



Courts Administration
Service

Service administratif des
tribunaux judiciaires

Courts Administration Service Digital Strategy

2025-2027



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JU20-15/2025E-PDF

ISBN 978-0-660-77112-0

This document is available on the Courts Administration Service
website at <https://www.cas-satj.gc.ca/en/pages/publications>

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Opening remarks

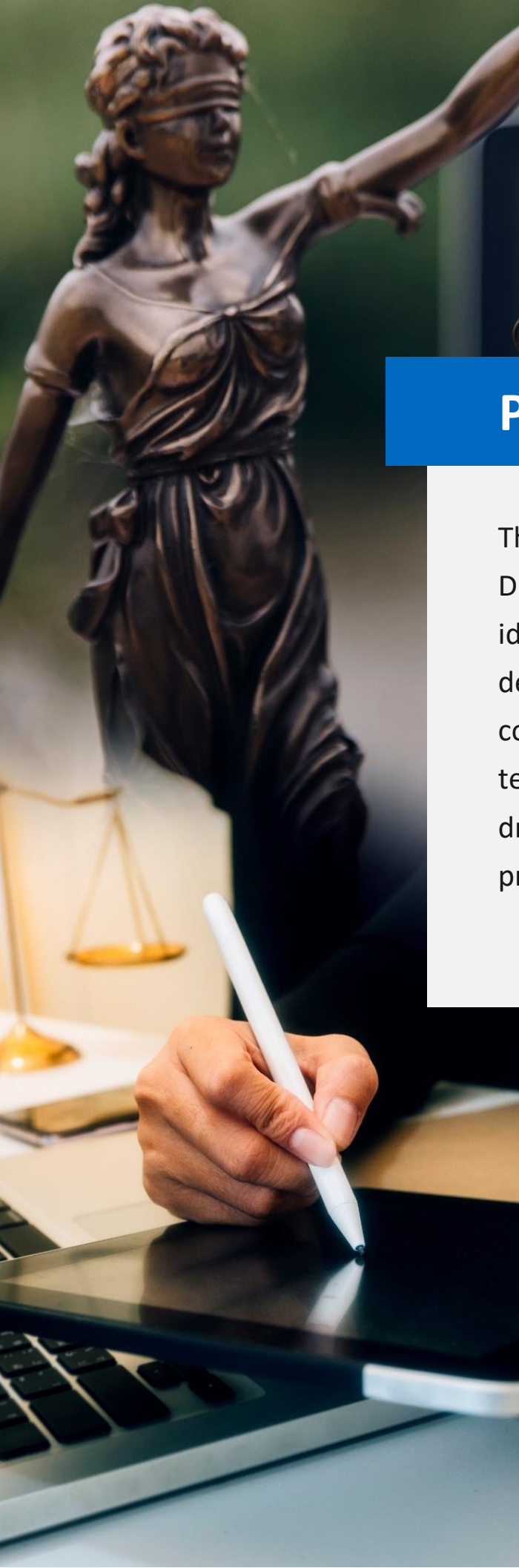
I am pleased to present our first Digital Strategy. This strategy highlights our commitment to deliver more efficient and effective court services, enhancing greater access to justice for Canadians and trust in Canada's justice system.

We have already made significant strides in digital transformation, both inside and outside the courtroom. Initiatives such as digital filing of court documents, digitalizing court records, integrating process automation, piloting artificial intelligence for administrative tasks and enabling virtual proceedings are just the beginning. I look forward to the future digital advancements we will achieve through our continued collaboration with the Federal Court of Appeal, Federal Court, Court Martial Appeal Court of Canada, and the Tax Court of Canada (collectively referred to as the National Courts).

I am grateful for the vision and trust of the National Courts as we work together to provide Canadians with more modern, accessible and efficient court services.

Darlene H. Carreau LL.B

Chief Administrator and Chief Executive Officer
Courts Administration Service



Purpose

The Courts Administration Service's Digital Strategy sets the direction and identifies key actions we will take to deliver more effective and efficient court services by leveraging technologies and applying agile, data-driven, and user-centric service delivery practices.



