



Comptroller and Auditor General
Report on Value for Money Examination

Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform

The Probation and Welfare Service

January 2004

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This report was prepared on the basis of information, documentation and explanations obtained from the public bodies referred to in the report. The draft report was sent to the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform. Where appropriate, the comments received from the Department were incorporated in the final version of the report.

Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General

The Probation and Welfare Service

I have, in accordance with the provisions of Section 9 of the Comptroller and Auditor General (Amendment) Act, 1993, carried out a value for money examination of the operations of the Probation and Welfare Service.

I hereby submit my report on the above examination for presentation to Dáil Éireann pursuant to Section 11 of the said Act.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Purcell', with a large circular flourish at the beginning.

John Purcell
Comptroller and Auditor General

12 January 2004

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Summary of Findings

Summary of Findings

The Probation and Welfare Service (the Service) is an operational agency within the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform (the Department). It has a staff of just over 320, working mainly in community-based teams, or in prisons and places of detention. The Service also employs contract staff to oversee unpaid community service work carried out by offenders.

The main functions of the Service in the criminal justice system are to

- prepare reports at the request of judges, to assist them in deciding on appropriate sentences for offenders
- supervise offenders subject to community-based sanctions ordered by the courts
- plan and assist in the rehabilitation of offenders in prisons or other places of detention.
- In addition, the Service funds a large number of schemes and programmes that provide education, accommodation, treatment and counselling services for offenders under supervision in the community. Total expenditure by the Service in 2002 was just over €32 million. In 2003, around €40.7 million was provided for the Service.

This examination focused on the operations of the Service over the period 1995 to 2002. In particular, it examined how well the Service has addressed

- the demands for its outputs
- the efficiency of its operations
- the effectiveness of the services it delivers.

The Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform established an Expert Group to review the Service in 1998. Some of the recommendations of the Expert Group, set out in two reports published in 1998 and 1999, have been partly or fully implemented. The Government decided to postpone implementation of certain other recommendations until this examination was completed.

Service Delivery

The level of demand in the criminal justice system for all of the Service's main outputs — reports to courts, supervision in the community and assistance to offenders in custody — increased significantly in the period 1995 to 2002. Staff numbers increased by around one third in 2001/2002 in response to the increased demand.

In 2002, there were around 4,100 persons under supervision in the community, compared to a daily average of around 3,200 prisoners in custody — a ratio of around 1.3:1. This examination found that there was no significant change in the relative use of community-based sanctions and custodial sentences between 1995 and 2002. While the estimated total number of persons under supervision increased by half, there was a similar increase in the estimated average prison population. The 1999 Expert Group report suggested that, in line with practice in other jurisdictions, there should be more scope for judges to impose community-based sanctions, relative to custodial sentencing.

Community-based sanctions were originally developed as a means of providing judges with an increased range of options when imposing sentences on offenders. More recently, the concept of

imposing a custodial sentence followed by a period of supervision has been developed, in the context of dealing with sex offenders.

Some of the main activities the Service carries out in the criminal justice system are not based on statutory powers. For example, almost half of offenders referred for supervision in 2000 were supervised by the Service without formal court orders being made — in these cases, sentence is deferred by the judge for a stated period. Most reports to courts are also provided on a non-statutory basis.

In contrast to its carrying out of non-statutory functions in the criminal justice area, the Service did not discharge functions in the family law area, for which there is a statutory basis, in the period 1995 to 2002. Up to 1995, the Service provided some support in family law cases, but this was suspended because of demands in the criminal justice area. Following the increase in staff levels in recent years, the Service has agreed to provide some support for family law courts on a one-year pilot basis.

Efficiency of Community-Based Work

Less than 10% of the cost of the Service in 2001 related to work in prisons and other places of detention. The balance was applied in carrying out community-based work — mainly providing reports to assist the courts, and supervision of offenders in the community.

Community-based teams provide reports, at the request of judges, about the suitability of the available community-based sanctions for persons found guilty of offences. The estimated cost to the Service in 2001 of providing an individual pre-sentence report averaged around €800 to €900. Following receipt of reports, judges may make an order referring the case for supervision by the Service, or may decide to impose a custodial sentence.

The nature, intensity and average duration of the different types of supervision varies and has different cost implications. Based on spending in 2001, implementing orders for supervision cost an estimated average of €1,500 for each community service order, €4,100 for supervision of an offender during deferment of penalty and €6,100 for supervision of an offender subject to a probation order.

The suitability of a community-based sanction in the case of an individual offender is a matter for the relevant judge. However, because community-based sanctions are significantly less costly to implement than custodial sentences, the availability of a community-based sanction at the point of sentencing provides a more economic option in suitable cases. For example, based on 2001 spending, it is estimated that implementing community service orders costs about one-third of the cost of implementing the custodial sentences that might otherwise be imposed.

There may be scope for more efficient use of the resources currently devoted to court duty. Probation and Welfare Officers routinely attend District Court hearings to receive requests for reports and referrals for supervision, and to deliver previously requested reports. This attendance absorbed an estimated 13% of the available professional main grade resources of the Service. The Service and the Courts Service should jointly examine arrangements for routine communication of court referrals for supervision and requests for reports, to see if rostered court duty can be reduced.

While acknowledging that many factors influence caseloads, the significant caseload variations between community-based teams noted during the examination may be worth investigating further from the point of view of optimum deployment of staff resources.

Work in Prisons and Places of Detention

The intended role of Service staff working with offenders in custody has changed in recent years. Previously, the role involved a significant degree of provision of assistance to offenders with welfare problems. The aim increasingly is to motivate offenders, who work with Service staff on a voluntary basis, to address their offending behaviour and use their time in custody constructively. Service staff are reducing their output of counselling sessions with individual prisoners and are involved more, working with Prison Service staff and with other disciplines, in structured group work with prisoners.

The cost of the Service's work in prisons and places of detention in 2001 averaged around €750 per offender. This reflects the fact that the ratio of prisoners to Probation and Welfare Officers was significantly higher than the Service's target ratio. In October 2002, the ratio was 87 prisoners per Probation and Welfare Officer, compared to a target of 50:1 generally, and 30:1 for special category prisoners, such as young offenders, prisoners serving life sentences and sex offenders. These target ratios take account of the fact that some offenders choose not to make contact with the Service during their time in custody.

Because there is no automated case recording system in use in the Service, the extent to which offenders in custody avail of Service assistance cannot readily be identified. While the Service aims for early intervention with offenders in custody, it doesn't monitor its response time.

Managing Service Performance

Performance reporting is not well developed in the Service. Performance measurement systems needed to allow it to report its performance or to evaluate its effectiveness are not in place. The Service has no system for producing routine management information. Information and communications systems in the Service have been poorly developed, but projects to computerise the Service and to develop a case tracking system are now well advanced. In developing its management strategy for the future, the Service should make provision for periodic evaluation of its own performance.

The ultimate objective of the Service, in both its community-based work and work with offenders in custody, is to reduce the level of re-offending as much as possible. Neither the Department — which oversees the operation of the criminal justice system — nor the Service has carried out research into rates of re-offending and the relative effectiveness of custodial sentences and community-based sanctions in Ireland. The results of this kind of research would assist the Service in preparing advisory reports for judges. It should also help to inform and provide assurance to the public that the work done by the Service is having the desired effect.

The Probation and Welfare Service

1 Introduction

1.1 The Probation and Welfare Service (the Service) carries out a range of functions at different stages in the prosecution of criminal cases and in the subsequent handling of offenders, together with the Courts and Prisons Services. The main functions of the Service are to

- prepare reports at the request of judges, to assist them in deciding on appropriate sentences for convicted offenders
- supervise offenders subject to community-based sanctions, with the objective of reducing or eliminating re-offending, thereby contributing to public safety
- plan and assist in the rehabilitation of offenders in prisons or other places of detention, and their integration into society following release, with a view to reducing the likelihood of re-offending

1.2 Community-based sanctions are generally regarded as being less punitive than custodial sentences, and consequently may be more appropriate punishments for certain types of offences and offenders. They are also usually less costly to enforce. They were originally developed as a means of providing judges with more options in imposing sentences on offenders. More recently, the concept of imposing a custodial sentence followed by a period of supervision has been developed, particularly in the context of dealing with sex offenders.

1.3 In addition to its functions in the criminal justice system, the Service also has a statutory role in providing reports to judges in civil family law cases. However, the provision by the Service of reports in family law cases was suspended in 1995 because of a lack of staff resources.

Organisation of the Probation and Welfare Service

1.4 The Service is established and run as an operational agency within the Prisons/Probation and Welfare Division of the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform (the Department). In addition to setting policy in relation to the Service and overseeing its implementation, the Department provides support for the Service in a number of administrative functions, including human resources, budgeting and accounting, and information technology support.

Service Staffing

1.5 In March 2003, a total of 323 staff were employed with the Service. Of these, 207 were main grade Probation and Welfare Officers.

1.6 Traditionally, the Service recruited professional staff who were social science graduates with a minimum of one year's experience in a relevant area. Some of those recruited would also have held a postgraduate qualification in social work. In 2002, due to the unavailability of sufficient candidates with the required experience, the Service recruited staff without the requisite experience on a temporary basis, pending the holding of a competition for permanent appointments in due course.

Structure of the Service

1.7 The Service is generally organised around regionally distributed teams, each managed by a Senior Probation and Welfare Officer and usually comprising four to six Probation and Welfare

Officers. Supervision of offenders in the community and the provision of reports to courts are undertaken by 31 community-based teams. Work in prisons and places of detention is undertaken by prison-based teams in Dublin and by some staff assigned to community-based teams but who work full time in prisons and places of detention within the respective teams' geographic regions.

1.8 A new team, consisting of an Assistant Principal Probation and Welfare Officer and a Senior Probation and Welfare Officer — the Homeless Offenders Strategy Team (HOST) — was established by the Service in June 2002 to co-ordinate the development of accommodation services for homeless offenders during and after periods of supervision and following release from detention. Homelessness is considered to be a major barrier to the social integration of offenders, and also creates circumstances where re-offending may occur. The Service does not provide accommodation directly, but through the HOST team liaises with accommodation providers to try to reduce the level of homelessness among offenders.

1.9 Central policy and operational support services are provided by Service headquarters staff in Dublin, and by relevant units of the Department. In addition, each of the regional operational managers at Assistant Principal Probation and Welfare Officer level has been assigned responsibility for development of one or more strategic issues relevant to the Service.

1.10 Total funding provided for the Service in 2003 was around €40.7 million.

Review of Probation and Welfare Service

1.11 The Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform established an Expert Group to review the Service in 1998. In its two reports (published in October 1998 and July 1999), the Group recognised that there were increased demands on the Service and concluded that there was scope to increase the range and use of community-based sanctions. It recommended that the number of officers employed by the Service should be increased significantly. It also recommended that the Service should resume its role in the provision of reports to judges in family law cases.

1.12 Some of the recommendations of the Expert Group have been partly or fully implemented. The Government decided to postpone implementation of certain other recommendations until this examination was completed. A summary of the current position in relation to each of the recommendations of the Expert Group is set out in Appendix A.

Scope of Examination

1.13 This examination focused on the operations of the Service over the period 1995 to 2002. In particular, it examined how well the Service addressed

- the demands for its outputs
- the efficiency of its operations
- the effectiveness of the services it delivers.

Examination Methodology

1.14 The examination was carried out by staff of the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General.

1.15 The work carried out during the examination included the following main elements.

- Interviews were held with the managers of the Service, with Probation and Welfare Officers and with Senior Probation and Welfare Officers. Interviews were also held with staff of the Department who deal with policy in relation to the Service and who oversee the Service's operations.
- Visits were made to seven of the Service's community-based teams (Dublin North East, Dublin North Inner City, Dublin South, Cork South, Athlone and Wexford teams and the Dublin Circuit Court team), to the Service team operating in Mountjoy Prison and to a number of schemes providing services for offenders in the community, funded through grant-aid and/or partly managed by the Service.
- Files and management reports concerning the operation of the Service were reviewed.
- Expenditure by the Service was identified and analysed.
- An activity survey was carried out in a sample of six of the Service's 31 community-based teams to provide estimates of how staff time is used in the Service.
- Data collected by the Service about community-based Probation and Welfare Officer's caseloads in February 2002 was analysed.
- National and international reports about performance measurement and evaluation of probation services were reviewed.

Structure of Report

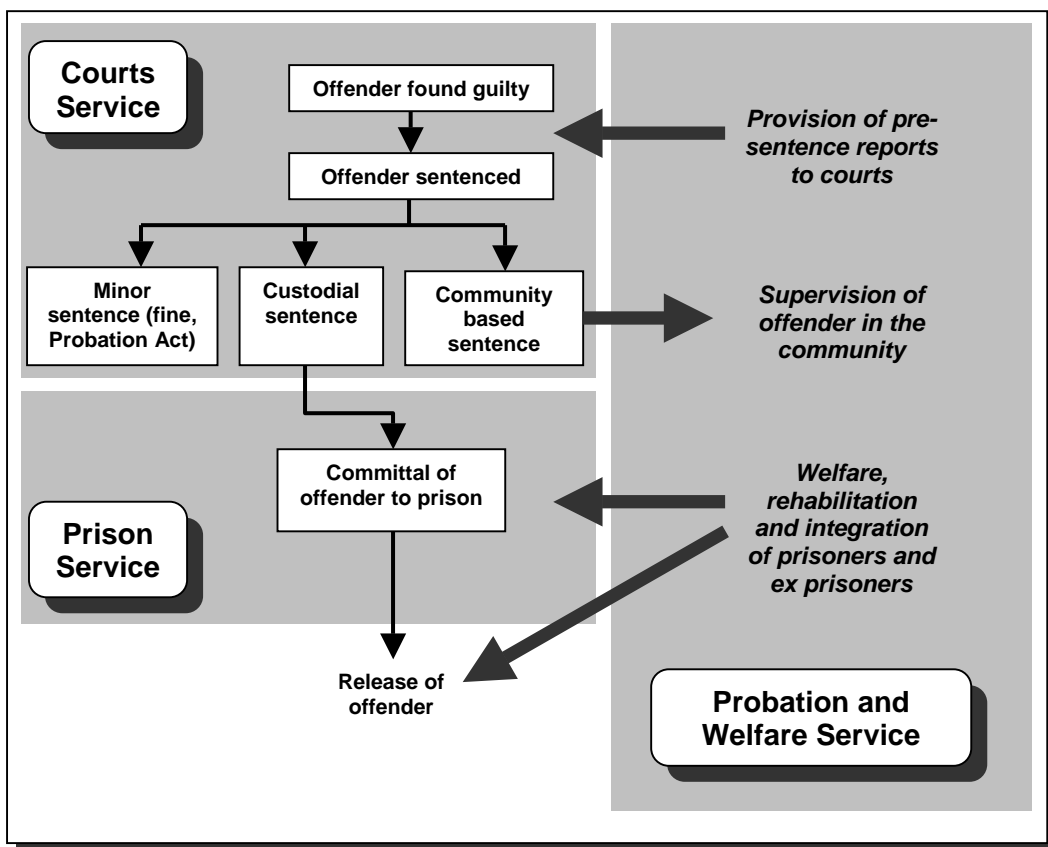
1.16 Chapter 2 looks at trends in the level of outputs of the Service, in the light of changing demands. Chapter 3 looks at the cost of the service and the level of efficiency achieved in the delivery of outputs. Chapter 4 examines the extent to which the Service has developed the systems, procedures and practices necessary to evaluate its effectiveness and to ensure that it delivers quality outputs.

