## Data quality information — Courts, chapter 7

|  |
| --- |
| Data quality information |
| Data quality information (DQI) provides information against the seven Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data quality framework dimensions, for all of the performance indicators in the Courts chapter.  Technical DQI have been agreed in consultation with relevant data providers. Additional Steering Committee commentary does not necessarily reflect the views of data providers. |
|  |
|  |

DQI Contents

Fees paid by applicants 2

Judicial officers (as expressed per 100 000 population) 4

Backlog 6

Attendance 8

Clearance 10

Judicial officers per 100 finalisations 12

Full time equivalent (FTE) staff per 100 finalisations 14

Cost per finalisation 16

### Fees paid by applicants

Data quality information for this indicator has been drafted by the Secretariat in consultation with the Courts Working Group and the Courts Practitioner Group, with additional Steering Committee comments.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Indicator definition and description** | |
| **Element** | Courts Equity – Access – Affordability |
| **Indicator** | Fees paid by applicants |
| **Measure (computation)** | Definition  The average court fees paid per lodgment.  Numerator   * Total court fees collected in a financial year   Denominator   * Total number of lodgments in a financial year   Computation  Numerator is divided by the denominator.  Data for the numerator are adjusted by applying the General Government Final Consumption Expenditure (GGFCE) chain price index deflator (see Chapter 2 section 2.5 for an explanation of statistical concepts used in the Report). |
| **Data source/s** | Court fees collected and lodgment data are unpublished and are sourced from Australian, State and Territory courts authorities and departments. |
| **Data Quality Framework Dimensions** | |
| **Institutional environment** | Numerator  In most jurisdictions, the data are collected and compiled by the court authority. In the other jurisdictions, it is collected and compiled by governing departments.  The data are requested and submitted in accordance with the authority of the terms of reference of the Review of Government Service Provision.  Denominator  In most jurisdictions, the data are collected and compiled by the courts authority. In the other jurisdictions, it is collected and compiled by governing departments.  The data are requested and submitted in accordance with the authority of the terms of reference of the Review of Government Service Provision. |
| **Relevance** | ‘Fees paid by applicants’ is intended to be an indicator of governments’ achievement against the objective of keeping services accessible through charging affordable court fees for services provided.  However, court fees are only a small component of the broader legal costs incurred by applicants. Given that using the courts is often only practically possible with the assistance of lawyers, this indicator should not be interpreted as an indicator of general accessibility to legal services or processes.  Also fee structures and the associated bases for charging differ across jurisdictions, e.g. corporate entities pay more than individuals. Jurisdictions also exempt and waive fees in special circumstances and this affects the amounts of fees paid in the ROGS. |
| **Timeliness** | The reference period is the 2014-15 financial year. Data are provided in September 2015, for publication in January 2016.  Data can be revised retrospectively up to 5 years later. |
| **Accuracy** | The data are sourced from finance and case management systems, which are subject to the normal legislative financial and administrative controls, reconciliation, and validation processes to ensure accuracy. Financial data are also independently audited at jurisdictional level for annual reporting purposes. |
| **Coherence** | For the last five years, the data have been counted and reported relatively consistently and no significant factors have been identified which have prevented or affected the consistent compilation of time series data. Exceptions are footnoted in attachment tables.  In some jurisdictions there is an alignment with other publications, e.g. annual reports. In the other jurisdictions there are differences due to the ROGS counting rules. |
| **Accessibility** | Data are supplied for the RoGS according to the specific RoGS counting rules.  In many cases the RoGS aligns with data published in jurisdictional reports, e.g. annual reports. Some jurisdictions may also publish different data which may not align with RoGS. |
| **Interpretability** | Contextual information for fees collected and lodgment data are provided in the Courts chapter and attachment tables. |
| **Data Gaps/Issues Analysis** | |
| **Key data gaps/ issues** | The Steering Committee notes the following issues:   * While ‘fees paid by applicants’ is an indicator of accessibility to court services, the broader legal costs for applicants are much higher and are likely to have a greater impact on accessibility. |