Who we are

The Courts Administration Service

The Courts Administration Service (CAS) provides administrative services to Canada's National Courts at arm's length from the Government of Canada to help safeguard judicial independence. CAS's structure and processes both contribute to affirming the roles of the Chief Justices and judges in the management of the Courts and conduct of court files, while promoting operational coordination, cooperation, efficacy, and efficiency across the Courts to ensure accountability and best use of public funds.

CAS strives to provide modern, accessible, secure, sustainable, and digitally enabled court facilities and services to the Courts and the public in every province and territory across Canada. This includes judicial and registry services - in particular maintaining 56 courtrooms across Canada and supporting members of the Courts in the preparation of files, conduct of hearings, and issuance of decisions.

The Courts we serve

The Federal Court of Appeal, the Federal Court, the Court Martial Appeal Court of Canada, and the Tax Court of Canada are collectively referred to as "the Courts" or the "National Courts".

The Courts are national, bilingual, and itinerant, holding hearings and trials across Canada to reach Canadians seeking justice wherever they are. They are all superior courts of record.

- **Federal Court of Appeal** - A bijural appeal court that makes decisions on matters of federal law across Canada.
- **Federal Court** - A bijural trial court, which hears and decides legal disputes arising in the federal court's jurisdiction.
- **Court Martial Appeal Court of Canada** - Hears appeals of court martial decisions. Courts martial are military courts established under the *National Defence Act*, which hears cases under the Code of Service Discipline.
- **Tax Court of Canada** - A bijural trial court that has exclusive original jurisdiction over a wide range of tax disputes and other matters.

The current environment

The rapid advancement of technology and digital services has made business transformation increasingly relevant and critical worldwide. Canadians now have unprecedented access to technology and information, accelerating change and altering expectations. Governments, businesses, and organizations are under growing pressure to provide seamless online services, easy access to reliable information, and flexible work and service channel options, mirroring the convenience and usability of major consumer-focused companies.

As a result, digital transformation has become a necessity for delivering modern services. Organizations must adapt to evolving user expectations, invest in cutting-edge infrastructure, and ensure their services are accessible, secure, and user-friendly. Those that fail to embrace this change risk falling further behind, while forward-thinking organizations look to leverage these advancements to streamline operations, enhance service delivery, and create more efficient, responsive, and personalized experiences for their users.

Emerging technologies like artificial intelligence, cloud computing, 5G, big data, and robotics process automation (RPA) are becoming mainstream, influencing how people live, work, and expect to be served. These technologies can enable personalized services, improve decision-making, strengthen security, verify identities, and reduce administrative burdens.

To date, Canada's National Courts have yet to fully leverage these advancements. Members of the Courts, litigants, and the legal community now expect modern technologies and digital tools to be integrated within the Canadian judicial system. However, digitization efforts to date have not met these expectations evenly and sustainably. This gap highlights the urgent need to modernize tools and processes to meet rising expectations while ensuring efficiency and accessibility in the digital age. This includes continuous reevaluation of technologies and trends in digital service delivery and understanding user needs and challenges. Tools like personas, service blueprints and journey maps help capture user experiences, aiding in design and strategic planning. Embracing user-centered design, as seen in leading systems like the UK's His Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service, is crucial for modernization.

Digital modernization will translate into enhanced service delivery, improved access to justice and National Courts that remain credible, trustworthy, and responsive to the evolving needs of society.



Our strategic context



Judicial priorities in the digital age

CAS is committed to maintaining public trust and confidence and improving access to justice. We seek to bring the National Courts into the 21st century by better leveraging new and existing technologies to deliver modern and efficient digital court services, while ensuring we continue to safeguard our information from cyber security risks. We continue to integrate this commitment in our plans, and in the actions we are taking to align our services with court users' expectations and our digital ambitions.