2 Probation and Welfare Service Outputs

2.1 The main outputs produced by the Probation and Welfare Service — supervision of offenders, reports to courts, and welfare and rehabilitation of prisoners — are driven by demands from other parts of the criminal justice system. The outputs are also interrelated, with individual offenders potentially being handled at different times by different parts of the Service, as indicated in Figure 2.1.

2.2 This chapter looks at the level of outputs produced by the Service and considers the extent to which it meets the demands of the criminal justice system for probation and welfare support.

Figure 2.1 Overview of the role of the Probation and Welfare Service in the criminal justice system



Demands on the Service

2.3 A number of trends in the criminal justice system are perceived to have increased the level of demand on the Service over the past number of years.

Demand for Supervision

- The number of persons being prosecuted for indictable crime is increasing.
- The Expert Group on the Probation and Welfare Service recommended in its 1999 report that there should be a significant shift in policy to facilitate the increased use of non-

custodial sanctions and the widening of the range of community-based sanctions available to judges in criminal cases.

- Recent legislation has provided for sex offenders to receive custodial sentences, followed by extended periods of intensive supervision in the community.

Demand for all of the Service's outputs is increasing

Demand for Reports to Courts

- There is a perception on the part of the Service that judges increasingly wish to have reports on offenders from the Service before penalties are decided.
- The Expert Group recommended that, as a general principle, the Service should provide pre-sentence reports to judges considering imposing terms of imprisonment where the offender is under the age of 21 or has been convicted of a first offence.¹ Under the provisions of the Children Act, 2001, judges will be required to seek pre-sentencing reports in all cases involving persons under 18 years of age where the judge is considering a custodial sentence or community sanction².

Demand for Services in Prisons

- More prison places have been provided, with the result that the prison population has increased in recent years.
- A plan for the management of offenders, published by the Department in 1994, envisaged a significant change in the role of the Service in prisons and places of detention. In place of the traditional role, which focused largely on one-to-one interviews and on meeting the welfare needs of persons in custody, the plan envisaged that the Service should have more of a role, working together with prisons staff and other services (education, psychological, medical, etc.) in the rehabilitation of offenders and on reducing the likelihood of them re-offending. This involves directly challenging offenders about their behaviour and attempts to tackle the social and personal factors that increase the likelihood of further offending.

Supervision of Offenders in the Community

2.4 Supervision of offenders in the community may be divided into three categories (see Figure 2.2). These are

- formal orders for supervision, which are final orders of the court
- informal supervision during deferment of penalty at the request of judges
- supervised temporary release from detention, on the order of the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform.

¹ The Expert Group excluded cases where a prison sentence is mandatory from the general principle that pre-sentence reports should be provided to judges in relation to young offenders and first-time offenders.

² The provisions of the Children Act, 2001 relating to functions by officers of the Service have not yet been brought into effect.

Figure 2.2 Main types of community supervision undertaken by the Probation and Welfare Service

Type of order	Legislative basis	Main features of supervision
Final orders of the Court		
Probation Order	Probation of Offenders Act, 1907 (as amended) Children Act, 2001	Offender undertakes to observe conditions specified by the court and to be of good behaviour for a specified period (from 3 to 24 months) Order may specify that the degree of supervision may be intensive
Community Service Order	Criminal Justice (Community Service) Act, 1983	Where a judge decides that a custodial sentence (of a specified duration) is warranted, a community service order may be considered as an alternative in appropriate circumstances Order specifies that the offender carry out a number of hours (from 40 to 240) of demanding and unpaid work in the community, under the direct supervision of the Service The hours of work specified under the order must be carried out within 12 months of the date of the order A default period of imprisonment or detention is specified
Order of recognisance	Misuse of Drugs Act, 1977	Offender required to undergo treatment for addiction in a residential centre or in the community Infrequently used because, among other reasons, the necessary rules and regulations have not been made
Supervision of sex offenders	Sex Offenders Act, 2001	Offender ordered to report to the Service at regular intervals over a specified period Supervision order may be in place of, or additional to (and following) a period of detention
Informal supervision orders		
Supervision during deferment of penalty	None	Judge defers specifying a sentence for a fixed period (usually 3 months) Supervision conditions are specified for the offender Service reports back to judge at the end of specified period If offender has complied with conditions, sentence may be further deferred or a final order of the court may be made; if offender has not complied, custodial sentence may be imposed
Supervision of offenders on temporary release		
Supervised temporary release	Criminal Justice Act, 1960	Supervised temporary release from detention can only be granted by the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform Offender released from prison or a place of detention before completion of sentence, on a temporary basis Release made conditional on offender reporting periodically to the Service and, usually, to a prison Offender may be returned to custody if conditions breached

Source: Adapted from the 1999 Report of the Expert Group on the Probation and Welfare Service

Formal Supervision Orders

2.5 The essential common elements of formal orders for supervision in the community imposed by the courts are

- The orders specify conditions with which the offender is required to comply. General conditions of supervision orders are that the offender must be of good behaviour and not commit further offences during the period of supervision, and that he/she must report regularly to an officer of the Service. Depending on the nature of the case, and of the order made, further specific conditions may also be imposed. These may include attendance at and satisfactory completion of specified addiction treatment, educational and rehabilitation programmes, the carrying out of unpaid work in the community, and conditions about where the offender must reside.
- The Service is required to ensure that the offender complies with all the conditions specified by the court. In the event that some breach of the conditions occurs, the supervising Probation and Welfare Officer issues one or more warnings to the offender. If non-compliance continues, the Service reports the breach to the court, and the offender is summoned to appear in court or a warrant may be issued for his/her arrest. (This process is usually referred to as 'breaching' the offender.)
- Where non-compliant offenders are returned to court, the judge may vary the original order or may order that the offender be taken into custody to serve a custodial sentence.

2.6 The threat of incurring a custodial sentence may, in many cases, provide a necessary incentive for offenders to co-operate with the Service and comply with the conditions of a court order for supervision. However, the process for breaching a non-compliant offender is protracted and time-consuming. This potentially impairs the effectiveness of breaching in ensuring compliance with supervision orders.

The time required to bring an offender who is in breach of the conditions of a supervision order back to court may undermine the effectiveness of the process

Supervision During Deferment of Penalty

2.7 Court orders for supervision of offenders in the community undertaken by the Service have been established under specific legislation, and are regarded as final orders of the court. An informal type of supervision, without a basis in statute, has also developed through the practice of 'supervision during deferment of penalty'. In these cases, the judge delays making a final determination in a case. With the agreement of the Service, the judge may defer the imposition of a penalty for a specified period (usually three months), specify conditions for the offender to follow under the supervision of a Probation and Welfare Officer, and ask the Officer to report back at the end of the specified period. If the Officer reports that the offender has been compliant, the judge may make a final order, or may again defer a decision about penalty for a further period and continue the supervision.

2.8 In its 1999 report, the Expert Group on the Probation and Welfare Service recommended that provision should be made for a greater range of types of supervision order, and that, in

There is no statutory basis for some functions which are now an accepted part of the Service's activities

particular, the practice of supervision during deferment of penalty be placed on a statutory footing. No legislative changes along these lines have been implemented.

of penalty by judges and by Service staff. The Service considers that, if the breaching process could be speeded up, short probation orders — perhaps with the option of extension at a review date — could serve the same purpose.

2.9 Based on the frequency with which such orders are made, there is widespread acceptance of the practice of supervision during deferment

Supervised Temporary Release

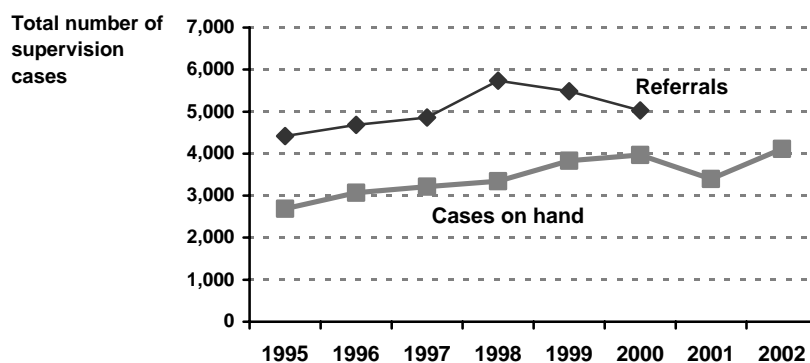
2.10 Supervision of offenders on temporary release from prisons or places of detention is a relatively minor part of the supervision work the Service currently undertakes. In July 2003, a total of 126 persons were under the supervision of the Service on temporary release. Almost half of these had received life sentences and were released subject to supervision, having typically served 12 to 15 years in custody.

Demand for Supervision in the Community

2.11 Figure 2.3 shows the total number of referrals for supervision each year from 1995 to 2000, and the number of cases on hand when case censuses were taken by the Service at the beginning of each year. The estimated number of cases on hand increased by around half between 1995 and 2002.

2.12 The Expert Group recommended in 1999 that, in line with practice in other jurisdictions, there should be more scope for judges to impose community-based sanctions, relative to custodial sentencing.

Figure 2.3 Number of cases for supervision in the community, 1995 to 2002



Source: Probation and Welfare Service Annual Reports

Note: Latest available data about referrals relates to 2000

2.13 A lack of consistent and reliable data across the courts, prisons and probation services makes it difficult to establish clearly the extent to which community-based sanctions are available to, and being chosen by, judges in their sentencing decisions. However, broad indications of the relative rates of use of community-based and custodial sanctions can be identified.

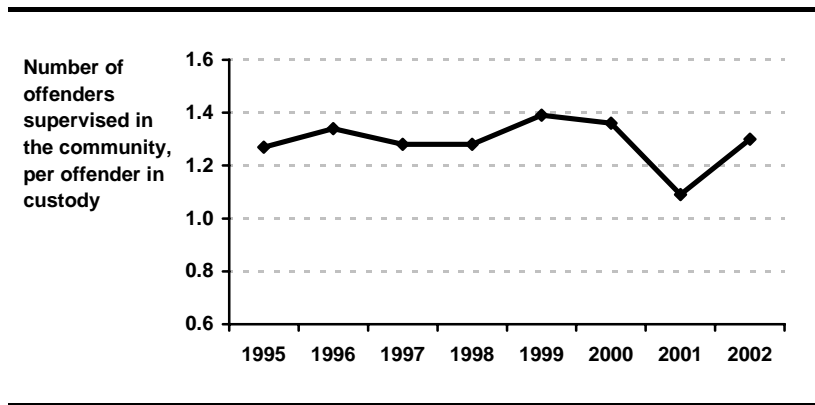
2.14 A census carried out by the Service of the cases on hand in community-based teams in February 2002 indicated that there were around 4,100 persons under supervision. The daily average number of prisoners in custody in 2002 was an estimated 3,200. This implies there were about 1.3 persons under supervision for each person in custody. Figure 2.4 shows the changes in the ratio over the period 1995 to 2002. The ratio generally fluctuated between 1.25 and 1.4 offenders on supervision for every offender in custody. This pattern suggests that the increase in utilisation of community-based sanctions recommended by the Expert Group has not occurred.

2.15 The number of persons under supervision increased by half in the period 1995 to 2002. However, the average daily number of offenders in custody also increased by around half, following an extensive prisons expansion programme that increased the number of prison places available. The Department considers that this expansion was necessary to stabilise the criminal justice system because lack of available custodial places had resulted in a ‘revolving door’ system, where offenders receiving short sentences were frequently serving little of their sentences. This ‘revolving door’ system also effectively undermined the threat of imprisonment as an incentive to offenders receiving community sanctions to comply with the conditions of orders.

The use of community-based sanctions has remained low relative to the use of custodial sanctions, despite its increase having been recommended by an Expert Group

2.16 The 20% drop in the ratio in Ireland in 2001 (from 1.36:1 to 1.09:1) also reflects the impact of an agreement reached between management and staff of the Service in 2000 to limit the number of cases each officer handles at a point in time. In some areas, judges were asked by Senior Probation and Welfare Officers to reduce the level of demand for offenders to be supervised. Recruitment by the Service of extra staff in the later part of 2001 helped to restore some of the capacity of the Service to meet the demand for supervision.

Figure 2.4 Ratio of offenders under supervision and average daily prison population, 1995 to 2002



Source: Analysis by Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General

2.17 The ratio of offenders on community-based sanctions to offenders on custodial sanctions varies internationally. In England and Wales, Canada and New Zealand, there were around 3 offenders subject to orders for supervision in the community for each offender in custody in 2000. In Northern Ireland, the ratio was 2.7:1. The ratio in Finland (1.5:1) was similar to Ireland.³

Types of Supervision Order Imposed

2.18 There was a significant change in the type of orders made by judges in relation to supervision in the community in the period 1995 to 2000. The extent to which judges used the informal supervision during deferment of penalty option increased from just over one third of all supervision cases to almost half of all supervision cases (see Figure 2.5). At the same time, the

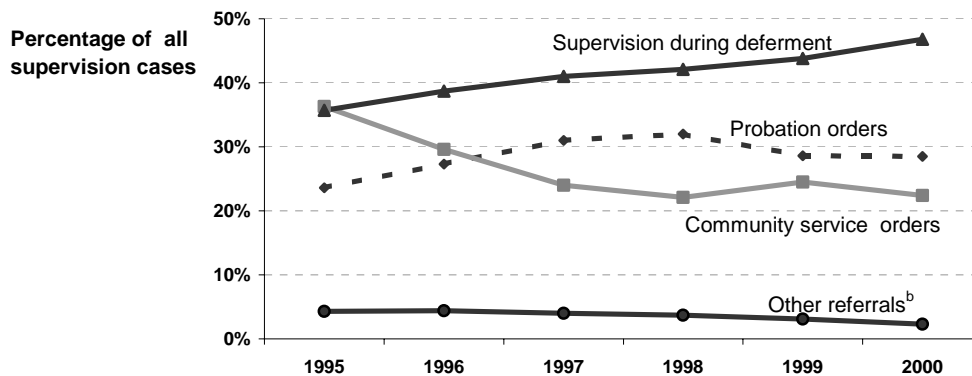
There has been a reduction in the use of community service orders by judges ... supervision during deferment of penalty has increased

use of community service orders declined from around one in three of all orders for supervision to just over one in five of all orders.

