



States of Jersey
Legislative Drafting Office

Turning policies into Jersey law

Legislative Drafting Office

Annual Report and Business Plan

2025 – 2026

R.95/2026



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1 Annual Report 2025

1.1 Overview

This is the first time that the Legislative Drafting Office (LDO) has issued a joint Annual Report and Business Plan and done so separately from the States Greffe. The LDO works closely with States Greffe colleagues and shares the States Assembly budget, and the Principal Legislative Drafter reports to the Greffier of the States, but the work of the LDO is sufficiently different to justify separate reports. This report links together a review of 2025 with our plans looking forward to the next administration.

1.2 Our staff

The LDO is headed by the Principal Legislative Drafter, assisted by 2 Senior Legislative Drafters. The administrative head of the office is the Legislation Editor and these 4 now constitute the LDO management team.

In 2025 the LDO complement additionally consisted of 4.5 permanent legislative drafters and 2 trainee drafters. We also enjoyed the services of 2 consultant drafters working for us part-time as a backfill for the drafter working on the violence against women and girls project. Such was the pressure of work in this pre-election year that the 2 consultant drafters plus 2 other ad hoc consultant drafters were also engaged on drafting projects, particularly in the field of financial services. A further drafter is on long-term secondment to work on roads and traffic matters.

The LDO is supported by our invaluable editorial and technology team, overseen by one of the Senior Legislative Drafters, but headed by the Legislation Editor, who is aided by 2 Assistant Legislation Editors. We continue to benefit from the services of our hugely experienced Legislation Services Consultant who has been using technology to develop some useful tools for us. She continues to work closely with the team responsible for maintenance and development of the Jersey Legal Information Board (JLIB) website (jerseylaw.je), as well as maintaining our Word-based template and other specialist internal IT products.

1.3 Our achievements

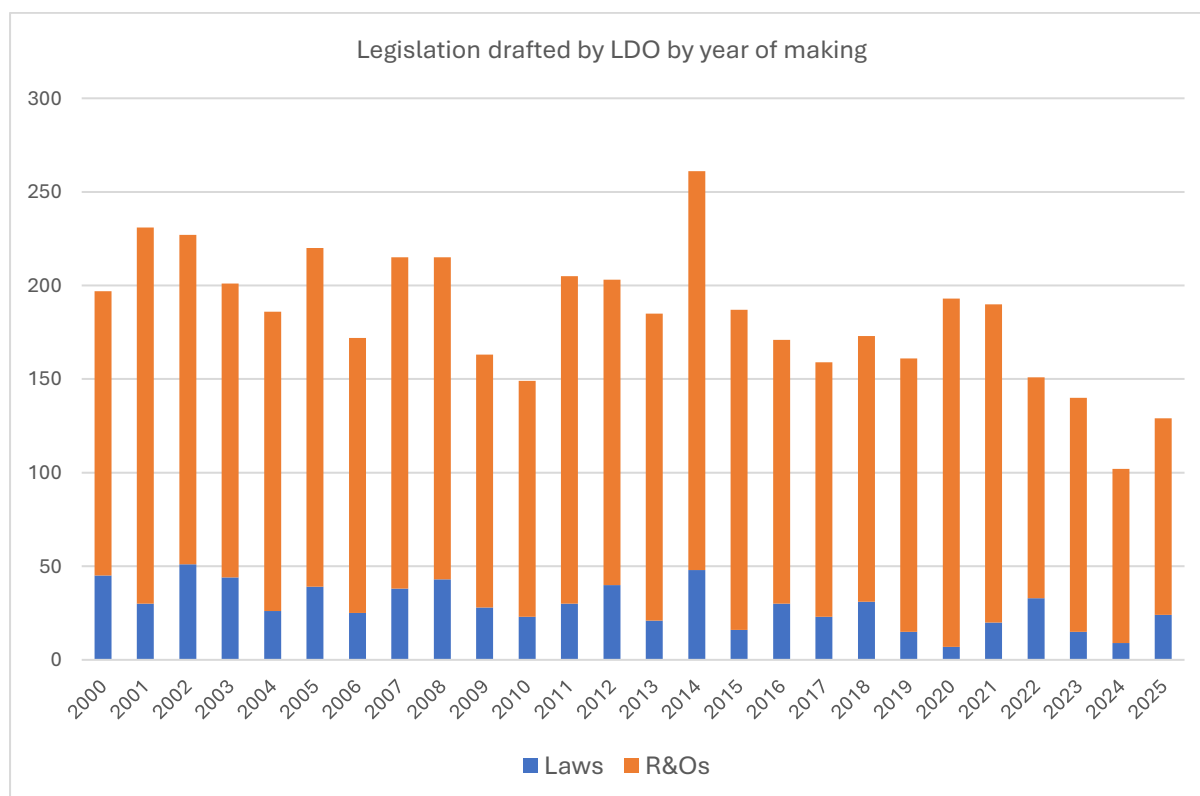
2025 was an exceptionally busy year. Achieving our primary purpose of delivering an extensive Government Legislative Programme inevitably resulted in other projects taking a temporary back seat – in particular the work to update our legislative style and work on a proposed new Interpretation Law.

