

SRA Update

Issue 105 - July 2022

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Welcome to the July edition of SRA Update. Despite the imminent arrival of the holiday season, it's still a busy time with lots going on. The Ministry of Justice has agreed to an increase in our fining powers, a move that should make sure cases can be resolved much more quickly - reducing costs and stress for all involved. We have also put in place measures to extend the use of the Solicitors Indemnity Fund (SIF) for post six-year run-off cover for a further 12 months. This will allow us to further explore options on the back of our consultation at the turn of the year. And talking of your views, we would like to know what you think about our approach to publicising disciplinary decisions, risks on the horizon and PII premiums. You can find out how in this issue too.

Paul Philip

Chief Executive

Progress update on financial penalties

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-105-financial-penalties/>]

The Ministry of Justice has confirmed an increase in the maximum amount we can fine individuals and firms within 'traditional' law firms. The increase, to £25,000, is one strand of our plans to update our financial penalties regime which we announced earlier this year following a public consultation.

Read more about: Progress update on financial penalties

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-105-financial-penalties/>]

Feedback on what disciplinary details are published

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2022-press-releases/publication-policy-principles-consultation/>]

We publish details on the disciplinary and regulatory action we take against solicitors so that, where appropriate, the public and employers have the opportunity to find out about any misconduct or concerns. To make sure we do this in a proportionate and fair way, we are consulting on what our



approach should be. Read our consultation to find out more and have your say.

Read more about: Feedback on what disciplinary details are published
[<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2022-press-releases/publication-policy-principles-consultation/>]

Post six-year run-off cover and the Solicitors Indemnity Fund: next steps

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2022-press-releases/sif-extension-july-2022/>]

Our Board has this week confirmed that current arrangements for the Solicitors Indemnity Fund (SIF) will continue until September 2023, to allow us to continue to explore options for what post six-year run-off cover arrangements should be beyond this.

Read more about: Post six-year run-off cover and the Solicitors Indemnity Fund: next steps [https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2022-press-releases/sif-extension-july-2022/]

Survey on your PII premiums

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-105-pii-survey/>]

We are conducting a short survey on professional indemnity insurance (PII) premiums, which we would like your firm to respond to. Your answers will help inform work we are doing in collaboration with the Legal Services Board exploring issues in the PII market.

Read more about: Survey on your PII premiums
[<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-105-pii-survey/>]

Latest suite of annual reports published

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2022-press-releases/annual-reporting-2022/>]

We have published the latest reports covering our operational work during 2020/21. The reports cover areas including education and training, enforcement, approval of new firms and solicitors, and the activity of the Compensation Fund. A full annual report on preventing money laundering is published separately in October.

Read more about: Latest suite of annual reports published
[<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2022-press-releases/annual-reporting-2022/>]



Research into over representation in reports and enforcement

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2022-press-releases/research-disproportionate-outcomes-2022/>]

Work on a major research project looking to better understand why there is over-representation of those from a Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds in reports made to us and subsequently our enforcement processes has begun. Experts from a consortium featuring the universities of York, Cardiff and Lancaster have come together to carry out the study, which is expected to report back next year.

Read more about: Research into over representation in reports and enforcement [<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2022-press-releases/research-disproportionate-outcomes-2022/>]

Practising certificate renewals 2022/23

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/mysra/updates/practising-certificate-registration-renewals/>]

Practising certificates/registrations renewals will take place from 1 to 31 October 2022. This year there are no new questions on any of the renewal application forms. We have made minimal changes and focused on improving mySRA to make sure renewing is more efficient and seamless.

Read more about: Practising certificate renewals 2022/23 [<https://www.sra.org.uk/mysra/updates/practising-certificate-registration-renewals/>]

Quality of legal representation in the youth justice system

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-102-advocacy/>]

The Institute for Crime and Justice Policy Research (ICPR) at Birkbeck is conducting research on legal representation and advocacy in the youth justice system. Have your say by completing a short questionnaire.

Read more about: Quality of legal representation in the youth justice system [<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-102-advocacy/>]

Have your say on risks on the horizon

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2022-press-releases/tell-us-about-changing-cybercrime-and-tech-risks/>]



We continue to set out what we believe are the key risks to you and your clients in our Risk Outlook and supporting reports. But we also want to hear about what concerns you have when running your firm. You can do this through a survey linked to our latest reports on innovation and cybercrime.

Read more about: Have your say on risks on the horizon

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2022-press-releases/tell-us-about-changing-cybercrime-and-tech-risks/>]

Scams and cybercrime threats continue [<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-105-scams/>]

We continue to receive reports about scammers trying to illegally obtain money or sensitive information. We have also seen a return to cybercriminals sending out emails to law firms claiming to be from us in a bid to infect IT systems.

Read more about: Scams and cybercrime threats continue

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-105-scams/>]

Webinar – inclusive workplaces for trans and non-binary people [<https://events.sra.org.uk/sra/608/home>]

We are holding a free webinar on Thursday 14 July – the International Non-binary People's Day – that looks at the first-hand experiences of Mx Oscar Davies, a non-binary barrister and LGBTQIA+ activist. Oscar was the first person to be listed as 'Mx' by their chambers and will discuss overcoming potential barriers to inclusion.

Read more about: Webinar – inclusive workplaces for trans and non-binary people [<https://events.sra.org.uk/sra/608/home>]

Ombudsman courses in September [<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-105-ombudsman-courses/>]

The Legal Ombudsman is running courses in September to help you deal even more effectively with client complaints. The online sessions – on myth-busting and the language of complaints – take place on September 14 and 21 respectively.

Read more about: Ombudsman courses in September

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-105-ombudsman-courses/>]

Update your diversity data

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2022-press-releases/update-your-diversity-data/>]

If you have a mySRA account, please can you log in and check/update your diversity information. Some questions asked within this section have been recently updated but reviewing your data is straight forward and should take no more than five minutes.