2.19 The Expert Group attributed the relative decline in the extent to which community service orders

are used, in part, to a lack of suitability of such orders for offenders with addictions. The Group concluded that supervision during deferment of penalty is frequently used where there are doubts about the offender's capacity to participate in community-based sanctions while avoiding further crime.

Figure 2.5 Supervision referrals, by type, 1995 to 2000^a



Source: Probation and Welfare Service Annual Reports

Notes: a Latest available data relates to 2000

b Other referrals include supervision of offenders on temporary release, and those on orders of recognisance.

³ International comparisons must be treated with caution because of differences in definitions and measurement methodologies. In addition, rates of imprisonment vary widely, and this influences how the ratios should be interpreted. In England and Wales, New Zealand and Canada, rates of imprisonment were in the range 120 to 150 per 100,000 of population; in Ireland, Finland and Northern Ireland, the imprisonment rate varied from 56 to 76 per 100,000.

2.20 The Service has also found that reductions in the rate of unemployment among offenders means that fewer offenders are available to undertake work in the community during normal work hours. This may also have contributed to the reduction in the extent to which community service orders are used.

Supervision of Sex Offenders

2.21 Courts began to make post-release supervision orders in mid-2002, under the Sex Offenders Act, 2001. Because of the nature of the offences involved and because orders of this kind are frequently of long duration, this emerging area of work may place substantial additional pressure on the resources of the Service.

2.22 By mid-2003, 59 orders for post-release supervision had been made under the 2001 Act. Of these, 21 involve supervision periods of three to six years; and eight involve supervision periods of seven years to life. The remaining orders are for durations up to three years.

2.23 In ten cases, offenders sentenced to post-release supervision had completed the custodial element of their sentences by mid-2003 and the supervision process had commenced. Approximately 140 other sex offenders were also under supervision in the community on orders made under other statutes.

Pre-Sentence Reports to Courts

2.24 Judges may request a variety of forms of report from the Service to assist them in arriving at decisions in criminal cases. The main types of reports requested are described in Figure 2.6.

Figure 2.6 Main types of reports to courts provided by the Probation and Welfare Service

Type of report	Legislative basis	Main features of reports
Pre-sanction report	None (except for child offenders – Children Act, 2001) ^a	Report may be sought after the offender is found guilty, and before a sentence is imposed Judge may ask for a report on the pattern of offending of the offender, an assessment of the suitability of the offender for supervision in the community and appropriate supervision conditions
Community service order report	Criminal Justice (Community Service) Act, 1983	When an offender has been found guilty and a judge has decided to impose a custodial sentence, he/she may ask for a report from the Service Service assesses the offender's suitability for supervision under a community service order Service also tries to identify if a suitable work placement is available for the offender
Victim report	None	Objective of the report is to assist the judge in assessing the likely future implications of the offence for the victim

Source: Adapted from the 1999 Report of the Expert Group on the Probation and Welfare Service

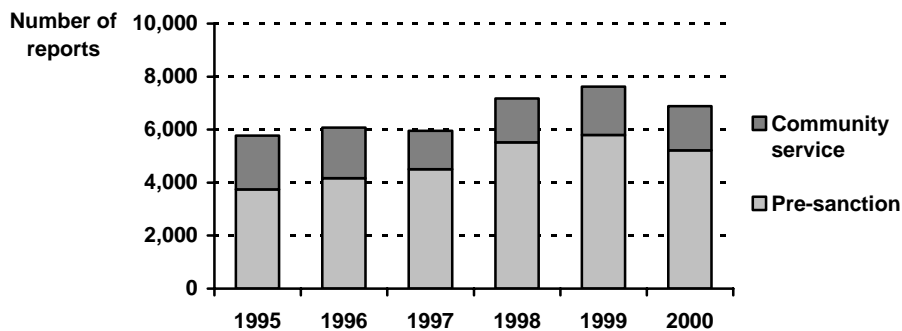
Note: a The provisions of the Children Act, 2001 relating to functions carried out by the Service have not yet been brought into effect.

2.25 Once an offender has been found guilty, the judge may defer sentencing for a period and request that the Service provide a report on the circumstances of the offender, the suitability of the offender for placement under supervision and the conditions that might be applied. Typically, the Service is asked by the judge to provide the report within a period of four to six weeks.

2.26 The officer preparing the report usually interviews the offender, his/her family and any significant persons or agencies with whom the offender has had contact e.g. Garda Síochána, medical, psychiatric or other professionals and project or agency staff.

2.27 Figure 2.7 indicates the number of reports requested by judges each year from 1995 to 2000. There was an upward trend in the number of reports requested up to 1999, followed by a reduction of 10% in the number of reports requested in 2000. This reduction reflects the implementation from March 2000 of the caseload agreement, which also related to the report work load.

Figure 2.7 Number of requests from judges for pre-sentence reports, by type, 1995 to 2000



Source: *Probation and Welfare Service Annual Reports*

Note: Latest available data relates to 2000

2.28 Less than a quarter of the pre-sentence reports requested by judges in 2000 related to cases where community service orders were being contemplated. In 1995, more than one third of the reports requested related to community service orders. The decline in the number of community

service reports requested reflects the less frequent imposition of community service orders by judges.

Most pre-sentence reports to courts are provided by the Service on a non-statutory basis

2.29 Apart from community service reports and (potentially) cases involving child offenders, the Service provides pre-sentence reports on a non-statutory basis.

2.30 A small number of victim reports are undertaken by officers of the Service at the request of the courts.

Demand for Pre-Sentence Reports

2.31 There is insufficient statistical information available to establish the extent to which courts currently seek pre-sentence reports. The proportion of offenders convicted of indictable offences in respect of which the trial judge receives a pre-sentence report is potentially a useful measure of the extent to which the Service meets the demand for such reports. However, this indicator cannot be compiled at the moment because different data definitions are used by the Service and by the Courts Service.⁴

2.32 The Service considers it is desirable that pre-sentence reports would be provided in most cases when courts are contemplating the use of custody. However, they do not generally promote the provision of reports because the Service has insufficient resources to meet the demand likely to be created through such promotion.

The Service does not actively promote the provision of reports to courts because it has insufficient resources to meet higher demand

2.33 In 2000, in response to pressures arising from the number of referrals for pre-sentence reports received from the Dublin Circuit Court, the Service put a limit on the number of referrals it would accept. Some judges expressed concerns about the potential unequal treatment of offenders arising from this limitation, and stopped making referrals. The combined effect was a substantial reduction in referrals for reports from the Circuit Court. The number of referrals has begun to increase again since the appointment of new judges to the Court in 2002.

Work with Offenders in Custody

2.34 The role of the Service in prisons and places of detention was outlined in *The Management of Offenders — A Five Year Plan*, published by the Department in 1994, and endorsed by the Expert Group in its 1999 report. The plan indicated that the functions of the Service in dealing with offenders serving custodial sentences included

- assisting those in custody, through individual and group programmes, towards an amelioration of personal and family difficulties
- confronting those in custody with their offending behaviour and counselling them towards a greater understanding of their responsibilities to themselves, their families and their communities
- developing and promoting good personal management arrangements and making effective resettlement plans with those in custody, and implementing the plans on release of the offenders
- actively seeking the support, co-ordination and participation of prison management and staff, and of those in custody, in plans for release and reintegration in the community

⁴ For example, the Service counts the number of requests by courts for reports based on the number of offenders, rather than the number of charges involved in any offender's case; Courts Service data focus more on the number of charges where a report was requested. Consequently, it is difficult to reconcile the Courts' estimate of numbers of 'reports' requested and the Service's own estimate of requests for reports received.

- utilising and developing community resources to meet accommodation, training and treatment needs
- fully participating and co-operating with the Prisons Service, the management and staff of prisons and other specialist services in the preparation and implementation of pre-release programmes for those in custody
- developing and co-ordinating the activities of voluntary groups visiting or dealing with those in custody.

2.35 Service staff offer the opportunity to each prisoner on committal or on transfer to another prison to meet with a Probation and Welfare Officer. This is designed to complement the work of other disciplines in monitoring the mental state of each prisoner at those critical points but it also provides an opportunity to discuss problems and possible work in custody. Some prisoners refuse the opportunity to meet with the Service.

2.36 Where an offender wishes to engage with the Service, the Probation and Welfare Officer carries out an initial one-to-one assessment interview. Based on the assessment, and in conjunction with the offender, the Officer draws up an appropriate plan designed to reduce the risk of re-offending. This may involve individual counselling, and participation in treatment and training programmes e.g. drug and alcohol awareness programmes, anger management courses, and a 'lifers' programme.

2.37 Substantial time is spent by Service staff motivating prisoners to address their offending behaviour and to use their time in custody constructively. The Service plays a major part in prison-based sex offender treatment programmes in conjunction with prison psychological

staff. The Service also participates in multidisciplinary and other structures, which operate within prisons, delivering alone or with other disciplines, a range of therapeutic and awareness programmes and arranging for specialist agencies or organisations to work in prisons e.g. AA and drug treatment agencies.

Service staff working with offenders in custody aim to motivate them to address their offending behaviour and use their time in custody constructively

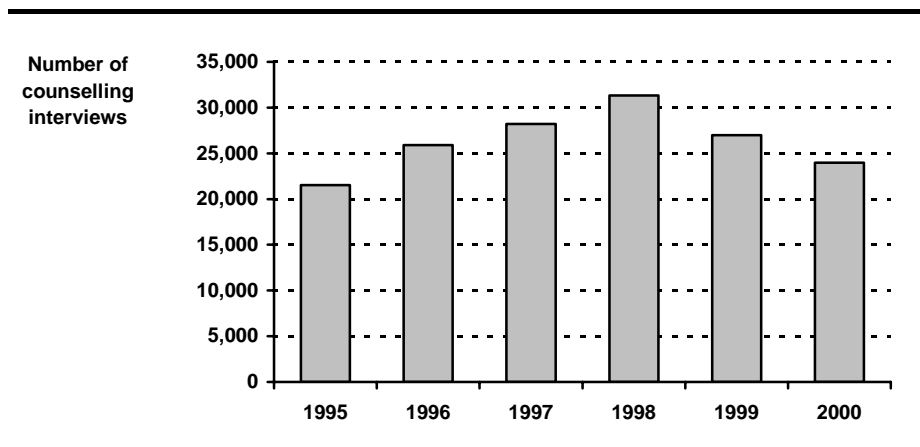
Service Outputs in Prisons and Places of Detention

Work with Offenders

2.38 The Service gathers very little data in relation to the work it carries out with offenders in custody. There is no count of the number of offenders with which the Service is dealing at a point in time, or of the number of cases commenced or completed within a time period. As a result, the Service is unaware even of the proportion of offenders in custody who make formal contact with its officers or who seek to engage with the Service.

2.39 One-to-one counselling interviews held with offenders were traditionally the main output of the Service in relation to work with offenders in custody. Figure 2.8 indicates that there was an upward trend in the number of recorded one-to-one interviews between 1995 and 1998, but that this fell from a peak of over 31,000 in 1998 to around 24,000 in 2000 — a drop of around 20%.

Figure 2.8 Number of Probation and Welfare Service counselling interviews with offenders in custody, 1995 to 2000



Source: Probation and Welfare Service Annual Reports
 Note: Latest available data relates to 2000

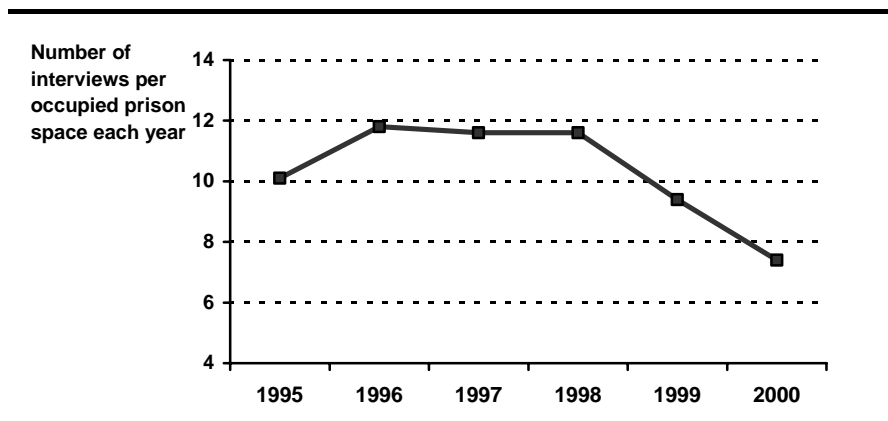
2.40 The average number of interviews per occupied prison space was relatively constant over the period 1996 to 1998, but fell by more than one-third between 1998 and 2000 (see Figure 2.9). This decline reflects the reduction in the number of interviews carried out, at a time when average prison occupancy was increasing.

2.41 The reduction in the number of counselling interviews with offenders after 1998 may be attributed to

- an increase in Service staff vacancies in prisons and places of detention in 1999 and 2000 (since 2000, the Service’s staff complement in prisons and places of detention has increased again)
- Probation and Welfare Officers working in prisons and places of detention are increasingly involved in providing group programmes as well as individual work with offenders.

The Service is carrying out fewer counselling sessions with individual prisoners but is involved in more group work with prisoners

Figure 2.9 Annual average number of Probation and Welfare Service interviews per occupied prison space, 1995 to 2000



Source: Analysis by Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General

2.42 The Service should begin to measure and monitor the extent of its output of group work with offenders in custody.

Other Outputs

2.43 Other outputs produced by Probation and Welfare Officers working in prisons and places of detention include interviews and counselling sessions with family members of offenders (770 in 2000); written reports on offenders (200 in 2000) and referrals to psychologists/psychiatrists (179 in 2000).

2.44 The Parole Board reviews the cases of prisoners serving custodial sentences of eight years or more. The Service provides comprehensive assessment reports on all prisoners whose sentences are under review by the Board. Annually, around 80 such in-depth reports are prepared. These reports are more detailed than court reports and focus primarily on offence-focussed work with prisoners and the risk posed to the community on release. In these cases, home circumstances reports are usually also provided by community-based staff.