### Judicial officers (as expressed per 100 000 population)

Data quality information for this indicator has been drafted by the Secretariat in consultation with the Courts Working Group and the Courts Practitioner Group, with additional Steering Committee comments.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Indicator definition and description** | |
| **Element** | Courts Equity – Access – Geographical access |
| **Indicator** | Judicial officers (as expressed per 100 000 population) |
| **Measure (computation)** | Definition  The number of officers who can make enforceable orders of the court. This can include judges, associate judges, magistrates, coroners and judicial registrars.  Numerator   * Number of full time equivalent judicial officers. Where judicial officers have both judicial and non-judicial work, refers to the proportion of time allocated to judicial work.   Denominator   * Estimated residential population in relevant jurisdiction as at 31 December   Computation  Numerator divided by the denominator multiplied by 100 000. |
| **Data source/s** | Numerator  Data are unpublished and sourced from Australian, State and Territory courts authorities and departments.  Denominator  ABS (Australian Bureau of Statistics) (unpublished) 2015 and previous years, *Australian Demographic Statistics*, Cat no. 3101.0, Canberra. For more detail about the population data used in the Report see RoGS Attachment Table 2A statistical context. |
| **Data Quality Framework Dimensions** | |
| **Institutional environment** | Numerator  In most jurisdictions, the data are collected and compiled by the court authority. In the other jurisdictions, it is collected and compiled by governing departments.  The data are requested and submitted in accordance with the authority of the terms of reference of the Review of Government Service Provision.  Denominator — Estimated residential population  For information on the institutional environment of the ABS, including the legislative obligations of the ABS, financial and government arrangements, and mechanisms for scrutiny of ABS operations, see *ABS Institutional Environment.*  The calculations associated with the use of ABS data are applied by the Report on Government Services Secretariat. |
| **Relevance** | This indicator seeks to reflect the availability of judicial officers to the community, by relating the number of judicial officers to the size of the jurisdictional population. However geographical and other factors such as remoteness of populations and workload, which are not represented in the indicator, need to be considered when comparing results. |
| **Timeliness** | Numerator  The reference period is the 2014-15 financial year. Data are provided in September 2015, for publication in January 2016.  Data can be revised retrospectively up to 5 years later.  Denominator  The reference period for population data is the financial year midpoint (31 December) estimate. |
| **Accuracy** | The identification of judicial officer numbers is done using data in payroll and human resource management systems. This is mostly electronic with some manual data counting. This is then adjusted to meet the RoGS data collection rules.  The data provided are consistent with RoGS counting rules and the data reported are for all court levels in each jurisdiction. In order to meet the needs of the RoGS, costings and resourcing are apportioned across civil and criminal categories. This is mostly done on activity based costing approaches and the use of estimations. This may affect accuracy.  The data come from payroll and human resource management systems, which are subject to the normal legislative financial and administrative controls and reconciliation and validation processes to ensure accuracy. Preparation of the data for the RoGS by court authorities also undergoes checking and verification procedures, including investigation of significant variances with previous years. |
| **Coherence** | For the last five years the data have been counted and reported relatively consistently and no significant factors have been identified which have prevented or affected the consistent compilation of time series data. Exceptions are noted in attachment tables. In some jurisdictions there is an alignment with other publications, e.g. annual reports. In other jurisdictions there are differences due to the FTE approach and exclusions set out in the ROGS counting rules. |
| **Accessibility** | Data on judicial officers are supplied for the RoGS according to the specific RoGS counting rules. Other data on judicial officers can be accessed through annual reports and court websites within most jurisdictions and in some jurisdictions there is an alignment with other publications, e.g. annual reports. However, some data obtained from these other sources in the other jurisdictions may not align with the RoGS due to the specific RoGS counting rules.  Also, while courts in most jurisdictions make information available as to who holds a commission as a judge or master and which officers of the court are registrars, the information is not necessarily designed to provide a FTE number that can be matched to the number reported in RoGS. |
| **Interpretability** | Contextual information for judicial officers data are provided in the Courts chapter and attachment tables. |
| **Data Gaps/Issues Analysis** | |
| **Key data gaps/ issues** | The Steering Committee notes the following key data gaps/issues:   * Jurisdictions may need to apportion or estimate FTE judicial staff numbers between criminal and civil levels of the magistrates, children’s, district/county and supreme courts. This may affect accuracy and comparability of data. * Not all jurisdictions calculate judicial officer FTEs in the same way for purposes of RoGS data collection. This may affect comparability of data. |