The national and itinerant nature of the Courts requires judicial and registry services to be available across the country. The Courts' needs and priorities are all funded from CAS's departmental budget. To get the best return on investment, we need to collaborate with and align the Courts as much as possible while maintaining their independence. Efforts have long been underway to transform Canada's National Courts by implementing procedural reforms and new technology and tools. However, these efforts need to be refocused and accelerated to tackle the increasing demand as well as the evolving expectations of court users.

Volume & complexity of cases before the Courts

Over the past several years, the volume, complexity, and duration of cases before the Courts have steadily increased. For example, in 2023, the Federal Court tracked a 24% increase in its immigration caseload compared to 2022, followed by a further 48% increase in 2024, with 24,663 cases filed. Immigration cases, in particular, are now approximately four times higher than the pre-pandemic five-year average. Furthermore, if the trend observed in January 2025 continues, the Federal Court could face another 31% increase compared to 2024, surpassing 30,000 cases by year-end.

The volume of cases before the Courts is a critical determinant in the need for effective and modern registry and judicial services. Volumes are often unpredictable, as changes in legislation and regulations, policy decisions, new precedents and current events can all influence the number of cases brought before the Courts. For example, increased funding for new programs within related departmental mandates, such as the Canada Revenue Agency or Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, and the Canadian Border Services Agency is expected to further increase caseload pressures. These additional pressures have the potential to decrease timely access to justice and the ability to maintain essential operations.

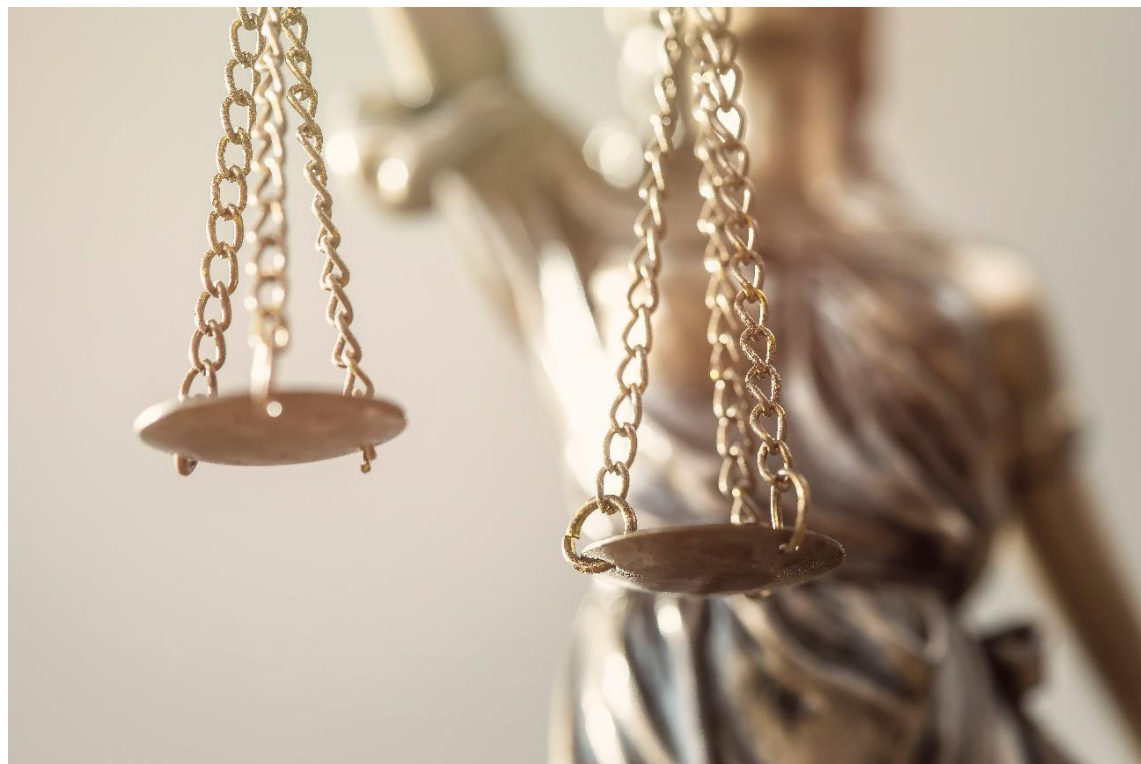
Between challenges with our legacy IT systems, the increased caseload, and expectations from court users, we are in a particularly vulnerable position. We acknowledge that this is an issue across all levels of government struggling to align social policy with funding, mobilization of staff and resources, and targets for completing mandates or achieving results.

