

2 Background

2.1 Overview of CJEP

The Criminal Justice Enhancement Program (CJEP) is a highly complex major information technology project of the Department of Justice (the department) which commenced in January 1999.

It is an integrated Information and Communication Technology (ICT) platform designed to support the participation of the key law enforcement agencies engaged in the administration of criminal justice within Victoria including Victoria Police, the Office of Public Prosecutions (OPP), Victoria Legal Aid, the County Court and Corrections Victoria.

CJEP is designed to integrate and streamline systems and processes across agencies to minimise transaction costs and to improve access, quality and timeliness of information to agencies, courts, legal practitioners and the public.

2.1.1 Origins of CJEP

CJEP emanated from a review of administrative processes supporting the Victorian criminal justice system which commenced in 1995. The final report to government on that review, *Project Pathfinder Report—Reengineering the Criminal Justice System* (the Pathfinder report), was finalised in 1998. It recommended significant reforms to administrative practices and procedures supporting the criminal justice system at an estimated cost of \$27 million over 3.5 years.

A key principle, outlined in the Pathfinder report, and underpinning the vision for an improved criminal justice system information environment, was that information should be captured once and then made accessible to authorised participants when and where needed.

Following adoption of the Pathfinder report by the government in September 1998, the department began to implement the report's major recommendations. Due to budget constraints, the department decided to implement a limited set of what were considered high priority and high impact projects which could be funded at an estimated cost of \$14.5 million. Funding approval was obtained in October 1998 for implementation of these projects, which were re-badged as CJEP, with a target project completion date of November 2000.

2.1.2 Objectives and scope of CJEP

The primary objective of CJEP was to improve the recording and management of information about persons accused of criminal activity, and the disposition of criminal cases in the courts.

The program scope originally comprised the following five principal projects:

- **Accused Management Project**—involving the creation of a computer application for accessing and updating information about accused persons and their lifecycle contact with the justice system.
- **Electronic Brief/Disclosure (E*Brief) Project**—intended to improve case preparation through streamlined briefs, progressive disclosure and an early involvement process for accused persons' legal counsel.
- **Caseflow Improvement Project**—seeking improved case flow in the Magistrates' Court through integrated diversion programs and better case listing practices.
- **Case and List Management System (CLMS) Project**—involving the development of a case listing and management system in the County Court to support more active judicial supervision of criminal cases.
- **Justice Knowledge Exchange (JKE) Project**—involving the establishment of a technology infrastructure to support secure information exchange across the justice portfolio between legacy systems and new systems in each project area.

Subsequently, three projects were added to the program's scope:

- **Civil Case Management and Electronic Filing Project** (August 2000)—involving the addition of a module for civil cases to the CLMS at the County Court.
- **IT Infrastructure Development Project** (July 2001)—replacement and enhancement of the IT infrastructure—mainly at Victoria Police, but also at the department and the OPP—to facilitate the introduction of the new applications and achieve integration with partner agency legacy systems.
- **Replacement of Correction's Legacy Systems Project** (September 2002)—involving the extension of CJEP to replace significant components of three legacy systems in Corrections Victoria used for the management of offenders, the Prisoner Information Management System (PIMS), the Offender Automated Search and Information System (OASIS) and WorkMatch.

CJEP's desired end products involve computer application systems in relevant agencies working together to provide end-to-end support for criminal justice processes; from arrest and initiation of proceedings by Victoria Police, through to judgement by the courts and interaction with the corrections system in both prison and community-based corrections environments.

To this end, all of the CJEP projects outlined above have been incorporated into the following three key integrated IT software applications:

- **E*Justice**—to be used by police, prosecutions, corrections and legal aid officers, with a focus on managing information about accused persons and handling briefs of evidence.
- **ACS Courts**—to be used by the County and Magistrates' Courts with a focus on improving case management and sentencing information.
- **Justice Knowledge Exchange**—to manage the exchange of selected data between E*Justice, ACS Courts, and the legacy IT systems that remain in operation in justice agencies.

The CJEP systems are referred to collectively as the Integrated Justice Systems suite of applications or the Integrated Justice Systems (IJS). The CJEP systems operate in conjunction with a large number of legacy systems and reside in a complex set of networks in Victoria Police and the Department of Justice. IJS also includes secure links between Department of Justice, Victoria Police, Office of Public Prosecutions, Corrections Victoria and private prison providers to enable the sharing of information.