A total of 66 legislative propositions were lodged in 2025, the most significant of which was the Assisted Dying (Jersey) Law 202-, which was over 100 Articles long and included 3 Schedules, drafted at speed with great care. It was exceeded in length by the Trade Marks (Jersey) Law 202-, containing 161 Articles and 4 Schedules, but there were many other Laws and Regulations of varying sizes lodged, including the legislation bringing back Senators, which was produced at great speed.

Other large projects included the Residential Tenancy (Jersey) Amendment Law 202-, the Cyber Security (Jersey) Law 202-, the Marriage and Civil Partnership (Dissolution and Separation) (Jersey) Law 202- and the Alcohol Licensing (Jersey) Law 202-. We had never been so busy, though the pressure only increased early in 2026 due to the need to have everything lodged in time to debate before the start of the pre-election period. As well as the lodged propositions, a series of Ministerial Orders on a wide variety of subjects were also drafted and made.

The number of drafting hours recorded remained high and steady for much of the year, dipping only slightly in August, which is traditionally the least busy month. The total number of drafting hours recorded in 2025 showed a significant increase of 34% compared to 2024.

A total of 25 Laws were made in 2025 along with 105 Regulations and Orders. The following chart shows the legislation drafted by year of making back to 2000. This is different from the work actually done in a particular year due to the time lag between the legislation being drafted and being enacted. We can predict a surge in 2026 as with earlier general election years, most notably 2014.



We mention with pride the Computer-Readable Legislation Project led by drafter Matthew Waddington, who has now retired. A report was presented to the States on 10 February 2026 and can be found at [States Assembly | R.24/2026](#). The project looked at ways in which legislative drafters can ensure that computers can read the logical structure of the legislation we draft. The project's results have been shared widely among legislative drafting offices across the Commonwealth, and among technology experts working in this field worldwide. That has brought direct benefits of collaboration. By achieving this level of international recognition, the project has also contributed to

enhancing Jersey's reputation as a world-leading innovator in both the legal and digital fields.

Despite the huge drafting workload we continued to refine our drafting template to gain further efficiencies in the speed and accuracy of our drafting and further refined our drafting style. Work continued with twice-yearly meetings of the Law Revision Board to bring about changes to the statute book that fall short of changing the law, but serve to improve the readability of legislation. In 2025 the Board published the decisions of its meetings in [April](#) and [October](#).

Projects begun jointly with JLIB involve reviewing the translations of French laws, completing the "as enacted" collection and looking to add all current UK legislation extended to Jersey to the jerseylaw.je website.

Another project begun in 2025 looks to the possibility of moving to an XML drafting product as we acknowledge that a Word-based template probably has a limited shelf life.

The LDO was pleased to send delegates to the Statute Law Society conference in Westminster in June and to the Commonwealth Association of Legislative Counsel (CALC) Europe Conference in Belfast, pictured below. Several presentations were made by the Jersey delegates and we were particularly proud of the one by our Legislation Editor on the importance of editorial functions in the legislative drafting process, which featured in the opening session of the conference and in the CALC journal, [The Loophole](#).



Our annual satisfaction survey for instructing officers, which has been running since 2022, continued for 2025. The survey consists of an introductory question concerning the extent of interaction between the respondent and the LDO, followed by an extended survey consisting of questions eliciting their satisfaction with the various services provided by the LDO, and other matters, using 3- and 4-point Likert scales as well as opportunities for free text responses. Overall, the feedback continues to be overwhelmingly positive and engagement with the survey has grown steadily since 2023. The table below shows the number of surveys sent, responses received and extended responses received since the survey began.

Metric	Surveyed year	2022	2023	2024	2025
A. Survey recipients		76	81	73	101
B. Responses received		31 (41% of A)	23 (28% of A)	28 (38% of A)	48 (48% of A)
C. Responses to extended survey		21 (67% of B)	15 (65% of B)	20 (71% of B)	36 (75% of B)

As a result of the survey, to maintain and further strengthen our working relationship with ministerial offices, we aim to increase the number of training sessions we hold for instructing officers by introducing online sessions to complement our in-person sessions, and we plan to expand the topics covered to include workstreams related to the lodging process.