Access to justice

Across Canada, courts have increasingly incorporated digital technologies, such as electronic filing systems, virtual courtrooms, and automation of processes. These innovations aim to improve access to justice, enhance efficiency, and reduce delays in the legal system. However, they also require substantial investment in technology, tools, and training to ensure better access for all citizens and consistency across the Courts' locations and services.

Over the past few years, there has been a growing digital divide – a gap created by unequal access to modern telecommunications technology across demographic groups and regions, which creates new challenges and barriers to accessing justice. The rapidly evolving move towards digitalization, as highlighted in the UN E-Justice report, increased risks related to the equity and diversity of justice systems. CAS's Digital Strategy seeks to reduce the digital divide by providing court users with more cost-effective, accessible, diverse, and inclusive services when accessing the National Courts.

Successfully navigating a digital transformation of the size and complexity needed to modernize the National Courts and improve access to justice is a big undertaking considering our limited resources. Our setbacks in the past have led us to taking a new approach, one where there is a focus on strengthening capacity within CAS, adopting a more agile mindset, as well as taking a user-centric approach to ensure that we meet the needs of court users and Canadians. The shift in the way we work and the way we think will enable us to deliver on the intended outcomes in a more efficient, effective, and integrated manner.





● **Aligning with court user perspectives**

Improving court services requires a user-centric approach. Formally engaging with users of court services on their diverse needs, challenges and experiences will allow us to build digital solutions that meet their needs and expectations, while tangibly improving access to justice. In this context, the users of court services are not only judges, associate judges, and CAS staff who deliver court services, but also litigants, including self-represented litigants, and the Canadian public.

Judges & associate judges

Members of the Courts require tools for in-person, virtual, and hybrid hearings at locations across the country. Judges work atypical hours and at locations in and outside of courtrooms and chambers, making system reliability and accessibility a key consideration. Safeguarding judicial independence and information is paramount, as is ensuring timely, accurate and secure access to court records.

Judges and associate judges would benefit from:

- secure digital access to court files in their entirety, with all information easily accessible anywhere across Canada;
- consistent and easy-to-use courtroom technology.

Litigants & lawyers

Lawyers require clarity on procedures, scheduling, timelines, and the tools available to them. They need to have access to reliable technology that allows them to submit documents for court proceedings, find information about their court files, and easily access court decisions.

Litigants and lawyers would benefit from:

- more secure, digital access to court file information;
- more timely communications about their court files;
- faster and easier e-filing and fee payment services;
- more consistent and easy-to-use courtroom technology.

Self-represented litigants

Inclusion and access to justice are particularly important considerations for this user group. According to the [National Self-Represented Litigants' Project](#), self-represented litigants may, without appropriate tools and access, feel set up for failure by a complex and demanding judicial process requiring significant time and financial resources to navigate.

Self-represented litigants would benefit from:

- increased online access to court information;
- more timely communication about their file;
- additional plain-language guidance and support within online applications and filings;
- easy-to-use courtroom technology;
- better tools to help them navigate court proceedings from start to finish.

The public & media

The general public and media must have confidence that our judicial system is efficient and impartial. Open courts are a fundamental principle of the Canadian justice system, supported by the ability to observe hearings and access court decisions and information.

The public and media would benefit from:

- increased online access to court documents;
- increased access to hearings in accessible formats;
- easier access to court information.


CAS staff

The work of CAS staff who provide services to the Courts require streamlined tools and processes that allow them to process court files more effectively and efficiently with minimal errors.