### Backlog

Data quality information for this indicator has been drafted by the Secretariat in consultation with the Courts Working Group and the Courts Practitioner Group, with additional Steering Committee comments.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Indicator definition and description** | |
| **Element** | Courts Effectiveness – Access – Timeliness |
| **Indicator** | Backlog |
| **Measure (computation)** | Definition  The age of a court’s pending caseload against nominated time standards.  Numerator   * Number of cases pending longer than 12 months in a financial year (Higher Courts, Federal Court, family courts & Coroners Courts) * Number of cases pending longer than 24 months in a financial year (Higher Courts, Federal Court, family courts & Coroners Courts) * Number of cases pending longer than 6 months in a financial year (Federal Circuit Court, magistrates’ courts and children’s courts) * Number of cases pending longer than 12 months in a financial year (Federal Circuit Court, magistrates’ courts and children’s courts)   Denominator   * Total number of cases pending in a financial year   Computation  The number of cases in the nominated age category is expressed as a percentage of the total pending caseload. It is derived by dividing the numerator by the denominator and multiplied by 100.  In calculating this measure, some matters are excluded, eg. civil cases affected by deeming rules and matters that are inactive due to the issue of bench warrants that have not been executed. |
| **Data source/s** | Backlog data are unpublished and sourced from Australian, State and Territory court authorities and departments. |
| **Data Quality Framework Dimensions** | |
| **Institutional environment** | In most jurisdictions, the data are collected and compiled by the court authority. In the other jurisdictions, it is collected and compiled by governing departments.  The data are requested and submitted in accordance with the authority of the terms of reference of the Review of Government Service Provision. |
| **Relevance** | ‘Backlog’ is intended to be an indicator of governments’ achievement against the objective of processing matters in an expeditious and timely manner.  However time taken to process cases is not necessarily due to court delay. Some delays are caused by factors other than those related to the workload of the court. These factors will vary across jurisdictions and can include any or all of the following:   * parties' refusal of the first available hearing date in favour of a later date * referral of cases to diversionary programs, or to alternative dispute resolution lengthening the duration of a case but offering better quality and more cost-effective outcomes for parties and the community * time taken to process interlocutory appeals in appellate courts * time taken to ensure that interlocutory or pre-trial issues are resolved so that a fair outcome ensues * a witness being unavailable * delays in the finalisation of post mortem reports for Coroner’s Court in jurisdictions where post mortems are undertaken by agencies outside the court jurisdiction.   For further information on the backlog indicator refer to Box 7.9, Box 7.10, and Box 7.11 in chapter 7 of the Report. |
| **Timeliness** | The reference period is the 2014-15 financial year. Data are provided in September 2015, for publication in January 2016.  Data can be revised retrospectively up to 5 years later. |
| **Accuracy** | The identification of backlog data is generally done using electronic case management reporting systems except for the following. Exceptions are noted in attachment tables.  The data provided are consistent with RoGS counting rules, eg. rules relating to deeming, warrants, bail matters, consolidations etc. and are reported in a consistent manner for all court levels in each jurisdiction, except the NSW civil children’s court.  The data are extracted from case management systems which are subject to the normal legislative financial and administrative controls, reconciliation and validation processes to ensure accuracy. |
| **Coherence** | For the last five years backlog data have been counted and reported relatively consistently. Exceptions are noted in attachment tables.  In most jurisdictions there is an alignment with other publications, eg. annual reports, while in other jurisdictions there are differences due to the ROGS counting rules in relation to exclusions. |
| **Accessibility** | Pending caseload data are provided for the Report on Government Services according to the specific RoGS counting rules. Other data on pending cases is available through court annual reports, court websites, on application from the Chief Jurisdictional Officer in the relevant state, territory or federal jurisdiction. Pending case data for the Australian Capital Territory courts can also be found in the Justice & Community Safety Directorate's Annual Report. |
| **Interpretability** | Backlogs can be caused by factors not associated with the performance of the court as detailed previously under “Relevance”. Additionally, comparisons over time and between courts must take into consideration the impact of an increase/decrease in the number of complex cases or cases that typically take longer to finalise, or alternatively an increase/decrease in the number of undefended or typically straightforward cases that are quickly finalised. These will eventually alter the composition of the pending caseload and hence the age profile of that caseload (as measured by the backlog indicator) over time.  For further information on the backlog indicator refer to Box 7.9, Box 7.10, and Box 7.11 in chapter 7 of the Report. |
| **Data Gaps/Issues Analysis** | |
| **Key data gaps/ issues** | The Steering Committee notes the following key data gaps/issues:   * Due to limitations of the data management system, NSW has been unable to provide pending caseload or backlog data for the civil children’s courts. It is hoped that this situation may be rectified for future reports. |

