

SRA Update

Issue 118 - August 2023

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Welcome to the latest issue of SRA Update. In the news world, August is known as the silly season. There has been nothing silly about the news of some solicitor firms featured in an undercover operation recently. We have acted quickly to protect the interests of the public in this matter, and maintain confidence in the profession, where the vast majority of firms provide quality services and uphold the highest of standards. Also this month, find out about our operational performance during the last business year, look at what the profession has done to keep its skills and knowledge up to date, and find out more about the technological advances being made in the delivery of legal services.

Paul Philip

Chief Executive

[Help at hand on immigration matters](#)

<https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/immigration-work-guidance/>

The role of solicitors in providing immigration services has attracted high profile political and media attention in recent weeks. We produced guidance on this area last year. The guidance looks at issues such as discussing the strengths and weaknesses of the client's case with them, clearly outlining their options, preparing properly for online hearings, and making it easier for clients to feedback or complain.

[Read more about: Help at hand on immigration matters](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/immigration-work-guidance/) [<https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/immigration-work-guidance/>]

[Annual reports outline our operational performance](#)

<https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2023-press-releases/annual-reports-2021-22/>

We have published our latest reports on our operational work during 2021/22. The reports cover areas including education and training, enforcement, approval of new firms and solicitors, and the activity of the compensation fund.



[Read more about: Annual reports outline our operational performance \[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2023-press-releases/annual-reports-2021-22/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2023-press-releases/annual-reports-2021-22/)

[Report captures continuing competence measures \[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/research-publications/annual-assessment-continuing-competence-2023/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/research-publications/annual-assessment-continuing-competence-2023/)

As a solicitor you have an obligation to keep your skills and knowledge up to date so as to provide the proper high standards of service expected. We produce an annual report on how the profession assesses its competence and the steps taken to make sure it maintains these levels.

[Read more about: Report captures continuing competence measures \[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/research-publications/annual-assessment-continuing-competence-2023/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/research-publications/annual-assessment-continuing-competence-2023/)

[Verifying your mySRA account \[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/mysra/updates/verifying-mysra-account/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/mysra/updates/verifying-mysra-account/)

To make your mySRA account more secure, we have introduced an additional verification step. Next time you log in, if you have not already done it, you will need to register a phone number. You will then need to have this phone with you whenever you log in in the future, so that we can send you a code by SMS text or call you to verify your identity.

[Read more about: Verifying your mySRA account \[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/mysra/updates/verifying-mysra-account/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/mysra/updates/verifying-mysra-account/)

[Catch up with the latest on lawtech \[https://publications.sra.org.uk/lawtech-insight-july-2023/\]](https://publications.sra.org.uk/lawtech-insight-july-2023/)

The latest issue of Lawtech Insight is out now. Tech reporter Jane Wakefield explores how the arrival of ChatGPT will transform traditional roles and day-to-day business at law firms. Other news includes how AI has put the most skilled professions at highest risk, how it could be regulated in the future, and its role in the justice systems.

[Read more about: Catch up with the latest on lawtech \[https://publications.sra.org.uk/lawtech-insight-july-2023/\]](https://publications.sra.org.uk/lawtech-insight-july-2023/)

[Hear from tech and innovation experts \[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/events/on-demand-events/innovation-2023/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/events/on-demand-events/innovation-2023/)



Do you want to learn more about how technology and innovation can help your firm and clients, both now and in the future? Hear what experts from across the legal sector, in law firms, from technology providers and from consumer groups had to say on this, and other lawtech issues, at our recent SRA Innovate events.

[Read more about: Hear from tech and innovation experts \[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/events/on-demand-events/innovation-2023/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/events/on-demand-events/innovation-2023/)

Practising certificate renewals 2023/24

[\[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/mysra/updates/practising-certificate-registration-renewals/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/mysra/updates/practising-certificate-registration-renewals/)

Practising certificates and registrations renewals will take place from 1 to 31 October 2023. There are no new questions or changes to what we are asking for. However, we have made enhancements to the applications to improve your experience.

[Read more about: Practising certificate renewals 2023/24 \[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/mysra/updates/practising-certificate-registration-renewals/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/mysra/updates/practising-certificate-registration-renewals/)

Book now for Compliance Conference 2023

[\[https://events.sra.org.uk/sra/643/home\]](https://events.sra.org.uk/sra/643/home)

You can now book your place at our Compliance Officer Conference, taking place at the International Convention Centre, Birmingham, on 18 October. You can get all the usual useful information on the latest position dealing with money laundering, innovation and cybercrime among others.

