

News

Statement: publication of SRA costs and correspondence in relation to the Leigh Day prosecution

16 January 2019

Note: the below SRA statement was originally published on 13 December 2018. It was updated on 16 January 2019 with an additional joint-statement from the SRA and Leigh Day on appeal costs.

Following the conclusion of our prosecution against Leigh Day and three of its solicitors, linked to the Al-Sweady Inquiry, we have published details of our legal costs for this case as well as relevant correspondence with the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Justice.

Costs for our disciplinary work

Our disciplinary work is a vital part of our role to make sure we protect the public and maintain trust and confidence in the high professional standards we expect from solicitors and law firms.

Our total costs for this case were around £3.1m (including VAT). This was made up of £2.1m for the Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal (SDT) hearing, in addition to almost £1m for the High Court appeal.

Our costs - primarily made up of legal fees - reflect the complexity and size of the investigation.

The work on this case was completed within our usual budget provision for our disciplinary work. We publish our annual budget for the legal costs of our ongoing disciplinary work every year in our business plan

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/strategy/business-plan/sra-business-plan-2018-2019>] .

STAGE	Gross Total £000s
Investigation	222
SDT Costs	1884
Appeal	972
Totals	3078

*Note: all numbers include VAT at 20%.

****Note:** we have not provided further detail of the costs of individual suppliers (for instance the costs of an individual QC) due to issues of commercial confidentiality.

*****Note:** separate details on what the SRA have agreed to pay for Leigh Day's appeal costs are below.

Disclosure of correspondence

Ahead of the hearing correspondence with organisations, including the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Defence, in relation to this case was made available to the Tribunal. Now we have concluded this case, we have published relevant correspondence with the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Defence.

We have not published case evidence and case correspondence with the complainant, in this instance the Ministry of Defence, in line with usual practice. We have redacted the names of junior staff in line with usual practice, as well as the names of employees who are no longer in post.

Download correspondence in relation to SRA Leigh Day prosecution (PDF 125 pages, 1.1MB) [<https://www.sra.org.uk/globalassets/documents/sra/news/leigh-day-correspondence.pdf?version=4a1abb>]

Joint statement from the SRA and Leigh Day on High Court appeal costs

In October, the High Court dismissed the SRA's appeal against Leigh Day and three of its solicitors, arising from the Al-Sweady Inquiry. The Court also made an order that the SRA should pay their appeal costs, to be assessed by the Court if not agreed between the parties.

The parties have now reached an agreement on the appeal costs. The SRA has paid £995,000 to Leigh Day. This includes £600,000 which was paid as an interim payment in accordance with the Court's October Order.