### Attendance

Data quality information for this indicator has been drafted by the Secretariat in consultation with the Courts Working Group and the Courts Practitioner Group, with additional Steering Committee comments.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Indicator definition and description** | |
| **Element** | Courts Efficiency – Inputs per unit of output – Attendance |
| **Indicator** | Attendance indicator |
| **Measure (computation)** | Definition  The average number of attendances recorded for those cases that were finalised in a financial year. The number of attendances is the number of times that parties or their representatives are required to be present in court to be heard by a judicial officer or mediator/arbitrator where binding orders can be made. The number includes appointments that are adjourned or rescheduled.  Numerator   * Total number of attendances in a financial year.   Denominator   * Total number of cases finalised in a financial year.   Computation  Numerator divided by the denominator. |
| **Data source/s** | Data are unpublished and sourced from Australian, State and Territory court authorities and departments. |
| **Data Quality Framework Dimensions** | |
| **Institutional environment** | In most jurisdictions, the data are collected and compiled by the court authority. In the other jurisdictions, it is collected and compiled by governing departments.  The data are requested and submitted in accordance with the authority of the terms of reference of the Review of Government Service Provision. |
| **Relevance** | ‘Attendance’ is intended to be an indicator of governments’ achievement against the objective of providing court services in an efficient manner. However the results for this indicator may not relate to the performance of the courts as the number of attendances in a case can be influenced by many factors outside the control of the court, eg. prosecution readiness, defence availability, nature of issues and offence, whether a case is defended or undefended.  For further information on the attendance indicator refer to Box 7.12 in chapter 7 of the Report. |
| **Timeliness** | The reference period is the 2014-15 financial year. Data are provided in September 2015, for publication in January 2016.  Data can be revised retrospectively up to 5 years later. |
| **Accuracy** | The identification of attendances is done using mainly electronic case management reporting systems but can also involve manual data extraction. Exceptions are noted in the attachment tables.  The data provided are consistent with RoGS counting rules and are reported for all court levels in each jurisdiction, except the NSW Supreme court, NSW children’s court and the Victorian Supreme court.  The data are subject to the normal legislative financial and administrative controls, reconciliation and validation processes to ensure accuracy. |
| **Coherence** | Data for 2014-15 are reported for all jurisdictions and court levels except the NSW “Supreme court, the NSW children’s court and the Victorian Supreme court. |
| **Accessibility** | Data are provided for the Report on Government Services according to the specific RoGS counting rules. Other data on attendances and finalisations may be available through court annual reports, court websites, on application from the Chief Jurisdictional Officer in the relevant state, territory or federal jurisdiction. Attendance data for the Australian Capital Territory courts can also be found in the Justice & Community Safety Directorate's Annual Report. |
| **Interpretability** | Fewer attendances may suggest a more efficient process. However, this should be balanced against the likelihood that the number of attendances will increase if rehabilitation or diversionary programs are used, or if intensive case management is used. Both of these paths are believed to improve the quality of outcomes.  For further information on the attendance indicator refer to Box 7.12 in chapter 7 of the Report. |
| **Data Gaps/Issues Analysis** | |
| **Key data gaps/ issues** | The Steering Committee notes the following key data gaps/issues:   * Due to limitations of the data management system, NSW is currently unable to provide attendance data for the Supreme court or the children’s court. The Victorian supreme court did not provide attendance data for the 2014-15 report. |