[Read more about: Book now for Compliance Conference 2023 \[https://events.sra.org.uk/sra/643/home\]](https://events.sra.org.uk/sra/643/home)

Webinar - anti-money laundering

enforcement [\[https://events.sra.org.uk/sra/646/home\]](https://events.sra.org.uk/sra/646/home)

Join our free webinar on Monday 11 September for an insight into trends seen in cases within our AML Investigations Team, where enforcement action has or is being taken for breaches of the money laundering, terrorist financing and financial sanctions regimes. You can also pick up tips on what controls you can put in place to avoid common AML breaches.

[Read more about: Webinar - anti-money laundering enforcement \[https://events.sra.org.uk/sra/646/home\]](https://events.sra.org.uk/sra/646/home)



[Your health, your career](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources-archived/your-health-your-career/) [https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources-archived/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://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources-archived/your-health-your-career/) [https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources-archived/your-health-your-career/]

Welcome to the latest issue of Compliance News. Bookings are now being taken for our Compliance Officers Conference in Birmingham on 18 October. It gets more and more popular as the years go by, so make sure you've secured your place at the sessions that you're most interested in. Find out how to book below. We've also produced an assessment of the risks facing legal services when it comes to keeping money laundering out of the profession. And the continuing cost-of-living crisis could create pressure when it comes to remaining compliant, our latest report highlights these dangers so you can take action to mitigate against them.

Paul Philip

Chief Executive

[Compliance conference 2023 - Bookings open](https://events.sra.org.uk/sra/643/home) [https://events.sra.org.uk/sra/643/home]

You can now book your place at our Compliance Officer Conference, taking place at the International Convention Centre, Birmingham, on 18 October. You can get all the usual useful information on the latest position dealing with money laundering, innovation and cybercrime among others.

[Read more about: Compliance conference 2023 - Bookings open](https://events.sra.org.uk/sra/643/home) [https://events.sra.org.uk/sra/643/home]

[Money laundering sectoral risk assessment](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/research-publications/aml-risk-assessment/) [https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/research-publications/aml-risk-assessment/]

Check you are up-to-date with all the latest developments and legislation regarding money laundering by reading our updated dedicated sectoral risk assessment. It looks at the specific risks and challenges within legal

services, including how some firms do not realise they are captured by the financial sanctions regime.

[Read more about: Money laundering sectoral risk assessment \[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/research-publications/aml-risk-assessment/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/research-publications/aml-risk-assessment/)

[Risk Outlook - remaining compliant in testing times](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/research-publications/regulatory-risk-economic-uncertainty/) [https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/research-publications/regulatory-risk-economic-uncertainty/]

Our latest Risk Outlook report looks at the problems facing law firms and their clients in the current economic downturn. It highlights a number of areas of concern that could lead to the profession failing to deliver the high standards expected. For example, long-standing clients could now be classified as vulnerable because of the cost-of-living crisis. Find out if you are at risk by reading the report.

[Read more about: Risk Outlook - remaining compliant in testing times \[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/research-publications/regulatory-risk-economic-uncertainty/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/research-publications/regulatory-risk-economic-uncertainty/)

[Financial sanctions - simple queries added](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources-archived/money-laundering/guidance-support/aml-questions-answers/) [https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources-archived/money-laundering/guidance-support/aml-questions-answers/]

A question on dealing with the Government's financial sanctions regime has been added to the Q&A section of our anti-money laundering pages. The query – and answer deals with the level of checks you need to undertake, including on counter-parties.

[Read more about: Financial sanctions - simple queries added \[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources-archived/money-laundering/guidance-support/aml-questions-answers/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources-archived/money-laundering/guidance-support/aml-questions-answers/)

[New financial penalties approach now in place](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/financial-penalties/) [https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/financial-penalties/]

Our new approach to issuing financial penalties came into force on 1 June. This includes the introduction of fixed penalties for specific technical breaches of our rules, and linking fines to firm turnover or individual's salaries.

[Read more about: New financial penalties approach now in place \[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/financial-penalties/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/financial-penalties/)



[Law firms offering good standard of support on powers of attorney](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-117-power-of-attorney/) [<https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-117-power-of-attorney/>]

A review into solicitors' work on lasting powers of attorney (LPA) and deputyships has found firms generally offer a good standard of service. Although, with people living longer, there are concerns about how current and future demand can be met.

[Read more about: Law firms offering good standard of support on powers of attorney](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-117-power-of-attorney/) [<https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-117-power-of-attorney/>]

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Editorial comment

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