Read more about: Update your diversity data

[\[https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2022-press-releases/update-your-diversity-data/\]](https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2022-press-releases/update-your-diversity-data/)

Your health, your career

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources/your-health-your-career/>]

Are you worried about your health affecting your work? Life as a solicitor can be challenging and the demands and pressures can easily build up. We can signpost you to sources of help and make adjustments for you if you are in difficulty.

Read more about: Your health, your career

[\[https://www.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources/your-health-your-career/\]](https://www.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources/your-health-your-career/)

Welcome to the Compliance News section of the latest issue of SRA Update. In this edition, you can find out about our new guidance on working for vulnerable clients, while those of you involved in lobbying can catch up with the latest developments on the Registrar's rules. We have also earmarked the date for this year's compliance officers conference, so make sure you save it in your calendar. This issue also carries our quarterly look at anti-money laundering, and that includes HM Treasury approving the UK-wide guidance for the latest regulations.

Paul Philip

Chief Executive

Taking instruction from vulnerable clients [<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-105-vulnerable-clients/>]

We have published new guidance on issues around receiving and accepting instructions from vulnerable clients. We have also updated our guidance on client confidentiality to address issues of their capacity to consent to disclosure.

Read more about: Taking instruction from vulnerable clients

[\[https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-105-vulnerable-clients/\]](https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-105-vulnerable-clients/)

Have your say on transparency rules

[\[https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/transparency-rules/\]](https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/transparency-rules/)

You should have recently received an email from our research partners, Economic Insight, asking you for your experiences and views on our transparency rules. Your input will be invaluable in helping us to better understand and develop work in this important area. Completing the survey should take around 15 minutes.

Read more about: Have your say on transparency rules

[\[https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/transparency-rules/\]](https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/transparency-rules/)

Have you published your firm diversity data yet?

[\[https://www.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources/diversity-toolkit/your-data/\]](https://www.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources/diversity-toolkit/your-data/)

It is a requirement for firms to publish a summary of their firm diversity data, so long as it complies with data protection legislation. We have updated our guidance page about publishing diversity data to include information about publishing social mobility data.

Read more about: Have you published your firm diversity data yet?

[\[https://www.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources/diversity-toolkit/your-data/\]](https://www.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources/diversity-toolkit/your-data/)

Lobbying registrar updates its guidance [\[https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-105-lobbying/\]](https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-105-lobbying/)

The Office of the Registrar of Consultant Lobbyists (ORCL) has updated its guidance. You are a lobbyist if you engage with ministers or permanent secretaries on behalf of your client, and should therefore make sure you are registered before you carry out any such activity.

Read more about: Lobbying registrar updates its guidance

[\[https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-105-lobbying/\]](https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-105-lobbying/)

Compliance Officers Conference – save the date!

[\[https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/events/on-demand-events/\]](https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/events/on-demand-events/)



This year's Compliance Officers Conference will take place on Tuesday 8 November at the International Convention Centre (ICC) in Birmingham. There will then be a week of online events from 14 November, as we did last year. Booking details will follow in the autumn. If you missed last year, you can catch up with our "On Demand" facility.

Read more about: Compliance Officers Conference – save the date!
[<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/events/on-demand-events/>]

Focus on AML

Legal Services Affinity Group guidance approved by HM Treasury

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources/money-laundering/guidance-support/>]

The Legal Services Affinity Group (LSAG), made up of both regulatory and representative bodies for legal services in the UK, produced guidance on the anti-money laundering (AML) regulations. This guidance, which for firms we regulate was already official, has now been approved by HM Treasury.

Read more about: Legal Services Affinity Group guidance approved by HM Treasury [<https://www.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources/money-laundering/guidance-support/>]

Working with clients affected by Russia/Ukraine conflict

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/home/hot-topics/financial-sanctions-international-issues/>]

With new and updated sanctions continuing to be added against individuals and organisations linked to Russia, it is critical that you and your firm stay up-to-date with the latest measures being introduced. Visit our dedicated webpage to see the latest guidance, particularly in relation to anti-money laundering, sanctions and conduct in litigation.

Read more about: Working with clients affected by Russia/Ukraine conflict
[<https://www.sra.org.uk/home/hot-topics/financial-sanctions-international-issues/>]

Tell us about your anti-money laundering work

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-105-aml-declaration/>]

If your firm falls within the scope of the current anti-money laundering regulations, then you should have been contacted about declaring certain information to us about your activities. If you have not yet submitted those

details, you need to do so before 31 July using the link in the email you received.

Read more about: Tell us about your anti-money laundering work

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-105-aml-declaration/>]

Guidance on firm inspections

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources/money-laundering/guidance-support/firm-inspections/>]

We carry out inspections of firms to check their AML processes and policies against their obligations laid down in the 2017 regulations. We have produced guidance for those firms so they know what to expect before we inspect.

Read more about: Guidance on firm inspections

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources/money-laundering/guidance-support/firm-inspections/>]

Government responds to views on anti-money laundering regime

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-105-government-information/>]

The Government has published its response to those that submitted views on the anti-money laundering regime in the Call for Evidence that ran in the second half of last year. While there were few hard policy announcements, there might be issues that require your attention later down the line.

Read more about: Government responds to views on anti-money

laundering regime [<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-105-government-information/>]

Subscription

If you are regulated by the SRA

As a regulated individual, please **simply ensure that the SRA has your current contact email address on record.**

To ensure we have your current email address, log in to mySRA

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/mySRA/>] and check your profile.

No subscription request is required.

We recommend that you ask your network administrator to ensure that bulk email with "SRA Update" in the subject line is not filtered as spam.

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