### Clearance

Data quality information for this indicator has been drafted by the Secretariat in consultation with the Courts Working Group and the Courts Practitioner Group, with additional Steering Committee comments.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Indicator definition and description** | |
| **Element** | Courts Efficiency – Inputs per unit of output – Clearance |
| **Indicator** | Clearance indicator |
| **Measure (computation)** | Definition  Whether the volume of case finalisations has matched the number of case lodgments during the reporting period. It can also indicate whether a court’s pending caseload would have increased or decreased over that period.  Numerator   * Total number of cases finalised in a financial year   Denominator   * Total number of cases lodged in a financial year   Computation  Numerator divided by the denominator multiplied by 100. |
| **Data source/s** | Data are unpublished and sourced from Australian, State and Territory court authorities and departments. |
| **Data Quality Framework Dimensions** | |
| **Institutional environment** | In most jurisdictions, the data are collected and compiled by the court authority. In the other jurisdictions, data are collected and compiled by governing departments.  The data are requested and submitted in accordance with the authority of the terms of reference of the Review of Government Service Provision. |
| **Relevance** | ‘Clearance’ is intended to be an indicator of governments’ achievement against the objective of providing court services in an efficient manner. However variations in the rate over time do not necessarily relate to the performance of the court. The clearance indicator can be affected by external factors outside of the court system which cause changes in lodgment rates, as well as by changes in a court’s case management practices.  For further information on the clearance indicator refer to Box 7.13 in chapter 7 of the Report. |
| **Timeliness** | The reference period is the 2014-15 financial year. Data are provided in September 2015, for publication in January 2016.  Data can be revised retrospectively up to 5 years later. |
| **Accuracy** | The data provided are consistent with RoGS counting rules and are reported for all court levels in each jurisdiction.  The data are extracted from case management systems which are subject to the normal legislative financial and administrative controls, reconciliation and validation processes to ensure accuracy. |
| **Coherence** | For the last five years lodgment and finalisation data have been collected, counted and reported relatively consistently. Exceptions are noted in the attachment tables.  In most jurisdictions there is an alignment with other publications, eg. annual reports, while in other jurisdictions there are differences due to the ROGS counting rules in relation to exclusions and differing definitions. Finalisation counting rules for civil courts in this report also include a “deeming rule” which means that RoGS finalisation data are unlikely to match the court’s own published data. |
| **Accessibility** | Lodgment and finalisation data are provided for the Report on Government Services according to the specific RoGS counting rules. Other data on lodgments and finalisations may be available through court annual reports, court websites, on application from the Chief Jurisdictional Officer in the relevant state, territory or federal jurisdiction. |
| **Interpretability** | The clearance indicator should be interpreted alongside lodgment and finalisation data and the backlog indicator. Trends over time should also be considered. The clearance indicator can be affected by external factors outside of the court system such as complexity of cases, capacity to handle workload, changes in lodgment rates, as well as changes in a court’s case management practices.  The application of the deeming rule can complicate the counting of finalisations because deemed finalisations for the reporting year have to be added to the court’s actual disposal count, and actual finalisations that have been counted in any previous year as a ‘deemed finalisation’ need to be removed from the finalisation count for RoGS for the current year.  The usual interpretation is that a clearance rate of 100% or more is good. The rate at which cases are lodged is as much responsible for the clearance indicator results as is the finalisation rate. Any surge in lodgments during the final months of the reporting period will worsen the clearance rate result because those cases are unlikely to be ready for finalisation before the reporting period closes. That surge in lodgments may well produce a surge in finalisations in the following year, which then favourably impact the next reporting period as finalisations – these fluctuations may or may not reflect efficiency.  For further information on the clearance indicator refer to Box 7.13 in chapter 7 of the Report. |
| **Data Gaps/Issues Analysis** | |
| **Key data gaps/ issues** | The Steering Committee notes the following key data gaps/issues:   * As noted under ‘Interpretability’ |

