



The Rules Committee

Te Komiti mō ngā Tikanga Kooti

8 June 2026
Minutes 4/26

Circular 16 of 2026

Minutes of Meeting of 13 April 2026

The meeting called by Agenda 4/26 (C 1 of 2026) convened at 2.00 pm in person at the Old High Court Boardroom in Wellington

Present

Rt Hon Dame Helen Winkelmann GNZM, Chief Justice of New Zealand
Hon Justice French, Special Purposes Appointee and President of the Court of Appeal
Hon Justice Cooke, Chair and Judge of the Supreme Court
Hon Justice Fitzgerald, Chief High Court Judge
Hon Justice Gault, Judge of the High Court
Hon Justice Radich, Judge of the High Court
His Honour Judge Taumaunu, Chief District Court Judge
His Honour Judge Kellar, District Court Judge
Ms Alison Todd, Senior Crown Counsel as Representative of the Solicitor-General
Ms Caroline Greaney, Deputy Secretary (Policy) in the Ministry of Justice and representative of the Secretary of Justice
Mr Daniel Kalderimis KC, New Zealand Law Society Representative and Barrister
Ms Stephanie Grieve KC, New Zealand Law Society Representative and Barrister

In attendance

Hon David Goddard KC, Te Au Reka Lead
Ms Cathy Pooke, Parliamentary Counsel Office Rules Committee Liaison
Mr Kieron McCarron, Chief Advisor Legal and Policy Supreme Court
Ms Lucy Saunders, Principal Policy Advisor in the Ministry of Justice
Mr Nick Mercer, Senior Policy Advisor in the Ministry of Justice
Ms Georgia Shen, Policy Advisor in the Ministry of Justice
Mr Raymond James, Chief Registrar of the District Court
Mr Henry Fitzgerald, Clerk to the Rules Committee

Apologies

Hon Judith Collins KC MP, Attorney-General
Mr Paul David KC, Special Purposes Appointee and New Zealand Bar Association President

1. Preliminary

The Committee considered the preliminary minutes of its 24 November 2025 minutes. Deputy Secretary Greaney suggested these changes to two bullet points of Item 2:

- Bullet point five also relates to other rules and should read “There will be a short, separate facilitative part of the High Court Rules and other relevant rules...”
- The reference to drafting instructions in the bottom paragraph should be “...intended to issue further drafting instructions to PCO in March 2026.”

The Committee agreed to these changes and approved the minutes of its 24 November 2025 meeting.

The Chair suggested that Item 4 (te reo Māori and sign language in courts) of the 6 October 2025 meeting minutes should refer to the “provisions” of the Te Ture Mō Te Reo Māori Act 2016 | Māori Language Act 2016, rather than the “principles” of that Act. The Committee agreed to make this change and reapproved the 6 October 2025 meeting minutes accordingly.

2. Te Au Reka

Update on Te Au Reka Phase Two rules changes

David Goddard KC began the discussion. Work on Te Au Reka for the Family Court is well advanced and continues at pace. Some issues of detail have been identified which require a little more time and attention. A July 2026 rollout date is no longer feasible. The Te Au Reka Steering Group will decide on 22 April what the new rollout date for phase one will be. He noted there is a significant advantage in rolling out Te Au Reka internally amongst judicial officers and court staff before release to court participants, as is now proposed, because it will allow the identification of issues before they directly affect court participants.

Nick Mercer and Lucy Saunders of the Ministry provided a paper on the Working Group’s progress since the Rules Committee’s November 2025 meeting. Relevant details included:

1. The Ministry and PCO continue to progress drafting on amendments to the Criminal Procedure Rules 2012, District Court Rules 2014, High Court Rules 2016 and Harmful Digital Communications Rules 2016. The Working Group has reviewed an early draft of amendments to the Criminal Procedure Rules and provided comments.
2. The Working Group has considered three further sets of rules within the Rules Committee’s remit: the Constituency Election Petition Rules 2008, the Trans-Tasman Proceedings Regulations and Rules 2013 and the Evidence (Trans-Tasman Service of, and Compliance with, New Zealand Subpoenas and Australian Subpoenas Issued in Criminal Proceedings) Rules 2013. The Working Group agreed that changes to these rules are not needed to support Te Au Reka as the rules do not have any significant inconsistencies with the intended use of the e-solution.
3. The Working Group has identified a preferred approach to changing the District Court (Access to Court Documents) Rules 2017 and Senior Courts (Access to Court Documents) Rules 2017,

to support the intended function of the e-solution to provide court participants access to information. The associated paper seeks the Rules Committee's in-principle agreement to this preferred approach.