CAS staff would benefit from:

- stable and easy-to-use case management tools that minimize repetitive data entry;
- more secure digital access to court files accessible from anywhere across Canada;
- systems and tools that are easy to learn, reliable and secure;
- more consistent and easy-to-use courtroom technology (such as videoconferencing, monitors, printers, etc.).

Where we are going



Our vision

Delivering **modern, efficient, and accessible** digital services that support access to justice and safeguards trust in the judiciary.

Our goals

Digital access to justice

- Improved digital access across our services and courtrooms throughout Canada, where official court records are electronic.
- Shorter time spent to access and navigate court information online.

Efficient & effective court services

- Shorter time spent on sequences of tasks, workflows, and manual processes.
- Improved consistency of processes, tools and experiences across demographics and geographic areas and amongst the Courts.
- Increased service and cost efficiency of judicial and registry services.
- Improved efficiency and user experience with digital solutions, resulting in an increase in satisfaction from the public, employees, and members of the Courts with court services.

Trust & public confidence

- Consistent gradual service improvements across the Courts.
- Increased operational resiliency and risk management through robust cybersecurity strategies, sustainable IT systems and data safeguarding measures.
- Improved data consistency, quality, transparency, and completeness.

Our future state

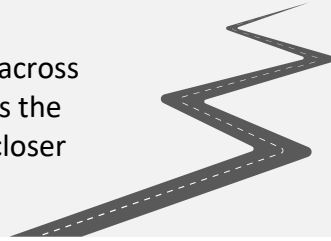
Implementing this strategy and advancing towards our vision will help shape a future where court services and user experiences are greatly improved. Below are examples of what our future will look like:

- Modern, resilient, secure and sustainable digital solutions support reliable and accessible court services for the long term.
- Court services, case information and decisions are easily and quickly accessible digitally.
- Hearings benefit from modern courtrooms equipped with the latest technology.
- Court information is safeguarded against loss or damage.
- Litigants have access to quality, timely court services regardless of where they are, and how they access them.
- Judges have timely access to the information, services, and solutions they need to hear matters and render decisions.
- CAS staff and members of the Courts have access to user-friendly and modern solutions that enable collaboration, engagement and productivity.
- Artificial intelligence and modern technologies in the registry significantly reduce the need for manual, repetitive processes, which free up court staff to deliver better and more cost-efficient services.



Our roadmap for success

Achieving our desired future state will take time, investments and coordinated efforts across a large portfolio of work. Our roadmap is composed of interconnected initiatives across the National Courts that will, each in their own way and in their sum, bring us collectively closer to our vision.



	Now	Next	Later
Improve the user experience of the Federal Court e-filing portal.	█		
Stabilize the courts' proceedings management system.	█		
Deploy robotics process automation to support the Federal Court registry in managing the surging number of immigration cases.	█		
Convert additional courtrooms to e-courtrooms.	█		
Implement a case management solution and dashboard to better coordinate and track the translation of decisions.	█		
Develop an artificial intelligence solution to help accelerate the translation of decisions to comply with the new obligations of the <i>Official Languages Act</i> (Bill C-13).	█		
Develop a dashboard to improve the use of courtrooms.	█		
Develop a dashboard to monitor trends in immigration cases and service levels.	█		
Implement a new service management platform to improve timely resolution of service requests from staff and members of the Courts.	█		
Implement new office collaboration and productivity tools.	█		
Optimize the processing of payments when e-filing documents.	█		
Improve e-filing and payment management for the Tax Court of Canada.		█	
Implement a modern evidence management solution to support digital hearings.		█	
Build new e-courtrooms in Toronto and Montréal.		█	
Revamp e-stamping and digital signature capabilities to support the end-to-end digitalization of court operations.		█	
Strengthen cybersecurity, disaster recovery and business continuity capabilities to improve the resiliency of court operations.		█	
Implement a suite of service and resource optimization initiatives to adapt court operations for the digital age and define and publish service standards.		█	
Improve corporate and court information classification and retention practices.		█	
Implement new, modern case management solutions.			█
Modernize scheduling capabilities.			█
Improve litigant self-service capabilities such as e-filing, electronic access to court records, and scheduling information.			█
Optimize and standardize processes and services.			█
Stabilize and digitize paper court records.			█

Guiding principles

The following guiding principles are necessary to achieve a successful digital modernization of the Courts. These principles will guide our efforts in our journey to deliver effective and efficient court services and provide improved access to justice.