### Judicial officers per 100 finalisations

Data quality information for this indicator has been drafted by the Secretariat in consultation with the Courts Working Group and the Courts Practitioner Group, with additional Steering Committee comments.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Indicator definition and description** | |
| **Element** | Courts Efficiency – Inputs per unit of output – Judicial officers per finalisation |
| **Indicator** | Judicial officers per 100 finalisations |
| **Measure (computation)** | Definition  The number of judicial officers per 100 finalisations.  Numerator   * Number of full time equivalent judicial officers within each court level   Denominator   * Total number of cases finalised in a financial year.   Computation  Numerator divided by denominator, multiplied by 100. |
| **Data source/s** | Data are unpublished and sourced from Australian, State and Territory court authorities and departments. |
| **Data Quality Framework Dimensions** | |
| **Institutional environment** | In most jurisdictions, the data are collected and compiled by the court authority. In the other jurisdictions, it is collected and compiled by governing departments.  The data are requested and submitted in accordance with the authority of the terms of reference of the Review of Government Service Provision. |
| **Relevance** | ‘Judicial officers per 100 finalisations’ is an indicator of governments’ achievement against the objective of providing court services in an efficient manner.  For further information on this indicator refer to Boxes 7.7 and 7.14 in Chapter 7 of the Report. |
| **Timeliness** | The reference period is the 2014-15 financial year. Data are provided in September 2015, for publication in January 2016.  Data can be revised retrospectively up to 5 years later. |
| **Accuracy** | The identification of judicial officer numbers is done using data in payroll and human resource management systems. This is mostly electronic with some manual data counting. This is then adjusted to meet the RoGS data collection rules.  The data provided are consistent with RoGS counting rules and the requested data reported are for all court levels in each jurisdiction. In order to meet the needs of the RoGS, costings and resourcing are apportioned across civil and criminal categories. This is mostly done on activity based costing approaches and the use of estimations. This may affect accuracy.  Preparation of the data for the RoGS by court authorities also undergoes checking and verification procedures, including investigation of significant variances with previous years. |
| **Coherence** | For the last five years the data have been counted and reported relatively consistently and no significant factors have been identified which have prevented or affected the consistent compilation of time series data. Exceptions are noted in the attachment tables.  In some jurisdictions there is an alignment with other publications, e.g. annual reports, in relation to judicial officer numbers. In the other jurisdictions there are differences due to the FTE approach and exclusions set out in the ROGS counting rules. |
| **Accessibility** | Data on judicial officers are supplied for the RoGS according to the specific RoGS counting rules. Other data on judicial officers can be accessed through annual reports and court websites within most jurisdictions and in some jurisdictions there is an alignment with other publications, e.g. annual reports. However, some data obtained from these other sources in the other jurisdictions may not align with the RoGS due to the specific RoGS counting rules.  Also, while courts in most jurisdictions make information available as to who holds a commission as a judge or master and which officers of the court are registrars, the information is not necessarily designed to provide a FTE number that can be matched to the number reported in RoGS. |
| **Interpretability** | Contextual information for judicial officers data are provided in the Courts chapter and attachment tables. |
| **Data Gaps/Issues Analysis** | |
| **Key data gaps/ issues** | The Steering Committee notes the following key data gaps/issues:   * Jurisdictions may need to apportion or estimate FTE judicial staff numbers between criminal and civil levels of the magistrates, children’s, district/county and supreme courts. This may affect accuracy and comparability of data. * Not all jurisdictions calculate judicial officer FTEs in the same way for purposes of RoGS data collection. This may affect comparability of data. * The deeming rule can complicate the counting of finalisations. |

### Full time equivalent (FTE) staff per 100 finalisations

Data quality information for this indicator has been drafted by the Secretariat in consultation with the Courts Working Group and the Courts Practitioner Group, with additional Steering Committee comments.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Indicator definition and description** | |
| **Element** | Courts Efficiency – Inputs per unit of output – FTE staff per finalisation |
| **Indicator** | Full time equivalent staff per 100 finalisations |
| **Measure (computation)** | Definition  Number of full time equivalent staff (including judicial officers) per 100 matters finalised.  Numerator   * Number of full time equivalent staff employed by courts or umbrella authorities   Denominator   * Total number of cases finalised in a financial year.   Computation  Numerator divided by the denominator multiplied by 100. |
| **Data source/s** | Data are unpublished and sourced from Australian, State and Territory court authorities and departments. |
| **Data Quality Framework Dimensions** | |
| **Institutional environment** | In most jurisdictions, the data are collected and compiled by the court authority. In the other jurisdictions, it is collected and compiled by governing departments.  The data are requested and submitted in accordance with the authority of the terms of reference of the Review of Government Service Provision. |
| **Relevance** | ‘Total FTE staff per 100 finalisations’ is an indicator of governments’ achievement against the objective of providing court services in an efficient manner.  For further information on this indicator refer to Box 7.15 in Chapter 7 of the Report. |
| **Timeliness** | The reference period is the 2014-15 financial year. Data are provided in September 2015, for publication in January 2016.  Data can be revised retrospectively up to 5 years later. |
| **Accuracy** | The identification of total FTE staff numbers is done using data in payroll and human resource management systems. This is mostly electronic with some manual data counting. This is then adjusted to meet the RoGS data collection rules.  The data provided are consistent with RoGS counting rules and the requested data reported are for all court levels in each jurisdiction. In order to meet the needs of the RoGS, costings and resourcing are apportioned across civil and criminal categories. This is mostly done on activity based costing approaches and the use of estimations. This may affect accuracy.  The data come from payroll and human resource management systems, which are subject to the normal legislative financial and administrative controls and reconciliation and validation processes to ensure accuracy. Preparation of the data for the RoGS by court authorities also undergoes checking and verification procedures, including investigation of significant variances with previous years. |
| **Coherence** | For the last three years the data have been counted and reported relatively consistently and no significant factors have been identified which have prevented or affected the consistent compilation of time series data. Exceptions are noted in attachment tables.  In some jurisdictions there is an alignment with other publications, e.g. annual reports, in relation to judicial officer numbers. In the other jurisdictions there are differences due to the FTE approach and exclusions set out in the ROGS counting rules. |
| **Accessibility** | Data on FTE staff are supplied for the RoGS according to the specific RoGS counting rules.  Also, while courts in most jurisdictions make information available as to who holds a commission as a judge or master and which officers of the court are registrars, the information is not necessarily designed to provide a FTE number that can be matched to the number reported in RoGS. |
| **Interpretability** | Contextual information for total FTE staff data are provided in the Courts chapter and attachment tables. |
| **Data Gaps/Issues Analysis** | |
| **Key data gaps/ issues** | The Steering Committee notes the following key data gaps/issues:   * Jurisdictions may need to apportion or estimate FTE staff numbers between criminal and civil levels of the magistrates, children’s, district/county and supreme courts. This may affect accuracy and comparability of data. * The deeming rule can complicate the counting of finalisations. |