Governance arrangements

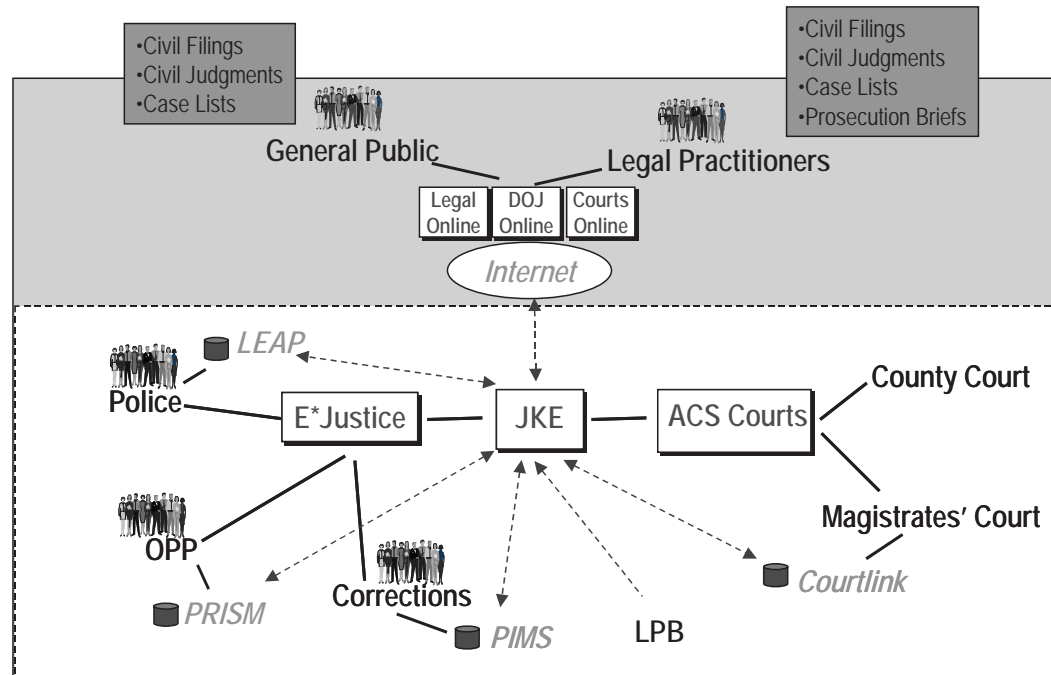
The Secretary of the department is the CJEP project sponsor and responsibility for day to day project management of CJEP has rested with the department. Implementation of CJEP has been overseen by a steering committee comprising representatives from the key agencies involved in the CJEP system and process integration project.

The department appointed a primary IT contractor in November 2000 to scope, design, build, install and support CJEP applications until June 2003. The term of this contract was extended and eventually concluded in December 2005. At that time, a unit was established within the department's Technology Services Group to maintain, support and enhance CJEP applications into the future.

The intention was for CJEP to be accompanied by the staged delivery of a program of major cultural change across multiple agencies within the Victorian justice portfolio combining process redesign with the development of major new IT systems, people and policy related changes.

Figure 2A provides a 'bird's eye' view of CJEP.

Figure 2A
CJEP—A bird's eye view



Source: Department of Justice

2.1.3 Benefits expected from CJEP

Since its inception, key benefits expected to flow from CJEP for participating agencies and the community included:

- better risk management of accused persons while in custody
- early representation for accused persons
- speedy access to the brief for the defence
- less time and effort consumed in the preparation and disposition of cases
- fewer court adjournments
- less waiting time for court users
- streamlined handling of information
- around 180 000 hours in time saved by the community each year through earlier Magistrates' Court hearings
- a 12 per cent reduction in case backlog in the County Court
- 350 000 hours in productivity gains each year by key agencies.

2.2 Audit objective and scope

2.2.1 Results of our 2003 audit

In May 2003 we reported to Parliament on the progress of CJEP and the adequacy of its management at that time. That audit did not examine the functionality of the various systems forming part of the program or the extent to which the future benefits of the project were likely to be realised.

The following key matters were raised in our 2003 report:

- While the program was initially planned to be completed by November 2000, widening of the program scope had, by then, resulted in a revised target completion date of March 2004.
- While funding of \$14.5 million was initially approved for the program, scope changes resulted in the level of approved funding increasing by \$20.5 million to \$35 million. The additional funding mainly related to the need for an IT infrastructure upgrade; replacement of Corrections Victoria legacy systems; inclusion of a civil module in the Case and List Management System Project at the County Court; unplanned agency requests; and departmental program management costs.
- Work under a contract variation commenced in advance of appropriate approval being obtained from the department's accredited purchasing unit.

The key recommendations made in our 2003 report were for the department to:

- establish firm milestones for all remaining critical tasks to ensure close monitoring of performance against its revised March 2004 completion timeline and achievement of that timeline
- determine, monitor and report on program-wide expenditure (including the costs incurred by participating agencies) so that the aggregate program costs could be included in the department's annual report to Parliament
- ensure that the program director did not fulfil both the roles of program manager and chairperson of the program steering committee, which are incompatible
- ensure that key aspects of the program (including performance monitoring, budgetary control, risk management and quality assurance) were subject to periodic independent scrutiny by an independent body, such as the department's audit committee
- establish program performance measures of a strategic nature, linked to the program's expected outcomes
- establish ongoing support arrangements for the program beyond June 2003, when the primary IT contractor's contract expired.

2.2.2 Objective of this audit

The overall objective of this audit was to assess whether the implementation of CJEP was well managed.

To achieve this overall objective, the audit examined whether:

- CJEP has been delivered and implemented on time; on budget; and consistent with planned expectations (benefits, savings and functionality)
- appropriate governance, project management and control structures were in place to oversight and effectively manage CJEP delivery and implementation
- appropriate monitoring and reporting frameworks were in place to assess whether the expected program and project deliverables and outcomes (benefits) have been achieved
- CJEP systems and data are secure, with information security and privacy arrangements consistent with relevant legislative requirements
- appropriate structures and processes are in place for the ongoing management and support of CJEP systems.

Audit approach

This audit followed up on issues raised in our May 2003 report to Parliament on the management and progress of CJEP, focusing on the management and delivery CJEP in the four years since the previous audit. It also examined the early stages of CJEP's planning and implementation to clarify a range of issues.

The audit was performed in accordance with Australian auditing standards.

The total cost of this audit, including the preparation and printing of this report, was \$385 000.
