems.
7. The more detailed data from the main section of the survey was then used to derive explanatory variables relating to satisfaction with advice received, and whether the respondent would recommend the advisor to another. When populated with provisional data from the LSRC survey, the formula for these explanatory variables for PSA 6 produce

¹ This adversely affects the margin of error for PSA 5 measures, and should be seen as only a short-term option.

measures of 0.8049 (satisfaction) and 0.8463 (recommendation). This means that eighty per cent of those obtaining suitable assistance, as defined by the principal indicator, were, on balance, satisfied with the assistance they received, and eighty-five per cent would, on balance, recommend the advice suppliers they made use of. Taking these figures and applying them to the principal indicator for PSA 6 allows us to produce an adjusted (i.e. combined) screen based indicator of 0.0888 (satisfaction) and 0.0934 (recommendation). This last measurement indicates levels of satisfaction/suitable assistance for those respondents already defined as receiving suitable assistance and equates to 89 people in 1000 (satisfaction) and 93 people in 1000 (recommendation).