### Cost per finalisation

Data quality information for this indicator has been drafted by the Secretariat in consultation with the Courts Working Group and the Courts Practitioner Group, with additional Steering Committee comments.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Indicator definition and description** | |
| **Element** | Court Efficiency – Inputs per unit of output – Cost per finalisation |
| **Indicator** | Cost per finalisation |
| **Measure (computation)** | Definition  Cost per case finalised, excluding payroll tax. This is not a measure of the actual cost per case.  Numerator   * Total net recurrent expenditure in a financial year, excluding payroll tax   Denominator   * Total number of cases finalised in a financial year   Computation  Numerator divided by denominator. |
| **Data source/s** | Expenditure, income and case finalisation data are sourced from administrative data collected by Australian, State and Territory court authorities and departments. |
| **Data Quality Framework Dimensions** | |
| **Institutional environment** | In most jurisdictions, the data are collected and compiled by the court authority. In the other jurisdictions, it is collected and compiled by governing departments.  The data are requested and submitted in accordance with the authority of the terms of reference of the Review of Government Service Provision. |
| **Relevance** | ‘Cost per finalisation’ is an indicator of governments’ achievement against the objective of providing court services in an efficient manner. This indicator is not a measure of the actual cost per case.  For further information on the cost per finalisation indicator refer to Box 7.16 in chapter 7 of the Report. |
| **Timeliness** | The reference period is the 2014-15 financial year. Data are provided in September 2015, for publication in January 2016.  Data can be revised retrospectively up to 5 years later. |
| **Accuracy** | In all jurisdictions the identification of total net recurrent expenditure is done using electronic case management and financial systems which are subject to the normal legislative financial and administrative controls, reconciliation and validation processes to ensure accuracy. Due to the financial nature of the data it is also independently audited at jurisdictional level for annual reporting purposes.  The data provided are consistent with RoGS counting rules and the requested data reported are for all court levels in each jurisdiction. |
| **Coherence** | For the last five years data associated with net recurrent expenditure have been reported relatively consistently. Exceptions are noted in the attachment tables.  Data are comparable (subject to caveats) within jurisdictions over time but are not comparable across jurisdictions. |
| **Accessibility** | Data on net recurrent expenditure and finalised cases are provided for the Report on Government Services according to the specific RoGS counting rules. Other data on net recurrent expenditure and finalisations may be available through court annual reports, court websites, on application from the Chief Jurisdictional Officer in the relevant state, territory or federal jurisdiction. |
| **Interpretability** | The application of the deeming rule can complicate the counting of finalisations because deemed finalisations for the reporting year have to be added to the court’s actual disposal count, and actual finalisations that have been counted in any previous year as a ‘deemed finalisation’ need to be removed from the finalisation count for RoGS for the current year.  For further information on the cost per finalisation indicator refer to Box 7.16 in chapter 7 of the Report. |
| **Data Gaps/Issues Analysis** | |
| **Key data gaps/ issues** | The Steering Committee notes the following key data gaps/issues:   * The ‘cost per finalisation’ indicator is not yet directly comparable across jurisdictions and is under ongoing review to improve consistency and comparability in how income and expenditure data are extracted and reported. |