3 Efficiency of the Service

3.1 This chapter examines the operational efficiency of the Service and the extent to which it has changed in the period 1995 to 2002. Three main aspects of efficiency are considered

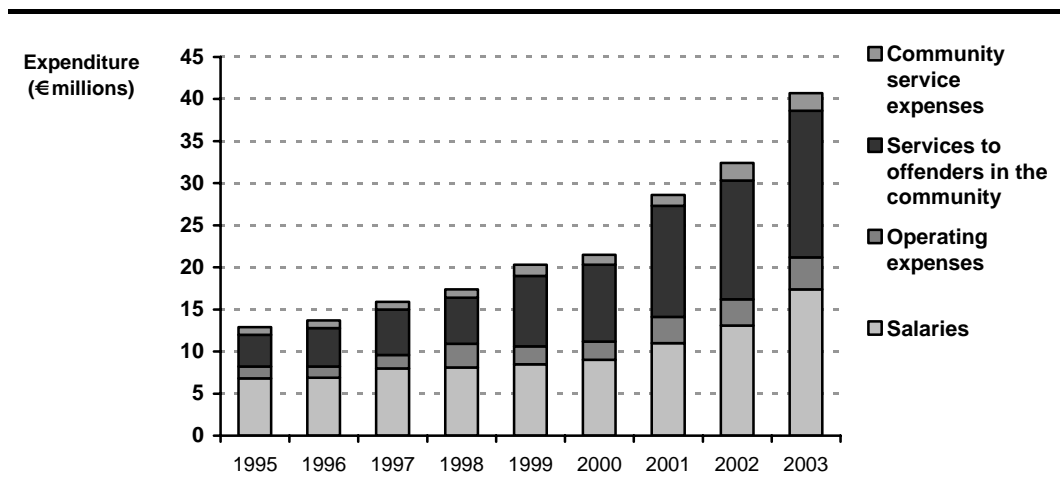
- cost of Service outputs
- productivity of Service staff
- timeliness of delivery of Service outputs

Cost of Service Outputs

3.2 Total expenditure by the Service in 2002 was around €32.4 million. The total level of resources provided for 2003 was €40.7 million.

3.3 Expenditure by the Service increased rapidly since 1995 (see Figure 3.1). The average increase between 1995 and 2002 was around 14% a year. Since general inflation averaged around 3% a year over the same period, there was a doubling in the real level of funding provided for the Service.

Figure 3.1 Expenditure by the Probation and Welfare Service, 1995 to 2003



Source: Appropriation Accounts (1995 to 2002); Estimates for Public Services (2003)

3.4 The fastest rate of increase (an average of over 20% a year between 1995 and 2002) was in the area of expenditure on services for offenders under supervision, including grants to community and voluntary bodies. Expenditure on staff salaries increased by around 10% a year, reflecting both pay rate increases and increases in the number of staff employed by the Service.

3.5 The increase in expenditure by the Service was mirrored by a similar increase in the annual expenditure on prisons. As a result, Service expenditure in the period 1995 to 2002 was between 8% and 11% of the amount spent each year on prisons.

Cost of Service Functions

3.6 The Service's expenditure was analysed to provide estimates of the cost of its main functional areas i.e. supervision of offenders, reporting to courts and services to offenders in places of detention.⁵ In preparing the estimates of cost

- an estimate of the annual cost of earned pension entitlements was added to direct expenditure on salaries
- expenditure on grants to community and voluntary bodies and on staff and other running costs for community service schemes was attributed to supervision of offenders
- salary costs were apportioned on the basis of a survey of how Probation and Welfare Officers use their work time
- overheads of the Service (management, administration, training, accommodation expenses, etc.) were apportioned on the basis of the use of Probation and Welfare Officers' time.

3.7 The analysis indicated that

- 72% of the total cost of providing the Service was applied in supervision of offenders in the community
- reporting to courts by the Service accounted for 20% of the total cost
- the cost of services to offenders in places of detention accounted for around 8% of the total.

Services for Offenders under Supervision

3.8 The Department provides funding, through the Service, to community and voluntary bodies that work with the Service in providing a range of services and rehabilitation programmes for offenders under supervision. These schemes included provision of programmes to address offending behaviour, hostel accommodation, addiction treatment, counselling, education and training programmes and integrated service and supports.

3.9 Funding was provided for 79 community and voluntary bodies providing services to offenders under supervision in the community in 2002. Total funding amounted to €14.6 million, which represented 45% of overall expenditure by the Service in the year.

3.10 Figure 3.2 presents a breakdown of the types of services and programmes provided by community and voluntary bodies in receipt of funding from the Service in 2002. The biggest areas of spending relate to education and training programmes, the provision of hostel accommodation (including accommodation for residential treatment programmes) and treatment and counselling programmes.

⁵ The analysis of cost was based on 2001 expenditure patterns. At the time the analysis was undertaken, a breakdown of 2002 expenditure was not available.

Figure 3.2 Expenditure on services and programmes for offenders, by type, 2002

	Total	% of total
	€million	
Education/training	6.5	44%
Hostel accommodation	4.2	29%
Treatment/counselling	2.7	19%
Intensive probation	0.9	6%
Other	0.3	2%
All schemes and programmes	14.6	100%

Source: Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform; see Appendix B for a listing of funding recipients

3.11 Most participants in the funded schemes are persons who are subject to supervision orders. A minority are persons who have been released from custody. Where there is unused capacity on a scheme, and it is considered appropriate to do so, programme places may be made available to people considered to be at risk of offending.

3.12 The Service has a representative on the management committee of each funded project to ensure that the programmes are related to client needs. Representatives of statutory, voluntary and community agencies, and of residential and commercial interests, are also members of these management committees. This representation is designed to achieve a broad range of inputs necessary to integrate those who offend into the community.

Expenditure on the Community Service Order Scheme

3.13 The Service spent just over €2 million in 2002 on costs related to the implementation of community service orders. Around 90% of the expenditure related to fees paid to suitably qualified supervisors, employed on full-time, permanent part-time and sessional contracts, to oversee the carrying out by offenders of unpaid work in the community. In March 2003, a total of 77 supervisors were employed.

Unit Cost of Service Outputs

3.14 Broad estimates of the average unit cost of the main outputs of the Service's community-based teams in 2001 were derived from the cost analysis and data about Service outputs.⁶

Unit Cost of Supervision

3.15 The estimated average unit cost for supervision of offenders varies, depending on the type of order made by the court (see Figure 3.3). The estimates include the cost to the Service of staff time associated with supervising an offender (with apportioned overheads) and an estimate of the cost to the Service of an offender's participation in grant-aided provision of programmes and schemes.

⁶ The Service is still compiling output data for 2001. Consequently, the unit cost estimates are based on output data for 2000.

Figure 3.3 Estimated average cost of supervision orders, by type, 2001

Type of supervision	Estimated cost/order €
Probation orders	6,100
Supervision during deferment of penalty	4,100
Community service orders	1,500

Source: Analysis by Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General

- The estimated average cost of supervision of offenders on probation orders is highest, at €6,100. This reflects the average duration of such orders. Typically, orders are intended by the courts to remain in force for 12 to 18 months. The estimate assumes that the average order remains in force for 15 months.
- Supervision during deferment of penalty orders typically lasts around 3 months, and participation of offenders in programmes is quite concentrated. The estimated average cost of an order of this kind was around €4,100.
- The estimated average cost of supervising an offender on a community service order is lowest, at around €1,500. Typically, such offenders require less direct supervision by Service officers. Community Service Orders infrequently require the involvement of offenders in treatment and training programmes.

3.16 International comparisons of costs of outputs cannot readily be made because of differences in definitions used, in the types of supervision orders imposed and in the structures and funding of probation services in other jurisdictions.

Unit Cost of Reports to Court

3.17 The estimated average cost of the provision by the Service of reports to courts is around €800 for each community service order report and around €900 for other pre-sentence reports. The difference in cost reflects a lower time input, on average, by Service officers in the research and preparation of community service order reports.

3.18 Almost half of the cost of producing reports for court relates to the attendance of Service officers in district courts. In most of the Service's community-based teams, officers are rostered to attend district courts to record decisions made by judges pertaining to the Service (e.g. the making of supervision orders in relation to offenders), to receive requests from judges for pre-sanction reports, to deliver written reports and to respond to case specific queries arising in the course of hearings.⁷

3.19 In a sample of five community-based teams examined, it was estimated that rostered duty in district courts accounted for between 8% and 23% of all available professional staff days. The average amount of staff time spent on rostered court duty was 16% for the teams examined.

⁷ Probation and Welfare Officers may also attend court in relation to hearings about specific individual cases e.g. where breaches of conditions are being brought to the attention of the judge. These attendances are treated as supervision case costs.

3.20 Assuming that the teams examined were typical of community-based teams, rostered court attendance may be costing the Service the equivalent of an estimated 24 full-time professional officers. Across the Service as a whole (i.e. including staff serving in prisons and places of detention), this represents over 13% of the Service's staff complement of main grade Probation and Welfare Officers.

3.21 Attendance of Service officers in court appears to provide a convenient way for the Service to liaise with judges on a day-to-day basis in the referral of cases for supervision and reporting. It may also provide opportunities for the

Routine rostering of staff to attend court sessions cost the Service the equivalent of 24 full-time professional staff – over 13% of its main grade staff complement

Service to make initial contact with offenders. Nevertheless, it is a considerable time burden, and reduces the volume of professional work the Service is able to take on.

3.22 There may be scope to reduce court attendance by professional grade officers of the Service.

- Since limits were placed by the Service on the number of referrals for reports which could be accepted, the team servicing the Dublin Circuit Court do not roster staff for court duty, relying instead on the court clerks to communicate decisions and to transmit requests for reports. Reports are sent by the Service to the clerk for submission to the relevant judges in advance of cases. Officers attend court hearings as necessary to present evidence.
- It is not always necessary for the Probation and Welfare Officer who prepares a report to be in court when the related case is being heard. In smaller courts, perhaps held weekly or less frequently, the reports presented may all have been prepared by the Officer presenting the reports. In the busier courts (especially in Dublin), which may be held on a daily basis, most of the reports handed over by the rostered Officer are prepared by other Officers.

3.23 On the other hand, the presence of a Probation and Welfare Officer in court may be a significant factor influencing the number of referrals of cases for reports. For example, the Service receives approximately twice the number of referrals from the three Bridewell District Courts where officers are in attendance, compared to referrals from the three Richmond District Courts where officers are not in attendance.

The Probation and Welfare Service and the Courts Service should jointly examine arrangements for routine communication of court referrals for supervision and requests for reports, to see if rostered court duty can be reduced

3.24 The variable practice in rostering Service staff for court duty suggests that alternative arrangements can be made to meet the routine communication and referral needs between the courts and the Service. This is a matter which should be explored on a partnership basis between the Service and the Courts Service. Many Senior Probation and Welfare Officers already meet the judges in their areas periodically to discuss management and workload issues. Given the relatively routine nature of many of the functions carried out by Service officers while on court duty, there

may also be scope for assigning administrative staff (on a full or part time basis, as required by local circumstances) to attend at court.⁸

3.25 Improved administrative and information technology systems in the Courts Service and the Probation and Welfare Service should facilitate the transmission of referrals and requests for reports, and the timely submission of reports to judges. It has been agreed in principle that e-mail facilities will be developed between the Service and the Courts Service in the future, to speed up the notification process.

Unit Cost of Work in Prisons and Places of Detention

3.26 The lack of comprehensive and relevant data about the output of the Service in prisons and places of detention means that it is difficult to estimate unit costs for outputs.

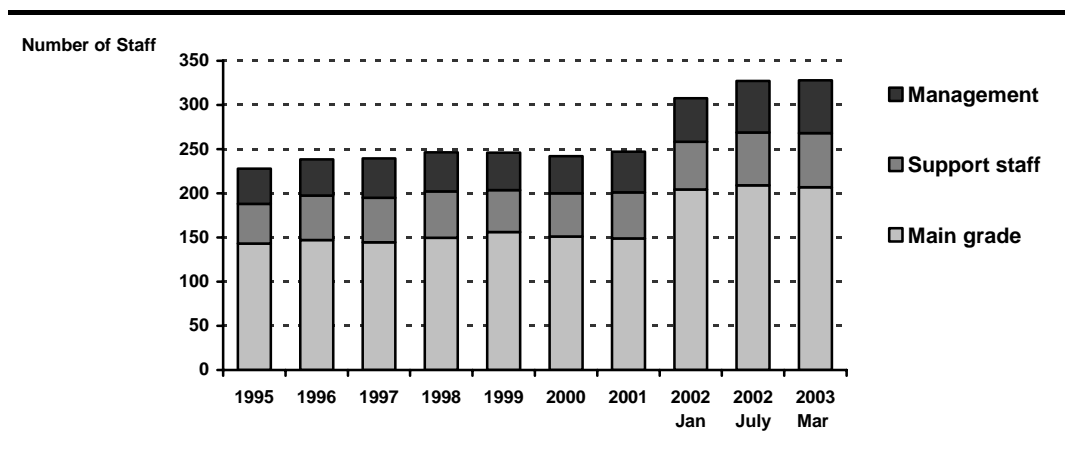
3.27 Trends in the average cost per case completed or per client would provide good indications of the cost efficiency of the work of the Service in prisons and places of detention.

3.28 The cost of the Service in prisons and places of detention in 2001 is estimated at around €750 per offender per year, based on the average daily prison population. This is equivalent to less than 1% of the estimated annual average cost of keeping a prisoner in custody for a year.

Productivity of Service Staff

3.29 In March 2003, the total number of staff employed by the Service was 323 whole time equivalents.⁹ The number employed increased by 32% between January 2001 and July 2002 (see Figure 3.4).

Figure 3.4 Number of staff employed by the Probation and Welfare Service, by grade, 1995 to 2002



Source: Probation and Welfare Service

⁸ In England and Wales, administrative-grade Probation Services Officers, rather than professional Probation Officers, undertake routine court attendance.

⁹ This excludes staff employed on a contract basis to oversee the work of community service offenders.

3.30 In March 2003, the main professional grade of Probation and Welfare Service Officers accounted for 64% of the total number of staff employed by the Service. Management grades accounted for 17% of the total, while administrative and clerical grades accounted for 19%.

Service staffing increased by one third between January 2001 and July 2002

3.31 While the increase in staff numbers has been significant, the staffing of the Service is below the level recommended in the First Report of the Expert Group. This recommended that the number of main grade officers should be increased to 225 (with appropriate increases in the number of management and administrative grades). The number of main grade officers serving in March 2003 was 207.

3.32 Caseloads handled by Service staff are examined separately for community-based teams and for teams based in prisons and places of detention.

