



EASTERN SERVICE CENTRE

ANNUAL BUSINESS PLAN

2003 - 2004

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BUSINESS PLAN 2003/2004

SECTION 1:

INTRODUCTION

The Eastern Service Centre provides a range of services relating to Finance, Personnel, Facilities Management, Training Support and Equality and Diversity to the 6 CPS Areas within the Eastern region namely Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Norfolk and Suffolk. In addition to assisting approximately 550 internal customers, the Service Centre supports various HQ Directorates and contributes to the overall aims of the CPS, through its professional dealings with a wide-ranging external customer base, particularly victims and witnesses of crime, and its involvement in the formulation of national strategies.

The Eastern Service Centre was officially formed in January 2001. Performance measures have been established, to provide a focus for all staff, in terms of performance improvement, and mechanisms, have been devised to assess customer perceptions/ requirements, such as the introduction of an annual survey. As a result, a number of historical practices and procedures have been effectively revised to meet targets set.

In 2003/2004 the Service Centre will comprise of 19.4 full time posts including the Regional Equality and Diversity Officer. The Service Centre operates from one location (Chelmsford, Essex). The Service Centre will further establish itself as a cohesive and effective unit with the intention as well as providing development opportunities for staff that hitherto did not exist. It is the intention of the Service Centre to provide an effective and ever improving service in relation to Finance, Personnel, Facilities Management and Equality and Diversity.

The geographical size of the Eastern Region presents a challenge to the Service Centre in terms of its desire to promote its role to all customers through face-to-face contact at all levels. It is intended, however, throughout the forthcoming business year to introduce a series of regular visits to Area locations to further explore customer perceptions and requirements. This will be of paramount importance with the appointment of the new Area Business Managers in the Region. In addition, our focus will be to reinforce the need for Areas and Service Centres to work in partnership through facilitating an exchange of knowledge/mutual streamlining of systems to enable payments and processes to be completed within nationally and locally prescribed timescales.

During 2003/2004 the Service Centre will become part of the Human Resources (HR) Directorate. At present the Service Centre is line managed by one of its customers in the family group.

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OBJECTIVES, PRIORITIES AND THE DELIVERY OF PSA TARGETS

Narrowing the Justice Gap

In relation to this particular target there is no response from the Eastern Service Centre.

Improving Public Confidence.

Action required to be taken.

1. Witness claim form to be redesigned in order to improve performance concerning the provision of accurate information. Working group to be established under the Chairmanship of Mr. Keith Milburn. Target dates to be set at inaugural meeting.
2. Development of multi-skilled staff and introduction of rotation policies across the Service Centre as a whole. (Ongoing)
3. Managers in the Service Centre to manage inefficiency correctly. (Ongoing)
4. Ensure that sufficient staffing levels are available during working hours. (Ongoing)
5. Provide advance payments to witnesses (Ongoing)
6. Continue to exercise discretion, where witnesses, would be inconvenienced, if, in order to remain within the financial limits, they would be placed in accommodation, which was not within a reasonable distance of the Court Centre. (Ongoing)
7. Utilise management information produced by the Service Centre to enable Areas to improve the timeliness of their returns. (Ongoing)
8. Continue to highlight to HQ common areas of dissatisfaction by claimants in order to influence a review of current strategy. (Ongoing)
9. Continue to educate Areas/Police/Victim Liaison Officers/Witness Service as to the Government Policy with regard to witness allowances. (Ongoing)

Value for money

1. Ensuring that recruitment campaigns in future are co-ordinated. (Already implemented and ongoing).
2. Service Centre receives appropriate training to carry out their roles in full. (Ongoing)
3. Visits to all Areas by Service Centre Staff.
4. Monitoring of all targets. (Ongoing)
5. Visits to other Service Centres to elicit best practice. (Ongoing)
6. Visits to Areas implemented e.g. surgeries (Ongoing).
7. Conduct exit interviews to establish why staff leave the CPS (Ongoing).