Modern

Embrace modern digital tools and solutions to optimize court administration and processes.

Accessible

Digital services are inclusive and accessible by individuals with diverse needs.

Consistent

Standardize data, technology, processes, and tools with consideration to the specific needs of the Courts.

Quality & reliable

Services and operations meet the highest standards and are resilient in the face of increasing threats.

Service-oriented & human-centered

Our people have the skills and knowledge needed to adopt a culture of service excellence and place users at the center of court operations.

Agile & incremental

Agile and modern in the way we deliver services and continuously improve and adapt based on user feedback, insights obtained through discovery, and emerging priorities.

Secure

Safeguard court records and judicial information.

Efficient

Provide timely, cost-effective digital court services that make the best use of public funds.

Enablers & risks

To deliver on our Digital Strategy, we will have to balance and manage various priorities, requirements, structures, methods, processes, and tools. Large-scale business transformations are complex and challenging, and require significant changes to the structure, culture, and operations of an organization. Critical success factors, or enablers, are essential conditions that an organization needs to achieve its goals. Success is not always certain, but without these enablers, it becomes more challenging.

Enabler	Result
Resources, leadership & governance	Judicial, executive, and business champions are identified, and appropriate resources, governance and decision-making guidance are in place. Our ability to deliver relies on appropriate funding levels, both for digital modernization initiatives and the maintenance of core operations.
Ongoing engagement	Open, active, frequent, and inclusive opportunities for feedback and engagement are available.
Realistic expectations	Achievable expectations and timelines are set while managing demand and risks effectively.
User-centered design	The needs, preferences and expectations of court users are at the forefront of the design process. Solutions and services are designed not only for technical feasibility and business/program area viability, but also for user desirability and usability.
Agile project management	Iterative development allows for the ability to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. fail fast and learn through prototyping; 2. deliver value early and often; 3. avoid wasted effort on misaligned products; 4. breakdown work into manageable portions.
Adaptable, scalable delivery	Compatible, future-ready solutions and requirements that provide value and align with our needs.
Product & requirement management	Product requirements are appropriately managed, collected, and prioritized in alignment with the Courts' needs. Where possible, our National Courts will champion and adopt a common digital solution that meets our shared and individual needs.
Demand & risk management	Effective and robust management of demand and risk ensures that: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. resources are optimally allocated to meet priorities, needs, and requirements, preventing delays and funding issues; 2. potential threats are identified early, allowing for proactive measures to mitigate risks.
Continuous training & upskilling	Continuous training and upskilling opportunities that result in employees and members of the Courts being able to adopt and adapt to new processes and systems, and effectively leverage digital tools and technology.
Change management	Change management practices are in place, ensuring that employees and members of the Courts understand the change and are prepared to work together to implement the required change.



Federal Court
of Appeal



Federal Court



Court Martial
Appeal Court
of Canada



Tax Court of
Canada

Message from the Chief Justices

We are committed to championing innovation in the administration of justice and fostering digitally enabled National Courts. Our goal is to build on past efforts to enhance access to justice for all.

We are pleased to support the Courts Administration Service's efforts to leverage digital solutions to facilitate the more effective administration of justice throughout Canada.

The Honourable Chief Justice Yves de Montigny
Federal Court of Appeal

The Honourable Chief Justice Paul Crampton
Federal Court

The Honourable Chief Justice Mary J. L. Gleason
Court Martial Appeal Court of Canada

The Honourable Chief Justice Gabrielle St-Hilaire
Tax Court of Canada