Caseloads of Community-Based Teams

3.33 Agreement was reached in March 2000 between Service management and representatives of Service staff on the standard caseloads to be carried by community-based professional staff. The agreement was considered necessary because the Service was increasingly unable to supervise adequately the number of persons being referred by the courts. Authorised staff numbers were insufficient to meet all the demands for supervision and this was compounded by a significant number of unfilled vacancies in the Service. The demand for pre-sanction reports was also increasing, and this put further pressure on the level of resources available to carry out supervision.

Target limits on the number of active cases being handled by individual Officers were agreed in 2000 to ensure staff have enough time to supervise offenders properly

3.34 The agreement set target limits for the overall number of cases being handled by an officer at a point in time, and on the number of requests for reports that would be referred to an individual officer each month. The objective in limiting the quantity of cases was to ensure officers would have adequate time available to implement supervision orders. The agreed limits were also expected to allow officers to participate to a reasonable extent in non-case work.

3.35 The main features of the caseload agreement were

- Each individual being dealt with, whether subject to one or more orders for supervision or in respect of whom a report (or reports) was being prepared, represents a single case.
- Each type of case was assigned a points score to reflect its relative complexity and the expected average time input required to handle it
 - 18 points for community service cases
 - 25 points for other District Court cases
 - 40 points for Circuit Court and Central Criminal Court cases, and
 - 67 points for intensive supervision cases, including sex offender cases.

- Each officer's caseload could be made up of a single type of case, or a mix of case types, subject to suggested maximum numbers of each type and a maximum of approximately 1000 case points.
- Assignment to officers of new requests for reports each month should total a maximum of 200 points.

3.36 The Service carried out a census of the number and type of cases on hands by professional staff in each of the community-based teams in February 2002. The results of the census were analysed based on the points system outlined in the workload agreement. Figure 3.5 compares the average caseloads of the teams.

3.37 Only 14 of the 31 teams were found to have average caseloads in the range 900 to 1100 points. Six teams reported caseloads greater than 1100 points on average. The Cork Intensive

Variations between teams in average caseloads should be examined to ensure staff deployment is optimised relative to the demand for services

Probation Team reported caseloads averaging over 2000 points per team member. Eight teams reported caseloads less than 800 points on average.

3.38 The caseload averages suggest that some staff may be

underutilised while others have excess caseloads, and that some redeployment of staff may therefore be warranted. However, further analysis of team caseloads is required before firm conclusions can be drawn, for a number of reasons.

- The caseload agreement provides for Senior Probation and Welfare Officers who manage community-based teams to take on cases themselves, up to a recommended maximum of 200 points. In February 2002, Senior Officers in 23 of the 31 teams were carrying caseloads; of these, 16 reported caseloads of over 200 points; and 5 reported carrying cases totalling 500 points or more.
- Court referrals of offenders for supervision or requests for reports may be left unallocated by Senior Probation and Welfare Officers if officers already have full caseloads. An analysis by the Service of such cases indicated that 14 teams had unallocated cases at end June 2002. Of these, 6 teams had unallocated cases totalling more than 1000 points. In Waterford, there were 69 unallocated probation order cases, 10 unallocated community service order cases and 9 unallocated pre-sentence reports – a total of over 2100 points.
- Senior Probation and Welfare Officers in some cases inform judges when there are insufficient resources available to take on all cases, and demand by judges may consequently be reduced.
- Faced with a significant number of vacancies and general unavailability of social workers with the traditional requisite 12 months experience of working in a related area, the Service relaxed its recruitment requirements and started, in 2001, hiring staff on temporary contracts. Those recruited were, in the main social science graduates without a professional social work qualification. Because of the scale of the recruitment taking place and the lack of experience of many recruits, the Principal Probation and Welfare Officer directed that such Officers should temporarily have a reduced workload. The duration and size of this reduction were left largely to the discretion of the relevant Senior Probation and Welfare Officers. The net effect was to cause a reduction in workloads carried by teams with one or more temporary contract officers.

- The caseload agreement allowed for the situation that officers delivering group programmes (e.g. programmes to address sex offending for offenders in the community in Sligo/Donegal) or engaged in Service representation on community or interdepartmental working groups would have a reduced caseload, at the discretion of the Senior Probation and Welfare Officer. Consequently, in interpreting average caseload data, it is important to recognise a distinction between the workload of the officer and the caseload — the workload reflecting a variety of duties other than managing cases.

3.39 The relative size of the average caseload and pressure of unassigned cases may impact on the volume of throughput of cases, the timeliness in dealing with cases and on the quality of service provided. Consequently, measurement of caseloads should be balanced with measurement of these other factors in monitoring staff productivity.

Caseloads in Places of Detention

3.40 Workloads and assignment of staff to work in places of detention are usually assessed in terms of the ratio of average daily prison populations to staff. Following discussions with the Prisons Service, the Service proposed to the Department that its staffing levels in prisons and places of detention should be increased to one Probation and Welfare Officer for every 50 offenders. For special category offenders (young offenders, ‘lifers’, sex offenders, addicted people in recovery, and other offenders assessed as high risk) the target ratio is 30:1. These ratios took account of the expectation that not all offenders will seek assistance from the Service.

3.41 Figure 3.6 indicates the average number of offenders in each prison/place of detention per probation officer in October 2002.

Figure 3.6 Average number of offenders per assigned probation officer, by institution, in October 2002



Source: Analysis by Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General

3.42 Since different prisons and places of detention have different mixes of prisoner types, each institution may consequently have a different target ratio in the range 30:1 to 50:1.

3.43 The average across all institutions was 87 offenders per Probation and Welfare Officer. The ratio of prisoners to officers exceeded 50:1 in all but three of the prisons and places of detention. One of the three, Shanganagh Castle, was in the process of being closed and held only 20 prisoners in October 2002.

3.44 The Service does not measure the caseloads carried by individual officers or teams in prisons or places of detention.

Pending the introduction of an automated case recording system, these teams should be included in the Service's periodic caseload censuses. This will require formal definition of what constitutes a 'case' for the Service in relation to offenders in custody.

Service staffing in most prisons and places of detention is significantly lower than target

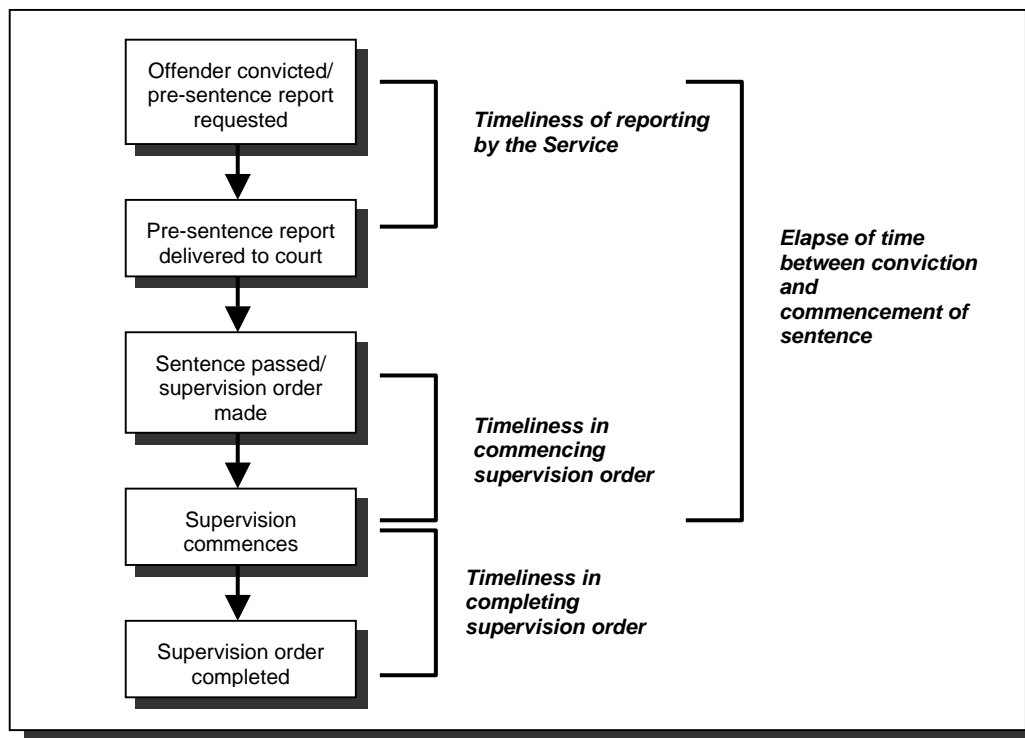
Timeliness of Output Delivery

3.45 Given the nature of the work in which the Service is engaged, timeliness in the delivery of outputs is a key aspect of its efficiency.

Timeliness of Community-Based Teams

3.46 Figure 3.7 indicates how the timeliness of the Service's community-based teams potentially accumulates in relation to the handling of an individual offender's case. From the Service's point of view, the elapsed time from the date the offender was found guilty to commencement of supervision should be the main focus of measurement of timeliness in relation to supervision orders.

Figure 3.7 Measuring timeliness of the Probation and Welfare Service in relation to supervision orders



3.47 Timeliness in completion of supervision orders is a management issue only in relation to community service orders. Typically, these specify an amount of time (ranging from 40 hours to 240 hours) to be spent at work in the community, and should be completed within 12 months. By contrast, probation orders and orders for supervision during deferment of penalty are set for fixed periods of time.

3.48 Timeliness of the Service's operations should be relatively easy to measure. However, the Service does not have a formal case tracking system for recording relevant dates in relation to referrals from courts for reports or for supervision, or to facilitate analysis of timeliness. The Service has set few formal time targets or standards for delivery of outputs by its community-based teams, and does not routinely monitor their timeliness.

Timeliness of Submission of Reports to Courts

3.49 The Service's guidelines for the management of community service orders advises Probation and Welfare Officers to seek a sufficient period of time from the court when a community service order report is requested, and suggests a period of three weeks. (This includes the time required to identify a suitable community work placement for the offender.) Guidelines in relation to other forms of pre-sanction reports suggest a period of three to four weeks should be sought.

3.50 A 1999 report of a review of community service orders (the Walsh report)¹⁰ stated that, in interviews, Probation and Welfare Officers estimated that it usually took between three and six weeks to produce a community service report for court, and more than six weeks when a backlog

Reports for the courts need to be timely to avoid delays in sentencing

of work had built up. During the activity-based survey of a sample of community-based teams for this examination, officers reported similar times were required to produce reports in 2002. Since some requests for reports may also remain unallocated within the Service for a period after

receipt from the courts, there may be significant delays in sentencing of offenders because of the time taken by Probation and Welfare Officers to produce reports.

3.51 Forms used by the Service to record new court referrals for reports are designed to capture the date of receipt of requests from courts and the expected date of delivery of reports to courts. However, this time-related data is not analysed. Furthermore, it is a paper-based system so reliable statistical estimates of timeliness of report production cannot be easily produced.

Timeliness of Supervision

3.52 For the purposes of this examination, reported dates in relation to the supervision cases community-based teams were dealing with in February 2002 were analysed. This indicated that recording of dates was more complete for community service orders than for other types of orders. When a community service order is imposed, the relevant Probation and Welfare Officer must receive a certified copy of the order from the court. In turn, the Officer is required to give a copy of the order to the offender, before the specified community service work can commence. (This is required to provide legal authorisation of the Officer's work in the case and for insurance reasons.)

¹⁰ Dermot Walsh and Paul Sexton, **An Empirical Study of Community Service Orders in Ireland**, Dublin, The Stationery Office, 1999 (report commissioned by the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform)

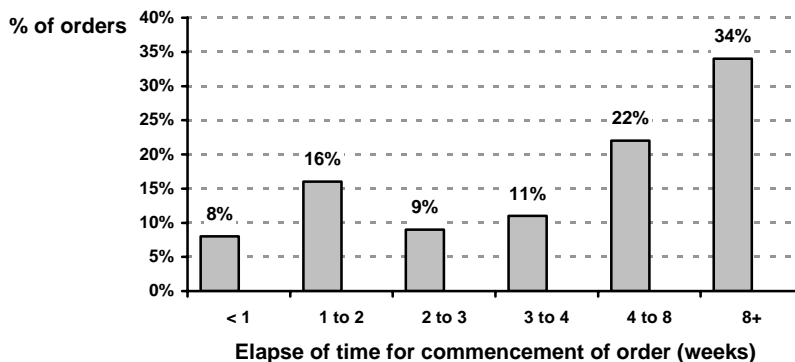
The process of notification to the Service by the courts of other forms of supervision is more informal, and relevant dates are less likely to be recorded. As a result, the following analysis of Service timeliness in relation to supervision cases is limited to community service orders only.

3.53 There is no legal requirement that the work prescribed under a community service order must start immediately, but completion of the order within 12 months is required. There may be delays in the availability of a placement or in the start-up of a group project in an area. However, in general, early commencement of an order is desirable.

Community service work ordered by the courts had not commenced within two months in one-third of cases

3.54 Analysis of the time taken to formally commence prescribed community service work in 'live' supervision order cases in February 2002 shows that, in around 44% of cases, the work commenced within four weeks of the order being made (see Figure 3.8). The prescribed community service work had not commenced within two months in a third of cases.

Figure 3.8 Timeliness of notice of commencement of community service orders, February 2002 cases



Source: Analysis by Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General

Note: Based on community service order cases for which the relevant dates were recorded.

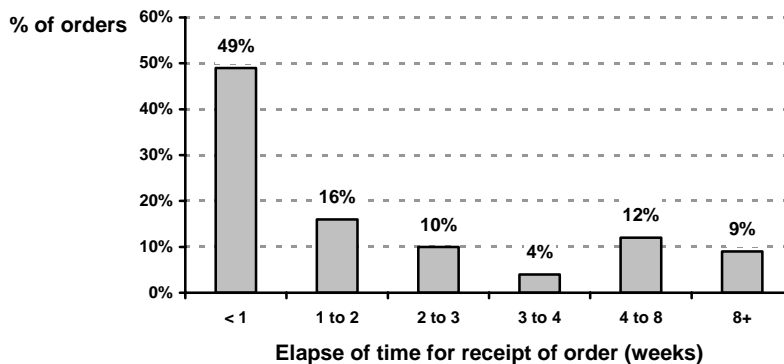
3.55 The elapsed time between imposition of sentence and commencement of community service orders in 2002 cases is similar to that estimated in the Walsh report. This also found that orders had commenced within a month of sentencing in less than half of the cases reviewed. The report listed a number of possible reasons for delay in the commencement of community service orders.

- Some offenders may prove uncooperative by failing to keep pre-arranged meetings with the relevant Probation and Welfare Officer and/or project supervisors.
- Original planned work projects may become unavailable before orders commence.