As a next step in progressing changes to the Criminal Procedure Rules, the Working Group also intends to consult with the Criminal Rules Sub-Committee to ensure implications for criminal courts have been thoroughly tested. It proposes to do this at the Sub-Committee's next meeting in June.

Winkelmann CJ noted the importance of ensuring that no rule changes related to Te Au Reka alter how court rules currently allocate and limit substantive decision-making powers and responsibilities. Mr Goddard agreed, noting that the changes should only be of an administrative or process nature, with judicial officers continuing to make decisions where the rules currently require a judicial officer to do so (as opposed to, for example, assigning greater decision-making power to registrars than the rules currently allocate them).

Proposed approach to amending Access to Court Documents Rules for Te Au Reka

Mr Mercer and Ms Saunders of the Ministry shared a paper seeking the Committee's in-principle agreement to the Te Au Reka Working Group's proposed approach to amending the Access to Court Documents Rules for Te Au Reka. The proposed amendments related to the District Court (Access to Court Documents) Rules 2017 and Senior Courts (Access to Court Documents) Rules 2017 and aim to support certain information being, by default, automatically accessible to specified court participants through the e-solution.

The Committee:

- noted the Working Group considers amendments to the District Court (Access to Court Documents) Rules 2017 and Senior Courts (Access to Court Documents) Rules 2017 are needed to provide the framework for default access to court information through Te Au Reka;
- noted the Working Group's preferred approach is to provide high level default access settings directly in the Access to Court Documents Rules, and provide for these to be supplemented by Head of Bench directions; and
- agreed in principle to the Working Group's preferred approach to amending the District Court (Access to Court Documents) Rules 2017 and Senior Courts (Access to Court Documents) Rules 2017 but these amendments must and will retain the existing allocation of decision-making authority.

Who the Te Au Reka Working Group should engage with on criminal rules changes

The Chair sought the Committee's view on whether and in what order the Te Au Reka working group should consult with the Criminal Rules Sub-committee in addition to the Rules Committee in relation to proposed criminal rule changes flowing from Te Au Reka. There was agreement that the Committee

and Sub-Committee have different focuses. The Committee is more focused on the constitutional implications of rules. The Sub-Committee has criminal expertise. Proposed rule changes would benefit from review by both groups. It would be important to avoid sending the issue back and forth between the Sub-Committee and the Committee.

The Committee agreed in principle that the Te Au Reka working group should first consult the Criminal Rules Sub-Committee about such rule changes before bringing them to the Rules Committee.

3. Te reo Māori and New Zealand sign language in court

The Committee noted the exchange of correspondence between the Deputy Secretary and the Chair about monitoring for and quickly addressing any unforeseen cost implications from the proposed changes to rules concerning the use of te reo Māori and New Zealand sign language in court.

The Deputy Secretary updated the Committee on where the Ministry had got to on advising the Minister of the proposed changes. There has been a series of conversations between the Minister and the Ministry on this question, however the Minister continues to have concerns about how the proposed rule changes could increase costs. The Deputy Secretary said it is unlikely the matter will progress before the Rules Committee's next meeting on 29 June 2026.

The Committee noted the position and expressed its hope that the matter will progress as soon as possible.

4. Family Court Rules Sub-Committee and bringing other court rules within the concurrence process

The Chair reminded the Committee that establishing a Family Court Rules Sub-Committee is part of the process that will hopefully soon bring the Family Court Rules 2002 within the jurisdiction of the Rules Committee. Currently the Governor-General makes the Family Court Rules by Order in Council, without the need for concurrence of any Rules Committee members. The Committee is soon to establish an interim Family Court Rules Sub-Committee in place pending the legislative change that would be necessary to bring the Family Court Rules within the concurrence process that applies to court rules such as those of the Senior Courts and those of the District Court.