When it came to the delivery of the Government Legislative Programme 2025-26 the LDO was asked to deliver 59 “programme items”, which do not include the usual round of minor and routine items. This we knew was a tall order. Some items were not delivered, mostly through late instructions or late responses to drafts, which will have been for a number of reasons, and additional items were added late to the programme. In the event, 61 programme items were lodged in time for debate before the 2026 election. The credit for this goes to the dedicated team of drafters and the equally dedicated editorial and technology team. Alongside this work the LDO publishes all legislation on the website once it is passed and consolidates all changes to current legislation.

2 Business Plan 2026

2.1 Introduction

This is the 7th business plan of the Legislative Drafting Office (the LDO), on this occasion published alongside the 2025 Annual Report for the LDO. It sets out our aims for 2026 and the values that drive our work.

2.2 Overview of the LDO

The LDO sits within the States Greffe as a separate unit. It shares the States Greffe budget, and the Greffier of the States is the line manager of the Principal Legislative Drafter and the accounting officer for the LDO as well as for the States Greffe. The LDO values the close relationship and support of the States Greffe, which provides accommodation, facilities and services on matters not relating to the production of legislation.

The main purpose of the LDO is:

To prepare draft legislation that gives legal effect to the policy of the Minister or other promoter of it in a way that is:

- (a) sufficiently unambiguous as to leave no room for construction other than that intended by the promoter; and
- (b) sufficiently clear as to be readily understood by the users of the legislation.

The work of the LDO feeds into all aspects of the Jersey performance framework to the extent that legislation is required. The Government Legislative Programme sets out the items of legislation that Ministers wish to be lodged in any given year. “Minor and routine” items that may still be of great importance but take only a day or so to draft, as well as work for the States Assembly, its Committees, Panels and individual Members, comprise the rest of the LDO’s workload. The work of the LDO supports the whole of Government whenever any of its plans or policies require a law change.

The secondary purpose of the LDO is to ensure accurate and up-to-date access to Jersey legislation.

2.3 How we work

The LDO’s mission statement is “turning policy into Jersey law”. This is achieved by taking the policy of Government (or, where applicable, that of an individual States Member, Committee or Scrutiny Panel) and producing draft legislation which, if the States Assembly (or in the case of an Order, a Minister) so decides, can pass into law.

We receive instructions from the Department, Member, Committee or Scrutiny Panel, analyse their requirements and, through working with the instructor, produce a draft that as far as is possible reflects their policy intention. Most of our work is for Government, and with large legislative items this necessitates honing the policy through a number of

drafts. But, importantly, the office also assists Members and Scrutiny Panels who wish to alter Government policy, principally by preparing for them amendments to any Government legislation that requires passing by the States Assembly.

The LDO also has a responsibility as guardian of the statute book in a manner that is consistent with the principles of the Free Access to Law Movement, of which the Jersey Legal Information Board (JLIB) is a member. Since the Legislation (Jersey) Law 2021 came into force in September 2021, the Principal Legislative Drafter has a statutory duty to prepare and publish consolidated legislation so that anyone can see what the law is as of today. This gives us our secondary purpose of giving everyone easy access to current law. We are responsible for notifying the public of any new legislation, maintaining a continually updated database of legislation, and ensuring it is published. This is done in conjunction with JLIB.

2.4 What we want to achieve in 2026

- 2026 is an election year and this plan is concerned only with the period following the dissolution of the States. 2025 was a hugely busy year and the first quarter of 2026 was heavily focused on meeting the requirements of the 2025-26 Government Legislative Programme and the needs of Members in relation to that legislation.
- The next stage of our drafting work is focused on the less controversial items that have drafting instructions or will do by the time of the general election. Once the new administration is in place we will look to meet the legislative aims of the new Government.
- In the meantime, the LDO needs to spend a certain amount of time looking inwards to what improvements might be made to the way we work and the service we provide. The LDO believes that we might have a larger role to play in relation to the Government Legislative Programme. We know what can be delivered with the resources available in any given year and would like to play a part in moving on legislative projects that stall due to lack of instructions or delay in responding to drafts. To that end we plan to set up a working group with colleagues from other departments that will make representations to the Council of Ministers about reform of the process.
- Also key to improving the way we work is the planned replacement of the Interpretation (Jersey) Law 1954, work on which was suspended during the drafting pressures of the last year. As mentioned in our last Business Plan, we are continuing to look at technological innovations that we hope may aid Members when reviewing amending legislation, and practitioners by displaying links to definitions of terms defined in a piece of legislation or elsewhere in the statute book.
- We will continue to work with JLIB to enhance accessibility to Jersey legislation. This year we are working on the “as enacted” section of the Jerseylaw.je website so that it will in the end feature every piece of legislation going back to the Code of 1771. The current collection, particularly in the case of older legislation, includes certain amendments and omits repealed legislation. We want the collection in future to be a historical record of all legislation as made.

- A further project hopes to include all UK legislation extended to Jersey that is currently in force. Only when we do that can the legislation section of the website truly claim to include all Jersey statute law.
- Though our current Word-based template has served us extremely well, we are starting to look to the future when a macro-based system will no longer be viable. We have begun to explore the possible future use of XML.
- We have published our current drafting practice, as required by the Legislation (Jersey) Law 2021. This year we intend to publish an updated version and we will continue to examine our house style to develop more consistency and clarity in how we draft.
- We will run more of our training courses for policy officers, subject to the demand for them, as well as conducting an online refresher for policy officers who have attended the initial course.
- We will continue to use Law Revision powers to prepare draft revised legislation to put before the Law Revision Board on a twice-yearly basis. The Board is empowered to make changes that fall outside of editorial powers but short of changing the meaning of the law. This year we hope to put for the Board's approval modernised versions of some older legislation, without changing the meaning.
- We will continue to participate in international drafting conferences and other training opportunities that may arise, this year ensuring Jersey is represented at both the conference of the Commonwealth Association of Legislative Counsel in Singapore and the drafting conference of Canadian Institute for the Administration of Justice in Ottawa. We will continue to assist in mentoring or training drafters from various parts of the Commonwealth when requested.

2.5 Our values

The LDO is staffed by lawyers and support staff with specialist skills committed to delivering high quality legislation for Jersey in accordance with public policy. The core values of the Government of Jersey are reflected in what we do and, as refreshed and applied in the LDO, are as follows:

1. We are respectful

We aim to treat all those we come across in our work with respect and co-operate with them as appropriate in all our dealings. We care about our colleagues as individuals and respect their positions and responsibilities in the workplace. We also respect their opinions even when we disagree with them.

2. We are better together

We share knowledge and expertise, valuing the benefits of working collaboratively with colleagues across departments and disciplines to help maintain the highest standards in drafting legislation for Jersey.

3. We are always improving

We look for ways of improving our expertise for the benefit of Jersey, whether it be modernising or simplifying our style of drafting or upgrading the technology that supports what we do. We look outwards to the practices and systems that evolve in drafting offices in other Commonwealth jurisdictions and take opportunities to learn from and share ideas with them.

4. We are customer focused

We are passionate about using our expertise to produce legislation that benefits the people of Jersey. We never forget that our purpose is to respond to the needs of those who instruct us, and, through them, the wider public. We aim to meet their needs as efficiently and effectively as we can.

5. We deliver

We are proud of working for Jersey and are passionate about delivering high-quality draft legislation as quickly as is consistent with the high degree of accuracy our work demands.

2.6 Measuring and benchmarking

We are committed to assisting Government to meet the requirements of the Government Legislative Programme for each year. We rely on Government Departments to send us appropriately detailed instructions so that we can give effect to Ministers' policy ambitions in legislation. Like the Greffe as a whole, we are also there to respond to the drafting needs of Scrutiny Panels, Committees and individual States Members. Our work is therefore demand-led and does not easily lend itself to targets.

Our Drafting Office Management Information System (Domis) makes it easier for the Principal Legislative Drafter to track progress on legislation projects. Domis, as well as being a way to store and retrieve electronic documents, provides a semi-automated system of recording time which has been used for all new drafting projects from the beginning of 2020. Thanks to Domis, we can extract useful management information from the system, such as how long drafting projects are with the LDO and how long they spend being reviewed by the instructing Department or elsewhere. It also enables time spent in drafting to be recorded more accurately. Domis is also capable of producing reports on the progress of each drafting project by pulling out information on the most recent activity. This information is fed back to the Cabinet Office, which hosts the Government Legislative Programme.

In addition, we run an annual satisfaction survey to measure satisfaction among our policy clients and will do so again after the end of 2026.

2.7 Resources

The LDO has a budget of just over £2 million, the majority of which covers staff costs.

In-house personnel consists of:

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- 9 legislative drafters (the Principal Legislative Drafter, 2 Senior Legislative Drafters, 4 Legislative Drafters and 2 trainees).
- a team of 3 editorial and technology staff.

There is one further drafter, not included in our complement, who sits outside of the LDO, working on road traffic matters for I&E.

The office receives specialist drafting office IT and related support from the Legislation Services Consultant, who works for us remotely as needed.

At the time of writing our organisational chart for 2026 is as follows:

