



Law Society Regional Report

October 2013

Regional manager: Fiona Tatton

Email: fiona.tatton@lawsociety.org.uk

Telephone: 07980 725 964

www.lawsociety.org.uk/yorkshire



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Law Society news and events

Firm Diversity Forum

Price: Free

Date: 08-10-2013

Time: 12:00 - 14:30

Venue: Eversheds, Bridgewater Place, Water Lane, Leeds LS11 5DR

CPD hours: 2.0

The case for diversity is simple. Society is changing fast and with it our clients, from hard done-by citizens who walk in to a high street firm saying 'I think I need a lawyer' to multinationals with multiple Magic Circle firms on their roster. Solicitors must understand their clients. They also need to ensure they've got the best team to serve them. To do this, they need a diverse workforce.

These free events will explore current key diversity and inclusion related topics affecting the profession and provide practical tools to help you achieve best practice. The sessions will also explore compliance issues in relation to principle 9 and chapter 2 of the SRA handbook and an update on the Law Society's work to support the profession in this important area.

To book, please visit:

<http://bit.ly/1epybpc>

MLRO Networking Group

Price: Free

Date: 12-11-2013

Time: Registration 16:00, Seminar 16:30 - 18.30

Venue: Walker Morris, Kings Court, 12 King Street, Leeds, LS1 2HL



CPD hours: 2.0

Why attend?

These seminars are designed to facilitate discussions between local law practices about the challenges of anti-money laundering (AML) compliance and to enable the sharing of good practice.

Who should attend?

The groups are for MLROs in law practices, their deputies and senior compliance staff. We reserve the right to refuse to accept bookings where an individual is not a MLRO (or relevant deputy or senior compliance staff member) within a legal practice regulated by the Solicitors Regulation Authority or where the firm has sought to register more than two delegates.

To book, please visit:

<http://bit.ly/169R1AB>

PII renewal

With this year's PII renewals upon us, members will be considering the best options available to them. It's not too late to obtain a renewals and the following links to the Law Society's advice page on PII, as well as the latest position regarding Berliner, will be useful reading. Details on the Law Society's new Chancery Pii service are also outlined.

PII frequently asked questions

www.lawsociety.org.uk/advice/articles/pii-fags/

The rights and responsibilities of solicitors, brokers and insurers when buying PII

www.lawsociety.org.uk/advice/regulation/pii/guides/

A list of insurers that provided solicitors with PII policies for 2013-14, their financial security rating and the practice sizes and areas that they will receive applications for new business

www.lawsociety.org.uk/advice/regulation/pii/guides/

Berliner policyholders

Firms who were offered PII cover with Berliner have been advised that they need to find alternative cover before 1 October 2013. The SRA has written to firms encouraging them to use the Law Society's PII guides and advice.



www.lawsociety.org.uk/advice/articles/information-for-berliner-policyholders/

Launch of Chancery Pii

Chancery Pii is a fresh approach to solicitors' professional indemnity insurance, created specifically to meet the needs of solicitors in 1-4 partner firms. Chancery Pii was created to address our members' concerns over the risks of unrated insurers, market stability and broker commission. We have created a solution that provides a quick and easy way to access minimum A- (S&P) rated cover for professional indemnity insurance.

www.lawsociety.org.uk/advice/regulation/pii/chancery-pii/

A better way to pay PII premiums

Are you thinking about how you will pay your PII premium? Endorsed by the Law Society, Syscap helps you to manage the cost of your PII premium over the year.



To find out more, visit www.syscap.com/professions/products-and-solutions/professional-indemnity-finance/ or call 0208 254 1950

Revised Legal Aid Proposals

In September Lord Chancellor Chris Grayling announced a second consultation on the legal aid proposals, with considerable changes. Price-competitive tendering (where work would go to the lowest bidder) has been dropped, meaning that any law firm will be able to offer legal aid work, provided they meet quality standards. This is a much better outcome for all concerned. In addition, people receiving legal aid will remain able to choose their solicitor.

The Law Society has been heavily involved in influencing the proposals, and whilst not universally popular we feel they offer advantages for the majority of our members in this area.