Radich J provided the Committee with an oral update. He referred members to correspondence between the Chief Justice and the Secretary for Justice. In a 31 July 2024 letter from the Chief Justice to the Secretary for Justice, Her Honour highlighted that, historically, the Judiciary has set the rules of court procedure but, anomalously, the Executive sets the Family Court Rules without the need for judicial concurrence. This is despite the Family Court being a division of the District Court, and the existing requirement that the District Court Rules 2014 go through the Rules Committee concurrence process. The Chief Justice noted that the Executive setting the Family Court Rules is constitutionally problematic. In a reply of 21 November 2024, the Secretary for Justice agreed in principle that the Family Court rules related to practice and procedure should fall within the concurrence process, while

noting an interim approach was necessary. The Chief Justice replied on 4 December 2024, welcoming the Secretary for Justice's agreement in principle.

Radich J said that the upshot of these discussions is that, once established, the Family Court Rules Sub-Committee will move towards doing the same sort of work that a rules sub-committee typically would while noting that, for now, formal rule-making power remains with the Executive. This situation may persist for a period because the rules currently contain a difficult mix of procedural rules and policy, and it will take some time to draft an overhaul of the rules that does not contain policy (policy should not typically exist in rules of court procedure). The rules should come within the Rules Committee's jurisdiction by the time this overhaul is complete.

The Deputy Secretary agreed that the Family Court Rules are currently a mix of rules and policy and that, as the Secretary for Justice said in his 21 November 2024 letter, this situation should not continue, and the rules should move to the Committee's jurisdiction. The Deputy Secretary said that the Family Court Rules Sub-Committee will ideally operate close to a concurrence model during the transitional phase while being clear that during the transitional phase the formal rule making power remains with the Executive. While the Ministry will endeavour to work in such a way that there is something near-equivalent to a concurrence model, the possibility remains that the Ministry may not agree with the Sub-Committee's position on any given rule change, particularly given that the Rules still contain significant policy. Radich J acknowledged the Deputy Secretary's position, agreeing that the Executive has an interest in the current Family Court Rules that it would not normally have in court rules.

The Committee noted this update from Radich J and the Deputy Secretary.

Bringing other court rules within the concurrence process

Relatedly, Daniel Kalderimis KC raised the Employment Court Regulations 2000. There is a mixed rule/policy quality to the rules of that Court too. They lack the refinement of the High Court Rules. Mr Kalderimis recommends change like that which will happen with the Family Court Rules to make the Employment Court's rules more coherent. Kieron McCarron highlighted that the Employment Court is under the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's (MBIE) jurisdiction. The Committee noted a concern that overhauling the Employment Court's rules may be a lower priority for MBIE than overhauling the Family Court Rules is for the Ministry of Justice. There was also discussion of the current fuel crisis perhaps limiting MBIE's capacity to engage with such a transition of the Employment Court rules at this time.

The Committee was concerned that there are several courts whose rules of procedure the Executive may currently change without Committee concurrence. There was agreement that overhauling the Family Court Rules is the most urgent task and that the Committee should keep under review bringing other court rules within the concurrence process. The incoming Chair, Radich J, agreed to raise with the Chief Judge of the Employment Court the possibility of bringing that Court's rules within the concurrence process.

5. Future work programme

5.1 Code of conduct for expert evidence relating to tikanga and mātauranga

The Chair informed the committee that there is a sub-committee, of which he is a member, which has done a reasonable amount of work on the idea of a reformed or self-standing code of conduct for expert evidence in relation to tikanga. Other sub-committee members include Harvey and Whata JJ, Professor Wiremu Doherty, Matanuku Mahuika, Virginia Hardy and Jason Gough. This sub-committee has its origins in the Law Commission recommending the Judiciary create a code of conduct concerning expert evidence relating to tikanga Māori. The sub-committee has produced a document containing many ideas and the Chair has gone back to the group with a draft code of conduct for their comment. The Chair did not present the Committee with any documents from the sub-committee as there were none yet that would be helpful to the Committee at this stage. This topic may warrant external consultation, but the Chair is trying as much as possible to keep it consistent with the existing code of conduct.

The Chair proposed to the Committee that he continue to be the person overseeing this sub-committee as it creates a proposed code of conduct even as he departs from being Chair of the Committee. The Committee and the incoming Chair welcomed this suggestion. Cooke J will continue to work on this matter after he departs as Chair of the Committee and the Committee will keep the matter under review.