There were further differences between regions in timeliness in commencing orders but the reasons for the variations were not obvious.

3.56 Since community service work cannot commence until the Service officially receives a copy of the order, delays in the transmission of orders from the courts may also potentially delay commencement. Where the dates of making and receipt of the order were available, analysis indicates that about half the orders were recorded as having been received within a week of being imposed by the courts (see Figure 3.9). One in five orders was received more than a month after being made.

Figure 3.9 Timeliness of receipt by the Service of formal orders for community service, February 2002 cases



Source: Analysis by Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General

Note: Based on community service order cases for which the relevant dates were recorded.

Timeliness in Prison Work

3.57 Since the primary objective of work with offenders in prisons and places of detention is rehabilitation of the offenders, it is highly desirable that contact with the Service should commence as soon as possible after committal of the offender. The aim of the Service is to meet prisoners within 48 hours of committal or transfer. Service staff also respond as soon as possible to prisoners' requests for interviews.

The Service aims for early intervention with offenders in custody but doesn't monitor its response time

3.58 It is standard practice for Prison Service staff to ask offenders at the time they arrive in prison whether or not they

wish to avail of probation and welfare support. However, the Service itself does not routinely record and monitor receipt of requests for assistance or the date of first contact with an offender.

3.59 The Service should monitor the timeliness of its work in prisons and places of detention by measuring and reporting

- the time between arrival of offenders in prisons and places of detention and date of first interview with offenders
- the time between receipt of a request for an interview and the time the interview occurred.

4 Evaluating Service Effectiveness

4.1 The effectiveness of organisations like the Probation and Welfare Service can be evaluated from a number of perspectives

- the extent to which they deliver services envisaged in legislation
- how well they achieve their stated missions and objectives
- what is the quality of the outputs they produce.

4.2 The 1999 report of the Expert Group on the Probation and Welfare Service recommended that the Service should develop a sound empirical base for evaluation of the effectiveness of its work as a means of identifying what kinds of community-based sanctions work, with which offenders and under what conditions. Council of Europe rules in relation to the development and operation of community-based sanctions and measures also encourage regular review of effectiveness, including the extent to which the use of such sanctions conforms to expectations, contributes to reductions in the rates of crime and of imprisonment, promotes the rehabilitation and integration of offenders into society, and is cost-effective.¹¹

4.3 Information about the effectiveness of the Service, both at an overall organisational level and in terms of the relative success of different kinds of interventions in individual cases, should

- assist Probation and Welfare Officers in producing pre-sanction reports on individual offenders and in recommending appropriate sentences and conditions for community-based sanctions
- help judges in deciding in what circumstances they will impose community-based sanctions or detention; and in deciding which of the available community-based sanctions is likely to be most effective in dealing with individual offenders
- inform and provide assurance to the public that the work being done by the Service is having the desired effect.

4.4 This chapter examines the extent to which the stated objectives match the Service's statutory mandate. Its objectives are considered in the context of the overall objectives of the wider criminal justice system, in which it plays a key role in relation to developing and operating the system of community-based sanctions. The chapter also considers the extent to which the Service has developed the required empirical-based systems to evaluate its overall effectiveness, and to ensure that it delivers high quality in its work in relation to individual offenders.

Service Objectives and Mandate

4.5 In carrying out its functions, the Service seeks to achieve a range of objectives, as described in its strategy statement (see Figure 4.1). These objectives are interrelated and include

- promoting the safety of the public
- reducing the level of re-offending
- rehabilitating and re-integrating offenders into society

¹¹ Council of Europe, **European Rules on Community Sanctions and Measures**, R(92) 16, rules 89/90

- promoting the recognition and use of community-based sanctions.

4.6 All of the stated objectives and high level goals of the Service relate to the criminal justice system functions it carries out. In practice, this includes significant activities for which the Service does not have a formal statutory mandate i.e. supervision of offenders during deferment of penalty and the provision of pre-sanction reports (other than community service order reports).

4.7 In its 1999 report, the Expert Group endorsed these non-statutory roles as appropriate and desirable roles for the Service but legislation recommended by the Group to underpin these functions has not been advanced.

4.8 In contrast to its strategic focus on its activities in the criminal justice area, the Service's statement of strategy makes no mention of services to courts in the family law area.

Figure 4.1 Mission and High Level Goals of the Probation and Welfare Service 2001-2003

Mission

The Probation and Welfare Service mission is to foster public safety and promote the common good by

- challenging the behaviour of offenders
- advancing the recognition and use of community-based sanctions, thereby reducing the level of re-offending

High Level Goals

The delivery of the Service's mission is achieved through the implementation of its high level goals. These are

- To assist the courts in sentencing decisions by the provision of pre-sanction reports that focus on offending behaviour and on how further crime could be prevented by applying community sanctions.
- To design, provide and promote effective programmes of supervision in the community through which offenders will be brought to an understanding and acceptance of their responsibilities to themselves, their victims, their families and the community by complying with the requirements and conditions of supervision orders.
- To assist and motivate offenders to critically examine their attitudes and behaviour and, with advice and encouragement, to avail of what help and support can be made available.
- To work with offenders contained in places of custody and schools for young offenders, focusing on their offending behaviour, liaising with families in preparation for their return to the community and advising on how community-based programmes may be utilised to strengthen the process of re-integration.
- To develop aftercare arrangements, including the provision of requisite facilities, for those offenders who have completed all or part of their custodial sentences and for whom the Service is expected to provide supervision, guidance and assistance towards their resettlement in the community.
- To bring together groups from the local community to assist the Service in addressing issues relating to the management of offenders in their neighbourhood, and together to identify, initiate and participate in specific projects designed to enhance supervision in the community such as probation residences, workshops, day centres or special projects in selected urban areas.
- To provide specialist information and appraisal of both current functioning and new developments in community sanctions and measures, internationally as well as domestically.

Source: *Advancing Our Aims — Probation and Welfare Service Statement of Strategy 2001-2003*

4.9 Up to 1995, the Service was informally involved in the provision of reports in District Court family law cases, at the request of judges and with the consent of the parties to the cases. The reports prepared were primarily in the areas of barring order applications, custody of and access to children, and the making of maintenance orders. Typically, the judge would adjourn an application to a further hearing and request that an officer of the Service would meet with the parties in the interim and present a report for consideration at the next hearing.

4.10 The Service handled around 300 to 400 referrals in family law cases each year in the late 1980s and early 1990s. In 1995, the Service decided to cease production of family law reports because of increases in demand in relation to criminal cases and because of difficulties in recruitment of staff. The absence of a clear statutory basis for their work in the family law area was also specified as a reason for withdrawal from provision of the service. However, the legal situation has since changed with the enactment of a number of pieces of legislation in the late 1990s (see Figure 4.2).

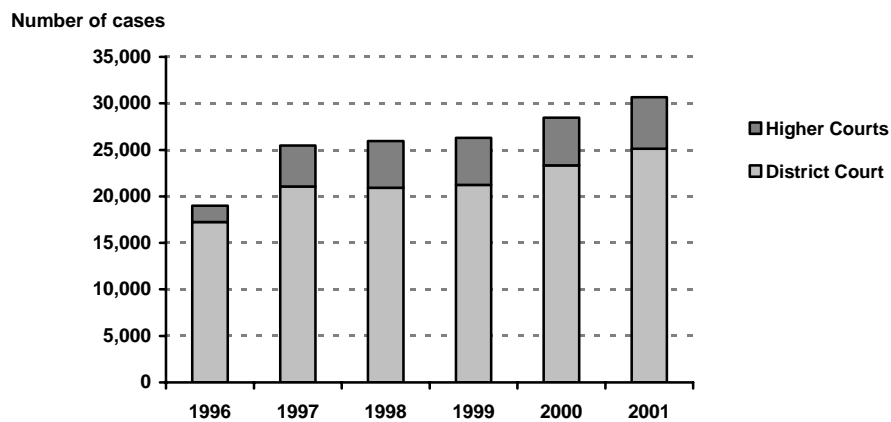
The Service is not discharging its statutory functions in the family law area

4.11 In terms of the potential demand on the Service, the formal extension to District Court judges of the power to seek reports is of particular significance, given the volume of family law cases heard there. Figure 4.3 shows the relative numbers of family law cases heard in the District Court and the higher courts. The annual number of cases heard increased from 19,000 in 1996 to 30,700 in 2001 — an increase of over 60%.

Figure 4.2 Statutory basis for judges in family law cases to request reports from the Probation and Welfare Service

Legislation	Potential implications for Service
Child Abduction and Enforcement of Custody Orders Act, 1991	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Courts empowered to ask officers of the Service to provide reports in relation to children involved in cases under Section 7(d) of the Hague Convention
Family Law Act, 1995	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Circuit Court judges hearing family law cases empowered (under Section 47) to give directions for the procurement of reports from (among others) an officer nominated by the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform
Family Law (Divorce) Act, 1996	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Circuit Court judges hearing divorce cases empowered to give directions for the procurement of reports
Children Act, 1997	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ District Court judges empowered to give directions for the procurement of reports ▪ Courts empowered to appoint a person presenting Section 47 reports to be guardian <i>ad litem</i> i.e. as an officer of the court, to independently represent the child and to present to the court what is in the best interests of the child

Source: Adapted from 1999 Report of the Expert Group on the Probation and Welfare Service

Figure 4.3 Number of family law cases heard, by court jurisdiction, 1996 to 2001

Source: Courts Service Annual Reports 2000 and 2001; Family Law Bulletin, December 2002

Note: Data for 1996 to 1999 relates to period from 1 August to 31 July of following year, in each case.

4.12 The Expert Group recommended the development of a separate division within the Service to deal with family law cases.

4.13 At the request of the Courts Service, the Service has undertaken to provide, on a one-year pilot basis, an agreed small number of reports to circuit courts in cases where the custody of children is in dispute.

Promoting the Use of Community-Based Sanctions

4.14 One of the primary aims of the service, as expressed in its statement of strategy, is to promote the recognition and use of community-based sanctions.

4.15 The 1999 Expert Group report recommended that the range of community-based sanctions available to judges should be expanded. This recommendation has not been implemented.

Comparative Effectiveness of Forms of Sanction

4.16 The Service approaches its role in relation to the management of offenders on the basis that

- in general, community sanctions are to be preferred to custody, which should be the penalty of last resort
- courts can deal with a significant number of offenders safely and effectively by using community sanctions that challenge offenders to accept responsibility for their offending behaviour
- intervention to restrain further offending is more effective when undertaken by way of reparation, restoration, renewal and resettlement than by simple retribution.

4.17 The Service is part of a wider system for the management of criminal offenders, with primary responsibility for supervision of offenders in the community, and a significant role — shared with the Prison Service — in the rehabilitation and resettlement of offenders who receive custodial sentences. As a result, its objective of promoting the recognition and use of community-

based sanctions should be evaluated in terms of the wider set of objectives underlying the sentencing of criminal offenders, and which judges weigh up in individual cases. These can be summarised as

- **Incapacitation** — the prevention of crimes that the offender would have committed during the period of a sentence in the absence of that sentence
- **Punishment** — the exercise of public moral objection to, and retribution for, the offence
- **Reparation** — the extent to which the offender makes appropriate and acceptable reparation to the victim and/or the community
- **Specific deterrence** — the effect the sentence has in reducing the likelihood that the offender will re-offend after the end of the sentence (i.e. preventing recidivism)
- **Rehabilitation** — the effect the sentence has on the individual's ability to make a contribution to society (family, community and economy) after the sentence
- **General deterrence** — the effect that the sentence has on the likelihood of others to commit crimes.
- **Public confidence** — the effect of the sentence on the public's perception of the effectiveness of the criminal justice system and of the risk or fear of experiencing crime.

4.18 Different types of sentence may be more or less effective in achieving each of the potential objectives of sentencing. For example, custodial sentences should be better than other sentences in achieving incapacitation of offenders; however, limitations on movement and the imminent threat of having to serve a custodial sentence that is associated with many community-based sanctions may also have an incapacitation effect. On the other hand, a custodial sentence may not achieve much in the way of reparation for the victim of a crime or for the community, whereas a compensation payment or work done under a community service order may have such an effect.

4.19 Internationally, there is considerable research into the relative effectiveness of different forms of sentence in achieving the kind of objectives outlined above. For a period in the 1970s and 1980s, the prevailing argument emanating from such research was that no form of sentencing was effective in reducing significantly the rate of recidivism (the 'nothing works' argument). More recently, comparative research work has concluded that, relative to imprisonment, some forms of community-based interventions can be more successful in certain circumstances in reducing the rate of re-offending, and in achieving some of the other objectives of sentencing. These conclusions underpin the policy of increasing the relative use of community-based sanctions.

No evaluations have been undertaken of the relative effectiveness of custodial and community-based sanctions in Ireland

4.20 Because all forms of community-based sanctions do not work in all circumstances, the Service needs to be able to carry out evidence-based evaluations of programme effectiveness to establish what programmes are most effective in Irish circumstances.

4.21 Neither the Department — which oversees the operation of the criminal justice system — nor the Service has carried out evaluations of the relative effectiveness of the different forms of sentence.

Cost Effectiveness of Community-based Sanctions

4.22 In addition to the Service's perception that supervision of an offender in the community is both more appropriate and more effective than a custodial sentence in many cases, the cost of imposing a community-based sentence is also significantly less than the cost of the alternative imprisonment term. While this is a very important consideration in policy design in relation to sentencing and in the provision of capacity to deliver sentences, the relative cost of implementing a sentence is usually not a primary consideration in individual sentencing decisions made by judges.

4.23 The estimated average cost of a community-based sanction imposed in 2001 ranges from €1,500 to €6,100. The Department has estimated that the average annual cost of keeping an offender in a place of detention in 2001 was around €79,000. At the simplest level of comparison, therefore, the estimated average cost of a supervision order ranges from 2% to 8% of the cost of keeping an offender in prison for a year. However, a number of other considerations need to be taken into account in making cost comparisons of imprisonment and supervision.

- While supervision in the community is designed and structured primarily as an alternative to imprisonment, judges may, in practice, use supervision orders in cases where they would not otherwise have imposed custodial sentences. (This 'net widening' effect results from the introduction/availability of supervision.) In cases where a custodial sentence would not have been imposed, there is no financial cost of alternative imprisonment.
- The alternative custodial sentences specified by judges in supervision cases may be less than or greater than 12 months, so comparisons between average costs of supervision and average annual costs of a prison place may be misleading. Furthermore, offenders might, on average, not serve the full specified sentences due to partial remission of sentence for good behaviour.
- If an offender fails to meet the conditions of the supervision order and is subsequently imprisoned, both the costs of the supervision order and of imprisonment may be incurred.