Speaking to The Gazette, chief executive Des Hudson outlines our opposition to planned fee cuts, why the Law Society's agreement is the best available package, and what it is doing to help members prepare and adapt to better meet future challenges.

www.lawgazette.co.uk/analysis/comment-and-opinion/criminal-legal-aid-what-now/5037808.article

The result is not perfect and under the new proposals fees for criminal legal aid will be cut by 17.5 per cent by 2015. There will still be changes in the market and the Law Society will continue to support our members and influence government. Read for more information:

www.lawsociety.org.uk/news/stories/revised-legal-aid-proposals-law-society-statement/



Contracts for Duty Work

The publication of 'Transforming Legal Aid: Next Steps' on the 5 September 2013 stated that the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) and the Law Society would commission independent research to determine the number of duty contracts on offer. The Law Society is calling on crime solicitors to respond to an independent survey on the new contracting arrangements for duty work.

We need your views to determine the minimum level of work required - in light of the proposed reductions in fees - to give us assurance that your business can remain viable. With this minimum level of work in mind, we are also interested in how you would propose to structure your business on this basis (ie staffing levels, overheads etc).

www.lawsociety.org.uk/news/stories/contracts-for-duty-work-help-us-build-the-evidence/

Quality Assurance Scheme for Advocates (QASA) begins 30 September

Registration for the first phase of the Quality Assurance Scheme for Advocates (QASA) – the Midlands and Western circuits – started on the 30 September.

From that date, solicitors who are providing advocacy services in courts on those two circuits, are able to start the accreditation process by completing an application form and pay the appropriate fee online through the SRA's website.

The scheme is due to be rolled out in three phases, with the first open through to 7 March 2014. The fees for registration on one of the four levels, progression and reaccreditation, as well as the relevant regulations approved in 2013, can be found at:

www.sra.org.uk/qasa/

The QASA handbook which was recently published can be downloaded from www.qasa.org.uk

The Law Society feels that QASA, which has been devised by the Joint Advocacy Group (JAG—the SRA, Bar Standards Board and ILEX Professional Standards Board), is disproportionate to the nature of any problem in advocacy standards, bureaucratic and burdensome.

Vision for the Future of Regulation

The Law Society has set out a vision for the future of regulation in the response to the Ministry of Justice's call for evidence. We recommend that relatively minor changes could provide a more proportionate regime which retains accountability and builds on the expertise of the profession:

- the burden of regulation on the profession is too high
- setting of standards and authorisation to practise should return to the Law Society



- the current system is too detached from the profession

www.lawsociety.org.uk/representation/policy-discussion/regulation-of-legal-services/

Excellence Awards – shortlist announced

Congratulations to all those shortlisted for this year's Excellence Awards

www.lawsociety.org.uk/Representation/Excellence-awards/Shortlist/

Practice notes

Evaluating diversity as part of the tender process

Read the practice note at:

www.lawsociety.org.uk/advice/articles/evaluating-diversity-as-part-of-the-tender-process/

Variable renewal dates and multi-year policies

Read the practice note at:

www.lawsociety.org.uk/advice/articles/variable-renewal-dates/

Forthcoming JAC Selection Exercises

Visit www.judicialappointments.gov.uk/selection-process/selection-exercises/forthcoming.htm for details of up and coming selection exercises and to subscribe to electronic alerts.

Electronic newsletters and updates – stay up to date

Visit the our newsletters page to subscribe to update bulletins

www.lawsociety.org.uk/news/newsletters/

Professional Update - **top issues from across the profession, every Thursday**

Anti-money Laundering Update - **bi-monthly developments and support for anyone interested in compliance**

International Update - **monthly international legal news and developments**



Legal Aid Update - **regular news and developments in legal aid**

Junior Lawyers Update - **regular updates for students, trainees and junior lawyers**

Gazette Online - **daily updates and breaking news from the Law Society Gazette**

In-house Forum - **latest news and advice for in-house lawyers**

From the President - **weekly updates from the Law Society President**

Sign up to receive Law Society Press releases via e-mail

Stay up to date with what's happening at the Law Society and how this affects our members.

<http://lawsocietymedia.org.uk/maillinglist.aspx>

Report ends. October 2013