5.2 Code of conduct for expert witnesses in criminal proceedings

The Chair informed the Committee that the Criminal Rules Sub-Committee has sent a draft of the Criminal Procedure Amendment Rules 2026, prepared by the Parliamentary Counsel Office, for the Committee to consider. A 2 April 2026 letter from the Chair of the Criminal Rules Sub-Committee to the Rules Committee Chair noted that, at its 5 November 2025 meeting, the Sub-Committee considered draft amendments from the Parliamentary Counsel Office which would introduce a code of conduct for expert witnesses in criminal proceedings. The Sub-Committee approved most of the draft amendments. The only controversial question for the Sub-Committee concerned the duty of expert witnesses to confer upon direction by a Judge. The Sub-Committee considered judges should be able to direct expert conferencing after the judge has heard from both parties. The Sub-Committee discussed a situation where defence counsel may be unable to obtain instructions from a defendant, potentially due to fitness concerns, but conferral would assist the process. The Sub-Committee was sensitive to possible implications for a defendant's right to silence should a judge be able to direct conferral without a defendant's agreement. After receiving the views of representatives from Crown Law, NZLS and the Bar Association, and further discussion at the 30 March 2026 meeting, the unanimous view of the Sub-Committee was that judges should be able to direct experts to confer after hearing from both parties, even in the absence of mutual consent. The Sub-Committee did not consider a defendant's right to silence would be infringed, apparently because the rule would only allow a judge to impose a duty to confer if they have provided both parties an opportunity to be heard on the matter.

The Chair noted that the Sub-Committee seems to have based its proposed code of conduct on expert evidence in criminal proceedings on the old code of conduct for expert evidence in civil proceedings. It

does not appear to have based it on the new code of conduct for expert evidence in civil proceedings that emerged through the access to civil justice reform project. The Chair said that this is appropriate because the new code of conduct for expert evidence in civil proceedings is more facilitative, which may be inappropriate in a criminal context.

The Chief Justice said that the Committee should not proceed the current draft amendment rules to concurrence. She noted that the United Kingdom's Civil Justice Council is consulting on a proposed amendment to a code of conduct for expert witnesses in civil and criminal proceedings that would require parties to disclose AI use related to proceedings. That Council has done a very thorough review and has concluded that only two areas of the relevant code of conduct require amendment to require disclosure of AI use. First, if the expert witness has used AI and, second, if a party has used AI for the brief they have prepared for the expert witness. The Chief Justice said the draft rules should not proceed until the Committee has considered how they should address AI, including whether to impose a duty to disclose AI use.

Returning to the question of whether the draft rules would interfere with a defendant's right to silence, some Committee members agreed with the Sub-Committee's conclusion that the draft rules would not result in such an interference given they provided the court could only require expert conferral having provided both parties an opportunity to be heard. However, the Chief Justice was concerned that the facilitative purpose of the court's power to impose a duty to confer on expert witnesses is inappropriate in a criminal context. In a civil matter, facilitation may be appropriate because the court may seek to move the parties to an agreed position, but this would be inappropriate in a criminal proceeding. The Chair noted that this may be why the Sub-Committee did not use the more facilitative new code of conduct for expert witnesses in civil proceedings as its template. He also highlighted that the draft rules would give the court the power to impose a duty on expert witnesses to confer in criminal proceedings after giving the parties an opportunity to be heard. The draft rules do not impose a general duty on expert witnesses to confer in criminal proceedings in the absence of a direction to do so by the court. The Chief Justice retained a concern on the basis that the proposed approach did not remove the threat to the defendant's right to silence. Compelling a defence witness to speak with a Crown witness about the defendant's case against the wishes of the defendant is inherently threatening to the defendant's right to silence. It may expose to the Crown material that puts the defendant at a disadvantage. A member also made the point that the draft rule may not only undermine the right to silence in a narrow sense but the broader right to elect whether to call evidence, as the court might impose a duty to confer before the defendant had decided to call on their expert witness.

The Rules Committee agreed it would be best for the outgoing Chair to refer the draft rules to the Criminal Practice Committee to review, both on the right to silence point and the AI point that the Chief Justice raised.