4.24 Figure 4.4 illustrates the potential impact of these factors on the relative costs of community service orders and of imprisonment. There is insufficient information available to calculate similar estimates in relation to probation orders and supervision during deferment of penalty.

The cost of imposing community service orders is estimated at around one-third of the cost of custodial alternatives

4.25 The analysis suggests broadly that the cost of community service orders is around one-third of the cost of the likely alternative imprisonment of offenders. In cost-effectiveness terms, therefore, there appears to be a strong argument for

developing the capacity of the Service to deal with as many offenders in the community as judges decide can appropriately be given such sentences.

Figure 4.4 Cost comparison of community service order and imprisonment alternatives, 2001

For illustrative purposes, this comparison is based on the estimated costs in 2001 associated with supervision of 100 offenders sentenced to community service, and the estimated costs of the imprisonment of offenders that would have been incurred had community service orders not been available to judges. Assumptions about the operation of the community service system are based on the findings of a research report commissioned by the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform (the Walsh report, 1999).

Cost of imprisonment

Community service orders can be imposed by judges for between 40 and 240 hours. The Walsh report found that the average length of sentence for a sample of almost 300 orders imposed in 1996/1997 was 141 hours.

Community service orders are legally only available to the courts as an alternative to a term of imprisonment. The alternative sentence to be served by the offender was specified in most cases reviewed in the Walsh report — the estimated average duration of the alternative prison sentences was 22 weeks. Based on an estimated annual cost of €79,000 for keeping a prisoner in 2001, this implies that, on average, the cost of the prison alternative to a community service order was around €33,400 (i.e. €79,000 ÷ 52 x 22).

The Walsh report also found that 43% of those sentenced to community service had no previous convictions and that a further 25% had a previous criminal record for only minor offences. On that basis, the report concluded that 'net widening' had occurred i.e. community service orders were being applied in some cases where custodial sentences may not have been imposed, had supervision not been available. However, some of these offenders might have been sentenced instead to other (and more expensive) forms of supervision (e.g. probation orders)

Assuming that 30% of those who received community service would not have received a prison sentence or another form of supervision sentence, the cost of the imprisonment of offenders that would have been the alternative for the 100 community service orders would therefore be €2.34 million (i.e. €33,400 x 70).

Cost of community service orders

The estimated average cost of a community service order in 2001 was €1,500. This implies the total cost of supervision of 100 offenders would be €150,000.

The Walsh report found that 83% of offenders successfully completed their community service orders. Non-completion implies that offenders should have been required to serve the specified prison sentences. Applying this percentage to the illustrative group of 100 offenders implies that 17 offenders would have been imprisoned, at a total cost of around €570,000.

Thus, the full cost to the Exchequer of enforcing community service sentences on 100 offenders is estimated at €720,000.

Cost comparison

The cost of community service is consequently estimated at 31% of the cost of the alternative imprisonment.

Source: Analysis by Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General

Evaluative Capacity

4.26 The ability of an organisation to carry out evaluations of effectiveness relies on certain key management systems being in place. In general, the Service has not developed the necessary systems, so its ability to evaluate the effectiveness of its operations — at organisational, programme or individual intervention levels — is quite limited.

Measures and Targets

4.27 While the Service has developed a clear statement of its objectives in relation to its criminal justice system functions, these have not, in general, been expressed as quantifiable measures and few specific performance targets have been set.

The Service has not developed the management systems needed to allow it to evaluate its effectiveness

4.28 Reducing the level of recidivism by offenders, while a key objective of the Service (and of the criminal justice system generally), is a difficult factor to measure

satisfactorily. In general, re-offending may only be recognised as such by the system when a crime is reported, detected and the offender successfully prosecuted. In assessing the significance of the re-offending, the seriousness of the offence and the frequency of offending may also need to be assessed — a reduced frequency of offending and reduced seriousness of charges may reflect some progress in the effort to rehabilitate a repeat offender.

4.29 Little work has been done by the Service or by the Department in relation to patterns of re-offending, or in the relative rates of recidivism following custodial or community-based sentences. As a result, there is no baseline in relation to rates of recidivism, and so there is no basis for target setting. This is important for evaluation purposes, because the general expectation would be that those sentenced to community-based sanctions should be lower risks for re-offending than those sentenced to custody.

4.30 The Service could begin to evaluate its effectiveness in the areas of re-offending and rehabilitation by measuring, even if only on a sample basis

- the percentage of Service clients who are re-convicted, say, within 1 or 2 years of completion of supervision order, or following release from custody (where the Service had actively worked on rehabilitation of the offender)
- percentage of offenders who offend again while under supervision.

Research should be carried out on rates of recidivism in Ireland

4.31 In evaluating rates of recidivism, it is important to note that a reduction in the frequency of offending or in the seriousness of the offences may represent progress, or success in individual cases.

Management Information Systems

4.32 Evidence-based evaluation and output focused management of the Service depend critically on the availability of relevant, reliable and timely management information and the ability of the Service to analyse the data. In practice, the Service has very poorly developed management information systems. This is compounded by the lack of relevant statistical information from other parts of the criminal justice system on a consistent basis.

Resources for Monitoring Performance

4.33 The Service has provided very few staff resources to carry out performance monitoring, evaluation and research work. These consist of one Senior Probation and Welfare Officer, who also has duties in relation to services in the Drugs Court in Dublin, 1.5 whole time equivalent Probation and Welfare Officers and one clerical support person in the Statistics and Research Unit.

Information Technology

4.34 The Service relies on the Information Technology Unit of the Department for assistance in the development of information technology systems. As a result, the Service must compete with other parts of the Department, including the Prisons Service, for priority and resourcing — financial and staffing — to meet its information technology needs.

4.35 Both the Service and the Department have long recognised that the development of an appropriate information and communications technology (ICT) capability is crucial to ensuring an efficient and effective Service. A 1994 consultancy report (the Vision report) outlined an information technology plan for the Service but the plan was not implemented.

4.36 In 1998, over €1 million was sanctioned for the development of ICT within the Service, to keep pace with relevant developments in the Prisons and Courts Services. In late 1998 and early 1999, a total of €645,000 was spent on ICT for the Service.

The development of information and communications technology capacity has long been identified as a crucial requirement for the Service, but development of capacity has been piecemeal and slow

- Spending on hardware and software licensing, totalling €400,000, has provided limited return for Service users. At the end of 2002, only €137,000 worth (34%) was in use in the Service. The remainder had either been loaned out to other justice agencies (€53,000 worth or 13%) or remained in storage (€209,000 or 53%).
- There was investment of €245,000 in site cabling of Service offices, but since the planned computer equipment has not been deployed, this has so far yielded little return.

4.37 In 2000, a small group within the Service was tasked with developing an initial case tracking system, based on proprietary software and using standard court return forms in use within the Service. The group was supported part-time by a consultant working in the Department and later by staff from the Department of Finance's Centre for Management and Organisation Development. The work of the group was suspended pending technical clarification, and the staff

subsequently left. This led to delays in the development of the case tracking system. Work later resumed on the project, which is now at an advanced stage.

4.38 The examination found that, at the end of 2002, ICT capacity was underdeveloped in the Service. The most significant deficiencies found were

- Only 58 users — 18% of the staff — had access to computers. These were mainly clerical/administrative staff operating stand-alone personal computers without network links or support.
- Most professional staff did not have individual computers and relied on clerical staff to prepare reports. In some cases, professional staff used their own personal computers to prepare reports.
- There were no e-mail facilities. This limited internal communication within the Service and slowed down contact with external agencies.
- All case records and systems were paper-based.
- There was no automated case tracking system or computerised database of the offenders currently being dealt with by the Service.

4.39 In its statement of strategy for 2001 to 2003, the Service did not identify the development of ICT as a key strategy to improving the performance of the Service. At the time the strategy was produced, there was little prospect that funding would be available to invest in information technology.

4.40 However, during 2002, consultants engaged on a Department-wide review of ICT requirements were asked by the Department to review options for developing and implementing suitable ICT systems for the Service. The consultants looked at a range of options, from building on existing investment to a complete upgrade.

4.41 A new information system for the Service, projected to cost between €1.1 million and €1.5 million, is currently being installed. The system has been rolled out for 114 staff, both professional and clerical, in the Service's headquarters, and in the Crumlin and Carlow offices. It is anticipated that, by the end of March 2004, all Service staff will have desk access to a computer. Equipment purchased earlier and held in storage will be used in the current project. Site cabling of Service offices is fully functional and does not have to be replaced for the current rollout.

4.42 Training in the use of information technology has been provided to 80% of Service staff. All staff currently on the network have e-mail facilities, which provides secure mail across the Justice sector data network.

Management Information

4.43 For practical purposes, the Service has no system for producing routine management information. Largely, this is a result of under resourcing and the poorly developed information technology system within the Service. However, there are other issues which need to be addressed as part of the development of an appropriate management information system.

- There are few formally agreed measures of what is relevant in terms of outputs, efficiency or effectiveness.

- There is little formal recording of case data for statistical purposes. For example, the staff time input on individual cases is not recorded.
- Data collection systems are mainly manual, involving successive rounds of data capture and data entry. Some statistical returns are incomplete or late and are not comprehensively validated. This has a significant impact on the timeliness and reliability of management information.

The Service has no system for producing routine management information

4.44 The Department has stated that its Prison/Probation and Welfare Policy Division have been in discussion for some time with the Courts Service about the possibility of the Courts Service generating statistics in such a way as to assist the Probation and Welfare Service in measuring and monitoring its activities. Arrangements have been made for very detailed monthly reports to be generated regarding, in the first instance, criminal cases involving persons under 18 years of age. Information will, initially, be available only in relation to the Limerick and Dublin areas, where court offices have been computerised. When all court offices have been computerised, the system will be expanded to cover criminal cases involving persons aged 18 years and over.

Reporting Performance

4.45 The Service has traditionally produced an annual statistical report, focused mainly on basic statistics about its outputs. The extent to which the Service operates efficiently or effectively has not been reported.

4.46 Timeliness in the production of the annual report has been a problem. A report for the year 2000 was compiled but has not yet been published. Even rough estimates of output statistics for 2001 or 2002 are not yet available.

Periodic Evaluation

4.47 The Service has not developed a formal evaluation strategy. As a first step in developing such a strategy, the Service should assign clear responsibility for developing and implementing a suitable evaluation programme.

4.48 It may be impractical for many reasons to carry out an extensive programme of evaluation research in-house. In that case, the Service should consider commissioning outside researchers to carry out the required work.

4.49 The Service's programme of evaluation work should be co-ordinated with evaluation work being undertaken or commissioned elsewhere in relation to the Irish criminal justice system (e.g. by the Department, the National Crime Council, the Prisons and Courts Services, the Garda Síochána, Economic and Social Research Institute, National Economic and Social Council, National Economic and Social Forum, etc.). However, as one of the primary agencies actively involved in rehabilitation of prisoners, the Service should take on responsibility for ensuring that the necessary evaluations are done.

Periodic evaluation of its own performance should be a feature of the Service's future strategy

4.50 Some evaluation work has been done by (or involving) the Service in recent years, to varying degrees of success e.g. an expenditure review of payments to voluntary schemes was more descriptive than analytic; a review by academics of community supervision orders/reports provided useful information about the operation and use of the system, but did not address its effectiveness.

Ensuring Quality of Service

4.51 The Service needs to ensure that its reports to courts and supervision of offenders in the community are of the requisite high quality if the system of community-based sentencing is to achieve effectiveness. At a minimum, this requires the Service to ensure that supervision order conditions are complied with fully. In addition, since many of the Service's interventions with offenders rely on the ability and professionalism of Probation and Welfare Officers, the Service requires systems and practices that provide reasonable assurance that interventions in individual cases are of the highest possible quality.

Measuring Quality

4.52 Although there is potential for the Service to measure the quality of its outputs, it does not currently have measures or targets in relation to quality, and does not routinely monitor quality.

4.53 Three indicators can be used as a base for carrying out an assessment of the quality of work in relation to supervision of offenders.

- Formal risk assessment systems have been developed in a number of probation services to assess and record the likelihood of re-offending of individual offenders, given their demographic, family and social backgrounds, and their history of offending. These assessments are used in proposing suitable community-based sanctions in individual cases. This kind of information is potentially useful in evaluating the relative success of programmes and in identifying what works. The Service has not implemented a formal risk assessment and recording process in its procedures.
- The proportion of offenders successfully completing an order is a simple indicator of the quality of supervision. The Walsh report found that, in a sample of community service orders, around 83% were completed successfully i.e. without the order being revoked because the offender was formally found to be in breach of conditions. The remaining 17% were formally breached i.e. the relevant Probation and Welfare Officers had them summoned back to Court for failure to comply with the conditions of the relevant court orders, which were subsequently revoked. (In some of the successful cases, Probation and Welfare Officers had issued one or more warnings to offenders who had breached the conditions of their supervision orders.) Similar information is not currently available in relation to other forms of supervision.
- The amount of time input by professional staff in relation to the case of an individual offender may be very useful in assessing the effectiveness of effort and in establishing what works in what circumstances. Currently, the Service does not routinely record data on how often, or for how long, Officers meet offenders in relation to orders. In interviews with Probation and Welfare Officers carried out during this examination, Officers report that active cases involving offenders on probation orders or supervision during deferment of penalty require around three hours professional time input per month; typically, community service order cases require around one and a half hours time input per month. Officers

invest more professional time working with certain offenders where intensive supervision is considered to be required. These reported professional time inputs are similar to those reported by probation services in the UK.

4.54 The Service could also routinely monitor the quality of the reports it supplies to judges through a range of indicators.

- The Service has specified standards for court report format and contents. Compliance of the reports produced with the standards is not formally monitored, even on a sample basis. However, Senior Probation and Welfare Officers review a proportion of completed reports — some categories of reports are automatically referred to the Senior Probation and Welfare Officer, others are selected for review.
- Some Senior Probation and Welfare Officers receive informal feedback from judges on the quality of the reports the Service provides. The Service could consider periodically gathering more formal feedback from judges. The Service could also monitor the percentage of cases where judges agree/disagree with Service report recommendations.

4.55 Currently, there is very little measurement of the quality of work undertaken with offenders in custody. At a minimum, the Service should consider recording and monitoring

- the number of formal interviews with client per case
- the hours of professional time input per case (taking account of sentence duration)
- the percentage of cases where planned Service interventions with offenders were successfully completed.

Staff Training

4.56 Provision of formal professional training for Service staff has been limited in recent years. The activity survey of community-based teams indicated that, on average, around 4 % of staff time had been spent on staff training in 2001. Most of this related to training associated with the civil-service wide performance management and development system, or to basic induction training for new recruits.

Audit of Effectiveness

4.57 The 1999 Expert Group report recommended the establishment of an independent Inspector of Probation Services function. The proposed objectives of the Inspector were

- to provide assurance to the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform that the Service is providing high quality advice to criminal and family law courts and is contributing to public protection by the effective supervision of offenders
- to assist in promoting and developing effective management and practice
- to conduct periodic thematic reports into dimensions of the work of the Service in order to develop models of best practice.

4.58 No decision has been taken by the Department in relation to the creation of this function.

4.59 In the absence of an independent external inspector, the Department and/or the Service should consider instituting a cyclical programme of independent peer reviews of its processes and service outcomes as a means of identifying potential strategic improvements.

Appendices

Appendix A Recommendations of the Expert Group on the Probation and Welfare Service

Recommendations	Action/current position
<i>First Report of the Expert Group (1998)</i>	
<p>1 The number of staff serving should be brought up to levels previously approved by Government decisions — this implies an increase in the number of basic grade officers serving from 148.5 (at 31 Dec. 1997) to 225, with appropriate increases in the numbers of senior staff and clerical support.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ In March 2003, the number of staff in the basic officer grade was 207 — an increase of 38% on the end 1997 position (which in fact was 149.5) ■ Senior staff increased in number from 44 at end 1997 to 55 in March 2003 — an increase of 25% ■ Support staff increased in number from 52.5 at end 1997 to 61 in March 2003 — an increase of 16%
<p>2 The current system for the recruitment of staff should be streamlined.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Staff recruitment was streamlined in 2001 but considerable problems remain, in particular in relation to the length of time from receipt of applications to intake (over 9 months) – resulting loss of potential officers to other employers ■ Service has reached its current professional establishment and recruitment of officers now mainly relates to filling vacancies created by turnover of personnel
<p>3 Invest in a comprehensive public information and awareness programme and to set aside funding for this purpose.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ No developments
<p>4 Immediately invite tenders for a new IT system; dedicated IT Section should be established within the Probation and Welfare Service as soon as possible</p> <p>5 Undertake a comprehensive staff training needs analysis of the training needs associated with the introduction of the new information technology system</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Consultants carried out a review of ICT and associated training needs in 2002 ■ Consultants engaged to implement a new ICT system for the Service over 3 years (2003-2005) at a cost of €2.1-€2.5 million

Recommendations	Action/current position
6 The Service should develop its statistics and data services as soon as possible, and should provide resources for the statistics and research function accordingly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No increase in amount of staff resources directed to statistics and research function (staff in November 2003 was 1 senior, 1.5 whole time equivalent Probation and Welfare Officers and one member of support staff)
7 Broader research concerns should be addressed through the Research Advisory Committee of the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Limited research carried out since 1998
8 Criminal Justice (Community Service) Regulations 1984, (which places responsibility for insurance on the group or body providing work for offenders) should be amended.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Service now carries own insurance for work projects

Final Report of the Expert Group (1999)

Policy and Legislative Framework

1 There should be a significant shift in policy to facilitate the increased use of a much greater range of non-custodial sanctions. This will require significant additional staffing and other resources for the Service.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No evidence of a significant increase in use of non-custodial sanctions ▪ Decisions on whether to use non-custodial sanctions are a matter for the judiciary
2 The Probation of Offenders Act, 1907 (as amended) should be repealed and new legislation enacted to provide for (a) a new statutory institutional framework for the Service and (b) additional non-custodial sanctions, including: treatment orders; mediation orders; reparation orders; counselling orders and combination orders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No new basic legislation for Service ▪ Children Act, 2001 has created a number of new types of orders (e.g. curfews, parental supervision orders, assessment in day centres in lieu of remands in custody for the purpose of assessment); resources permitting, the first of these will begin to be available in 2004
3 As a general principle, no person under the age of 21, nor any person convicted of a first offence, should be sentenced to a term of imprisonment without the court having before it a report prepared by the Service, except in cases where there is a mandatory sentence of imprisonment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Children Act, 2001 makes a report obligatory where judges are considering a custodial sentence or community sanction for persons under the age of 18 years
4 All non-custodial sanctions should be sanctions in their own right and not described as alternatives to imprisonment. Community Service Orders should be available both as an alternative to imprisonment and as a sanction in its own right.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No developments

Recommendations	Action/current position
<p>5 There should be greater co-ordination and integration of the various agencies in order to achieve a rational, cost effective and efficient criminal justice system. There should be a clearly defined and enhanced role for the Service within it.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Limited evidence of greater co-ordination and integration of services ▪ Information sharing is uncoordinated and limited
<p>6 Electronic monitoring should not be introduced at this stage. Given the limitation in relation to electronic tagging and the continued development of more sophisticated mechanisms of monitoring, the introduction of third generation systems should be awaited and monitoring of the existing systems in Europe and elsewhere should continue.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No action required
<p>7 The role of probation hostels should be expanded and linked to existing community-based initiatives. Consideration should also be given to establishing bail hostels, with the possibility of utilising some existing land or buildings in the current open prisons.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No developments
<p>8 The existing sex offender treatment programme should be replicated in every penal institution which has sex offenders. It should be developed, staffed and funded appropriately.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Existing treatment programme (8 places) in Arbour Hill Prison ▪ Capacity to treat sex offenders in a group setting increased from 8 to 16 places by establishment of a second treatment programme, in the Curragh Prison, in 2000
<p>9 A sound empirical base should be developed to demonstrate the potential and limitations of community-based sanctions, in order to further advance an understanding of what works, with which offenders and in what conditions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No developments
<p>10 One of the research priorities of the Service should be to conduct research which would attempt to ascertain why the number of non-custodial sanctions and committals to prisons and places of detention are rising, despite the considerable decrease in crime in Ireland in recent years.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No developments

Recommendations	Action/current position
Structure and Staffing	
<p>11 A statutory Probation and Welfare Agency should be established soon. It should comprise a Board of Directors responsible for overall policy and direction within a statutory framework. Pending the enactment of legislation to establish the Probation and Welfare Agency on a statutory basis, an Interim Board should be established to facilitate the establishment of the Agency.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No developments
<p>12 The role of the Probation and Welfare Agency should be to manage, effectively and efficiently, the Probation and Welfare Service within policy parameters established by the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Objectives in relation to criminal justice system adopted as Service objectives in strategic planning documents ▪ Objectives in relation to family law system not adopted
<p>13 The key objectives of the Agency should be to deter offenders from crime, to rehabilitate offenders by providing appropriate services, to provide cost-effective community sanctions, and to provide a professional service to both the criminal and family courts.</p>	
<p>14 A Director of Probation and Welfare Services (DPWS), who will be the Chief Executive Officer, should be appointed by the Board following open competition. The Director should be responsible to the Board for the management and business of the Agency.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No developments
<p>15 A number of functions linked to specific areas of responsibility (e.g. planning and research, human resources, regional support, corporate affairs) should be established within the Service, to address existing deficiencies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Limited progress — each Assistant Principal Officer (13) has been given strategic responsibility for different areas
<p>16 Appropriate regional structures should be developed within the Agency, on the principle that powers and responsibility should be devolved to the lowest operational level compatible with the efficient and effective delivery of the Service.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Regional structures in place and the Service is continuing to localise its offices throughout the country ▪ Individual teams in prisons and in districts are tasked with negotiating service level agreements with relevant agencies at local level
<p>17 The Board should determine staff numbers, their grades and salaries within the overall limits agreed with the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform and the Department of Finance. The public service ethos of probity and independence is a key strength of the Service and should be maintained.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No developments

Recommendations	Action/current position
<p>18 Within the Agency structure, two distinct service sections should be developed; one section dealing with the area of criminal law, the other with family law. Recruitment, human resources and information needs of both sections should be managed centrally by the Agency. When working in the area of family law, officers should be designated as Court Welfare Officers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Family law work not being done
<p>19 An Advisory Forum should be established. It should include organisations concerned with the justice and family law systems, both statutory and voluntary clients of the Service. The role of the Forum should be to advise the Agency on the formulation of policy and facilitate dialogue between the Agency and relevant bodies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No developments
<p>20 The Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform should appoint an Inspector of Probation and Welfare Services. The Inspector should have responsibility for ensuring the delivery of a quality Probation and Welfare Service.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No developments
<p>21 Relationships with, and services to other agencies, in particular the Prisons Service and Courts Service, should be developed via negotiated agreements and appropriate mechanisms of inter-agency co-ordination and co-operation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A Service Level Agreement is currently being negotiated between the Service and the Irish Prisons Service
<p><i>The Role of the Service</i></p>	
<p>22 In order to ensure that officers develop a holistic appreciation and integrated approach to their work, provision should be made for staff mobility throughout the Service.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All main grade probation officers required to serve minimum of 3 years providing services in prisons or places of detention
<p>23 There should be a substantially extended and enhanced role for the Service in relation to providing assistance to the court and on the direction of the court, the management of offenders; and the development of more effective use of professional input of officers in prisons and places of detention</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No major change
<p>24 The Service should be adequately resourced to enable it to discharge its function in the Family Law Courts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No developments relating to family law (no official sanction of posts)

Recommendations	Action/current position
<p>25 The current role of the officer, which is to provide independent objective assessments to the courts, should be maintained. This should also apply in the Family Law Courts. Mediation and family conflict resolution is not an appropriate role for the officer.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Limited service to circuit courts to be provided on a one-year pilot basis
<p>26 Drug courts should have the benefit of the input of officers on the scale necessary to achieve the courts objectives.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 2 Officers in Statistics and Research Unit currently also support Drug Court
<p>27 The role of officers should be enhanced in such areas as addictions and other behaviours which may contribute to criminal activity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No major changes ▪ Increased role in relation to sex offenders and their supervision in the community
<p>28 The Service should clarify for the courts the modus operandi and the nature and range of programmes including those available for drug and alcohol problems, either institutionally or community-based.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Not formalised yet – communication on informal basis at local level
<p>29 Necessary structures and resources should be provided to allow for the Service to provide for a comprehensive after care service for prisoners.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In May 2002, the Homeless Offenders Strategy Team (HOST) — was established by the Service to co-ordinate the development of accommodation services for homeless offenders during and after periods of supervision and following release from detention ▪ Current after care is limited and on a voluntary basis
<p>30 In future, staff of the Adoption Board should no longer be seconded from the Service</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Staff currently seconded to the Adoption Board will remain. No new secondments will be made.
<p>31 The role of the Service in the special schools for young offenders should be discontinued.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The role of the Service in special schools for young offenders is ongoing with 4 Officer positions provided for this purpose

Appendix B Payments to Schemes providing Services to Offenders under Supervision, 2002

Name of Scheme	Total €
Education Schemes	
West Tallaght Probation Project	611,552
The Linkage Project - Training And Employment Opportunities	580,461
BOND (Blanchardstown Offenders For New Directions)	454,324
Stepping Out Project, Athlone	404,590
Southill Outreach, Limerick	309,096
Tivoli Training Centre, Dun Laoghaire	305,892
Wexford Area Partnership (Cornmarket Project)	259,344
Killarney Diocesan Youth Services	250,000
Dóchas don Oige, Galway	243,808
Moyross Probation Project - Ceim Ar Ceim	223,914
Clonmel Youth Training Enterprises	200,000
Treble R Industries, Dublin	194,269
Candle Community Trust	188,904
St Vincent's Trust, Dublin	171,400
Tuam Community Training Centre Ltd	170,794
Waterford Treo (formerly Waterford Inclusion Project)	167,612
Athy Alternative Project	165,207
Auto Crime Diversion Project Ltd	152,047
Cork Alliance For Justice and Social Care	150,687
Muckcross Centre	150,000
Ballinasloe Training	132,466
Churchfield Youth Community Trust, Cork	114,276
WHAD, Ballyfermot	109,131
Matt Talbot Community Trust	89,136
Wexford Centre Project Ltd	88,728
WRENS (Women Reviewing Equality Networking Standards)	78,670
Adventure Sport Project, Dublin 1	67,881
Ballymun Youth Action Programme	64,436
Cherry Orchard Education and Training	60,000
Aftercare Recovery Group	50,790
Cox's Demesne	48,042
Nenagh Community Reparation Project	45,254
Usher's Island	40,784
Kilkenny Employment For Youth	29,366
Youth Development Project, Loughrea	28,401
Westside Family Resource Centre	20,000
All Hallows Horticulture College, Dublin	17,200
Education Trust For Ex-Prisoners (ICPO)	9,523
Blanchardstown Area Partnership	5,000
Tipperary Youth Services	2,205
All Education Schemes	6,455,190

Name of Scheme	Total €
<i>Hostel Accommodation</i>	
Lionsvilla Probation Hostel	1,505,815
PACE	1,102,686
Waterford Probation Residence Project	392,864
Harristown House, Castlerea – Alcohol Treatment	343,365
Cork Probation Hostel	281,169
Aiseiri Treatment Centre, Wexford	263,501
Cuan Mhuire, Athy	76,653
Cuan Mhuire - Bruree House, Limerick	69,836
Cuan Mhuire, Coolanre	44,694
Aiseiri Treatment Centre, Cahir	37,643
St John's	34,526
Kazelaine (Sligo Homeless)	29,079
Semi-Support Residential (Cleveragh Project), Sligo	6,349
All Hostel Accommodation	4,188,180
<i>Treatment/Counselling</i>	
Coolmine Ltd	740,250
Ruhama Project Dublin	369,228
Guild Of St Philip, After Care For Female Offenders	217,944
Aislinn Adolescent Treatment Centre, Ballyragget	209,508
Merchant's Quay Project	205,672
Cuchulainn Dundalk Probation Project Ltd	174,466
Kerry Adolescent Counselling Centre	152,346
COSC	101,578
Granada Institute for Sex Offenders	100,076
Tabor Lodge Chemical Dependency	75,284
Clarecare	73,228
Donegal Inter Agency Sex Offenders	63,486
MOVE	62,314
SAOL Project	60,946
Ana Liffey Project	56,550
Crinan Group Project	30,474
Fellowship House	20,000
Icon Drugs Support Service	15,236
Talbot Grove	4,564
All Treatment/Counselling	2,733,150
<i>Intensive Probation</i>	
North Clondalkin Probation Project Tower	420,710
Bridge Intensive Probation Supervision Project	252,656
Inpro Ltd, Grattan House	178,928
Marist Rehabilitation Centre	66,852
All Intensive Probation	919,146

Name of Scheme	Total €
<i>Other schemes</i>	
Tallaght Community Mediation: Victim/Offender	184,032
Society of St Vincent de Paul	71,255
St Patrick's Welfare Association	620
All other schemes	255,907
All expenditure on services to offenders	14,551,573

Source: Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform