

CTTT 2002-2012

Significant achievements

In February 2012 the Consumer, Trader and Tenancy Tribunal (CTTT) marked ten years of operation as the largest dispute resolution service in NSW. This information sheet provides a summary of the CTTT's key achievements since 2002, and service innovations now underway.

Establishment of the CTTT

The CTTT was established on 25 February 2002 as an independent decision making body that offers an accessible, low-cost, quick and efficient dispute resolution service for sorting out a range of everyday disputes.

The CTTT took over the roles of the former Residential Tribunal and Fair Trading Tribunal, to become the busiest Tribunal in NSW.

9 Divisions

The types of disputes brought to the CTTT has increased since 2002. The CTTT can now deal with disputes about:

- Living in rental premises, residential parks or retirement villages
- Living in an apartment block / building
- Buying goods and services
- Buying or repairing motor vehicles
- Building or renovating a home.

Disputes are dealt with under a Divisional structure—General, Commercial, Home Building, Motor Vehicles, Residential Parks, Retirement villages, Strata and Community Schemes, Social Housing and Tenancy.

Details about the CTTT's nine Divisions and other information are available from www.cttt.nsw.gov.au.

570,000+ Applications lodged

In 2002 close to 74,000 applications were lodged and the annual trend in applications received at the CTTT has remained around that level. By the end of January 2012 more than 570,000 applications had been lodged at the CTTT.

57% Online

The way in which people bring their disputes to the CTTT has changed since 2002. Back then, paper application forms were used. Towards the end of 2003 new technology was brought in to allow people to lodge an application over the internet.

By 2005-06 30% of all applicants were using the *CTTT Online* service and that number has continued to rise. In December 2011 a record 57% of all applications were lodged via *CTTT Online* on the CTTT website.

Application forms can also be downloaded from the website, or collected from any CTTT Registry or Fair Trading Centre around NSW.

709,000+ Hearings

The CTTT conducts hearings in almost 70 locations in metropolitan and regional NSW, and a free interpreter service is available.

Between 2002 and the end of 2011 more than 709,000 CTTT hearings had been held. Each year more than 2,000 interpreter services across over fifty languages have been provided to applicants and respondents.

1.8 Million+ Website visits

The CTTT is committed to helping people find out about, understand and use its dispute resolution service.

In ten years more than 1.8 million people have visited www.cttt.nsw.gov.au to lodge their applications and access resources, including videos available online in English and community languages.

Ongoing innovation

Over the past ten years the CTTT has used technology to help manage its large workload and improve and streamline its services. A number of projects currently underway will further simplify processes and continue to transform the way in which people interact with the CTTT.

- **eConnect:** An 'opt in' service that allows case-related correspondence including notices of hearing and orders to be sent to parties via email. This service commenced on 16 January for online applicants and will be rolled out to all parties over the coming months.
- **Video conferencing:** Currently in pilot stage, video conferencing is expected to be used in Tribunal hearings in 2012-13. This service will be particularly useful for parties in regional and remote locations.
- **Digital documentation:** Planning has commenced to allow electronic submission of evidence and other case-related documents by parties ahead of the hearing.

Consumer Trader and Tenancy Tribunal Timeline 2002-2012

2002-2004: Commence and consolidate	
2002	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CTTT starts on 25 February ¹ • Consultative forums established ² • CTTT Case Management System (CMS) • Digital sound recording implemented • <i>InCourt</i> pilot in Sydney ³
2003	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgraded online lodgement system and online payment gateway (<i>CTTT Online</i>) • Website www.cttt.nsw.gov.au • Holiday parks disputes added to jurisdiction
2004	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • InCourt extended to all CTTT Registries • Hearing lists available online • Digital sound recording available at all CTTT locations
2005-2007: Review and refine	
2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pawnbroker disputes added to jurisdiction • InCourt available at non-registry locations Gosford and Blacktown
2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conveyancing disputes added to jurisdiction • CTTT Operations Review ⁴ • Statutory review of the <i>CTTT Act 2001</i> report to NSW Parliament • <i>eMember</i> project pilot ⁵
2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New CMS implemented • <i>eMember</i> project extended across State • <i>CTTT Online</i> expanded
2008-2011: Continuous improvement	
2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>CTTT Amendment Act 2008</i>—new Social Housing Division • Aboriginal Consultative Forum established after consultations with community representatives • Electronic hearing list displays in registries • <i>CTTT Communications Strategy 2008-2010</i> launched
2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electronic hearing allocation diary (SNAP) implemented • Communications Strategy for Aboriginal Communities 2009-2011 launched
2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Residential Tenancies Act 2010</i>—significant change to Tenancy and Social Housing Divisions • Consumer Credit matters transferred to Commonwealth ⁶
2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Agricultural Tenancies Bill 2011</i>—proposed additional jurisdiction ⁷ • Australian Consumer Law ⁸ • New reporting system • Record 57% of applications lodged via <i>CTTT Online</i> ⁹ • Video conferencing pilot • <i>eConnect</i> pilot ¹⁰ • <i>Communications Strategy for CALD Communities 2009-2011</i> launched • CTTT YouTube channel launched

- 1 CTTT established by the *Consumer, Trader and Tenancy Tribunal Act 2001* merging the former Residential Tribunal and Fair Trading Tribunal.
- 2 Consultative Forums involving key stakeholders were established. These forums are still operating and remain an important communication channel for the CTTT
- 3 InCourt enables Tribunal Members to type their orders directly into the CTTT's case management system (CMS).
- 4 Review followed a statutory review of the *Consumer, Trader and Tenancy Tribunal Act 2001*. Review recommendations were implemented and provide a focused and systematic approach to continuous improvement.
- 5 *eMember* project—Tribunal Members in metropolitan and regional NSW use laptops with wireless software to make orders in *InCourt* and capture audio recordings of hearings.
- 6 Legislative change at the Commonwealth level resulted in certain consumer credit disputes previously dealt with by the CTTT were transferred to Commonwealth jurisdiction on 1 July 2010.
- 7 *Agricultural Tenancies Bill 2011*—introduced into NSW Parliament on 9 November 2011—proposal to add agricultural tenancy disputes to CTTT jurisdiction.
- 8 Australian Consumer Law replaced Commonwealth, State and Territory consumer protection fair trading laws and the *Trade Practices Act 1974* on 1 January 2011 led to some changes for the CTTT's jurisdiction
- 9 In December 2011 a record 57% of applications were lodged over the internet via *CTTT Online*—accessed from the CTTT website www.cttt.nsw.gov.au
- 10 *eConnect* enables people to 'opt in' to receive correspondence from the CTTT by email.