5.3 Organising Principles

At its 24 November 2025 meeting, the Rules Committee formed a sub-committee consisting of the Chief Justice, Cooke J, Daniel Kalderimis and Cathy Pooke to consider whether the Committee should

update its 31 March 2014 Statement of Principles and Purposes of Rules of Civil Justice. The sub-committee has not yet met. The outgoing Chair felt the best way to breathe life into the project could be to gift it to the incoming Chair. The Committee agreed with this, and that the sub-committee would, therefore, have the same membership except that Radich J would take Cooke J's place.

6. Name suppression in sexual cases (part 2)

The unanimous view of members at the Criminal Rules Sub-Committee's 30 March 2026 meeting was that there was no need for rule changes to facilitate the ability of victims to have the court consider their views in relation to whether a defendant receives name suppression, as the new Victims of Sexual Violence (Strengthening Legal Protections) Legislation Act 2025 provides. The Committee was happy to accept the Sub-Committee's position that no rule changes are necessary.

7. Timeframes for sentencing submissions and victim impact statements

Fitzgerald J provided an oral update and Raymond James provided a memorandum for the Committee addressing proposed rules changes affecting the timeframes for filing sentencing memoranda and victim impact statements. The Committee also had before it the Parliamentary Counsel Office's draft of the Criminal Procedure Amendment Rules (No 2) 2026, which would effect the proposed changes. Rule 5A.4(1) of the Criminal Procedure Rules 2012 currently requires the prosecutor to file a sentencing memorandum no later than five working days before the date of the sentencing hearing. Rule 5A.4(2) requires the defendant to do so no later than three working days before the date of the sentencing hearing. The amendment rules would amend r 5A.4 such that the prosecutor and defendant would have to file no later than 12 and six working days before the sentencing hearing respectively.

Rule 5A.5A(2) of the Criminal Procedure Rules currently requires the prosecutor to use best endeavours to ensure that, at least five working days before the date of the sentencing hearing, the victim impact statement is filed in court, among other related matters. The amendment rules would change r 5A.5A such that the prosecutor would have to use best endeavours to file a victim impact statement no later than the time specified in r 5A.4(1) for the prosecutor to file a sentencing memorandum.

Mr James's memorandum stated that the alignment of sentencing preparation timeframes in the District Court and High Court is intended to provide all parties with sufficient time to prepare and consider submissions. This is essential to ensuring that sentencing hearings can proceed at the earliest opportunity and supports efforts to reduce delay and backlogs.

In a memorandum provided to the Rules Committee's meeting on 24 November 2025, the Criminal Rules Sub-Committee recommended that the Committee amend r 5A.5A(2) (filing of victim impact statements), to align with the proposed prosecutor's sentencing submission timeframe (which the memorandum then proposed be extended to 10 working days before the hearing, and five or six working days for defence submissions).

At its meeting in December 2025, the Criminal Practice Committee agreed that the appropriate timeframe for the filing of sentencing memoranda was 12 working days for prosecution and six working

days for defence. It was agreed the revised proposal for changing filing timeframes would return to the Rules Committee for final approval.

Mr James shared that the Ministry has engaged with the Chief Victims Advisor, Police and Crown Law on the timing for filing victim impact statements. The Chief Victims Advisor and Police agreed to the proposed timeframe of 12 working days. Police have confirmed that a 12-working day period will not present any operational difficulty, and therefore the change is acceptable. The Police also acknowledged that in some cases, delays may arise for legitimate reasons and may need accommodation, which the Judiciary recognises.

The Chief District Court Judge has confirmed his support for the proposed amendment to r 5A.5A(2), to align with the proposed prosecutor's sentencing submissions timeframe (12 working days prior to sentencing). Crown Law also supports the alignment of the dates for filing victim impact statements and Crown sentencing submissions. The Criminal Rules Sub Committee representatives for Ministry of Justice Senior Courts and District Courts representatives agree with the proposed change to r 5A.5A(2).

At the Criminal Practice Committee there was a discussion of aligning Pre-Sentencing (PAC) report deadlines with the extended timeframes for filing of submissions. The Chief Registrar of the District Court is working on aligning all sentencing hearing preparation timeframes. This includes updating the District Court MOU with the Department of Corrections which sets out the timeframes for filing of PAC reports. Under the new timeframes, the prosecutor submissions and the PAC report will be due on the same day, noting that individual judges still retain the discretion to alter dates for submissions in particular cases. This is the preference of the District Court Judiciary and is accepted by Crown Law and Police. Work will continue to update the MOU following confirmation of the amendments to the Criminal Procedure Rules.

Chief District Court Judge Taumaunu noted his agreement with these points.

The Rules Committee:

- noted that it had previously agreed in principle to amendments to the Criminal Procedure Rules 2012 to extend the timeframes for filing sentencing memoranda;
- noted that the Criminal Practice Committee agreed that the appropriate timeframe for the filing of sentencing memoranda is 12 working days for prosecution and six working days for defence;
- noted the recommendation of the Criminal Rules Sub-Committee that the timeframes for filing victim impact statements should align with the timeframe for prosecution sentencing submissions; and
- proceeded the Criminal Procedure Amendment Rules (No 2) 2026 to concurrence.

8. Improving the Operation of the Land Transfer Act 2017

Fitzgerald J provided the Committee with an oral update. Land Information New Zealand contacted the Rules Committee last year requesting that the Committee consider introducing rules that would provide

for a more efficient way of registering court freezing orders on the land register. At its previous meeting, the Committee agreed that Fitzgerald J would identify a judge who could investigate this issue. Since that meeting, Fitzgerald has talked with Osborne J, who has confirmed he is happy to prepare material on this for the Rules Committee. The Committee was pleased to note Osborne J's agreement to prepare material on this matter.

9. District Court Rules 2014 updates

Cathy Pooke referred the Committee to rr 20.79 and 20.81 of the District Court Rules 2014. These two rules reference provisions of the Construction Contracts Act 2002 that the Construction Contracts Amendment Act 2015 repealed. The two rules require updating so that they reference new provisions of the Construction Contracts Act. Ms Pooke confirmed she is happy to draft the required amendments to rr 20.79 and 20.81.

The Committee noted that this is an amendment that it should make to the District Court Rules in due course but that it would not proceed such an amendment to concurrence until enough small rule changes like this accumulated. The Committee resolved to maintain a list of such amendments.

10. A proposal to increase the general civil jurisdiction of the District Court

Judge Kellar orally addressed his proposal to raise the general civil jurisdiction of the District Court from \$350,000 to \$1,000,000 and provided a paper outlining the rationale for the proposal. He made the point that, after some problems a few years ago, the District Court's civil jurisdiction is now in order and there is significant expertise that parties cannot fully benefit from due to the \$350,000 limit. Reasons in favour of raising the limit include improving access to justice, saving costs for parties, reducing the burden on the High Court and quickening dispute resolution.

The Chair noted that during the recent Access to Civil Justice project, people did raise a concern that increasing the Dispute Tribunal's jurisdiction to \$60,000 (as the Rules Committee eventually did) could squeeze the District Court's civil jurisdiction.

Members largely did not support raising the District Court's civil jurisdiction limit to \$1,000,000. There was general agreement, however, that raising the limit in line with inflation would be desirable. Section 74(1)(a) of the District Court Act 2016 has set it at \$350,000 since 1 March 2017. The Reserve Bank's website indicates that the consumer price index has increased by 33.9 per cent since that time, such that the equivalent of \$350,000 in 2017 is approximately \$470,000 in real terms today. The difficulty is that the limit on the District Court's civil jurisdiction is set by statute, not court rules, so would require an Act to increase. Members generally agreed that it would be ideal if there was a mechanism to regularly review and increase limits such as this in line with inflation instead of increasing them at irregular intervals by statute as has been the longstanding practice.

There was also discussion of s 362(1)(d) of the Property Law Act 2007, which limits the jurisdiction of the District Court to \$500,000 in claims related to wrongly placed structures. It does this by cross-referencing s 79 of the District Court Act, which limits the jurisdiction of the District Court to \$500,000

in certain cases of claims for land recovery. Any future Rules Committee work on the District Court's jurisdictional limit should consider not only the general civil jurisdiction limit under s 74 of the District Court Act, but limits other provisions prescribe too.

The Committee agreed it would be best to leave this matter until the end of year because at that point the Committee will be able to better assess the impact of the access to civil justice reforms on the Disputes Tribunal and the High Court. That information will better place the Committee to reach conclusions on the District Court's civil jurisdiction limit. The Chair will select someone to prepare a paper on this question in time for the Committee's final meeting of this year. Additionally, he will seek information from High Court Associate Judges on the number of cases before the High Court that are within or near the District Court's current jurisdictional limit.

Justice Cooke
Chair