

SRA Update

Issue 129 - July 2024

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Welcome to the latest issue of SRA Update. In this month's edition, we have details of our Board's decision to regulate Chartered Institute of Legal Executives (CILEX) members, if CILEX decides to re-delegate this to us. Also in this issue, we update on our investigations into solicitors involved in the Post Office Horizon scandal, and separately the fall-out from cavity wall insulation claims brought by the SSB Group.

You can also find out about our consultation on further changes to our financial penalties framework, as well as clarifications around our approach to drink driving convictions. And we provide information on changes we have made to the declarations we require when you renew your authorisation.

Board gives go-ahead for potential CILEX change [\[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2024-press-releases/board-cilex-change/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2024-press-releases/board-cilex-change/)

Our Board has agreed it would regulate Chartered Institute of Legal Executives (CILEX) members, if CILEX decides to re-delegate this to us. If re-delegation went ahead, we would make sure that our rules, processes and communications would maintain the distinct identities of CILEX members and solicitors.

[Read more about: Board gives go-ahead for potential CILEX change](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2024-press-releases/board-cilex-change/)
[\[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2024-press-releases/board-cilex-change/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2024-press-releases/board-cilex-change/)

Consultation on SRA fines and drink driving action [\[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2024-press-releases/financial-penalties-consultation-2024/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2024-press-releases/financial-penalties-consultation-2024/)

We are consulting on potential updates to our approach to issuing financial penalties to law firms and solicitors. Featuring new fining bands for higher level fines, minimum fine levels and providing more detail on how we will consider harm and impact when considering sanctions, the proposals also clarify our approach to disciplinary action in cases related to drink driving.



[Read more about: Consultation on SRA fines and drink driving action \[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2024-press-releases/financial-penalties-consultation-2024/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2024-press-releases/financial-penalties-consultation-2024/)

Update on investigation on Post Office

Horizon [\[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2024-press-releases/post-office-update-2024/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2024-press-releases/post-office-update-2024/)

We have been investigating firms and individuals linked to the Post Office Horizon scandal for a number of years. We have recently provided a further update on the number of firms and individuals we are investigating and the types of issues we are looking at.

[Read more about: Update on investigation on Post Office Horizon \[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2024-press-releases/post-office-update-2024/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2024-press-releases/post-office-update-2024/)

Competence declaration updated in renewals applications [\[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/mysra/updates/bulk-renewal/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/mysra/updates/bulk-renewal/)

Practising certificate and registration renewals will take place from 1 to 31 October 2024. This year, there are no new questions in the renewal application. However, we have reworded the continuing competence declaration to make it even clearer what we expect from you. We have written to your organisational contact an authorised signatory to explain more, and provided information on our website.

[Read more about: Competence declaration updated in renewals applications \[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/mysra/updates/bulk-renewal/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/mysra/updates/bulk-renewal/)

Webinar - qualified lawyers and becoming a solicitor [\[https://events.sra.org.uk/sra/702/home\]](https://events.sra.org.uk/sra/702/home)

Are you an overseas or UK qualified lawyer looking to also qualify a solicitor of England and Wales? Our free webinar gives you the facts on what qualified lawyers will need to do to become a solicitor, including UK and Irish lawyers. It takes place on Thursday 5 September.

[Read more about: Webinar - qualified lawyers and becoming a solicitor \[https://events.sra.org.uk/sra/702/home\]](https://events.sra.org.uk/sra/702/home)

Should you boil an egg in a microwave? **Practical AI tips from firms**



[\[https://publications.sra.org.uk/lawtech-insight-summer-24/\]](https://publications.sra.org.uk/lawtech-insight-summer-24/)

From training lawyers to pricing models, what will be the impacts of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) in the sector? In the latest issue of Lawtech Insight, get practical insights from four firms on how they are using GenAI, how it will change legal services, and how you should use it like a microwave.

[Read more about: Should you boil an egg in a microwave? Practical AI tips from firms \[https://publications.sra.org.uk/lawtech-insight-summer-24/\]](https://publications.sra.org.uk/lawtech-insight-summer-24/)

Innovate on demand: How to adopt new tech and other helpful hints and tips

[\[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/events/on-demand-events/innovation-2024/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/events/on-demand-events/innovation-2024/)

Practical tips on harnessing the power of existing tech, examples of organisations bringing in new tech and the unique challenges of AI facing the profession were all on the agenda at the SRA's Innovate roadshows, held in Manchester and Leicester. Watch back what was said, view supporting presentation, including a keynote address by Microsoft.

[Read more about: Innovate on demand: How to adopt new tech and other helpful hints and tips \[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/events/on-demand-events/innovation-2024/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/events/on-demand-events/innovation-2024/)

Joined up approach needed to tackle ethnicity assessment differences

[\[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2024-press-releases/tackling-ethnicity-gaps-outcomes-assessments/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2024-press-releases/tackling-ethnicity-gaps-outcomes-assessments/)

We are calling on the legal, education and training sectors to work with us to tackle the underlying issues leading to differential outcomes in professional legal assessments by ethnicity. It follows the publication of research we commissioned to understand why candidates from certain ethnic groups perform better than others.

[Read more about: Joined up approach needed to tackle ethnicity assessment differences \[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2024-press-releases/tackling-ethnicity-gaps-outcomes-assessments/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2024-press-releases/tackling-ethnicity-gaps-outcomes-assessments/)

Cavity wall insulation claims handled by SSB Group and Pure Legal Limited

[\[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/ssb-group/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/ssb-group/)



We updated our information regarding our investigation into the SSB Group and clients being pursued to pay costs in relation to failed “no win, no fee” cavity wall insulation (CWI) litigation claims.

[Read more about: Cavity wall insulation claims handled by SSB Group and Pure Legal Limited \[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/ssb-group/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/ssb-group/)

Scam alerts – police your identity

[\[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-127-scam-alerts/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-127-scam-alerts/)

We have warned for many years about identity theft affecting law firms. Criminals routinely take your good name in a bid to trick the public into sharing confidential information or transferring money. We have already seen more than 80 cases of such scams in the first quarter of this year. Find out about recent trends, so you can protect yourself against this.

[Read more about: Scam alerts – police your identity \[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-127-scam-alerts/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-127-scam-alerts/)

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

Welcome to the latest issue of Compliance News. In this edition, you can find out about two new warning notices. One focuses on those involved in mergers or acquisitions of their firm, and the importance of making sure clients’ interests are central to the process. The other reminds firms of their obligations around replacing shortages on the client account.

Firms involved in claims around mis-sold financial products should make sure they understand new rules that come into effect later this month restricting excessive fees. And finally, another reminder that this year’s compliance conference takes place in Birmingham on 5 November. So please put that date in the diary – I look forward to seeing you many of you there.

New rules on fees in financial mis-selling work [\https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-



[129-fee-restriction-rules/](#)

New SRA rules which will restrict excessive fee-charging when firms make compensation claims for mis-sold financial products are to come into effect on 26 July. If your firm represents clients during financial service claims, then from 26 July there are maximum charges in place for claim representation progressed through financial service redress schemes.

[Read more about: New rules on fees in financial mis-selling work](#)
[\[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-129-fee-restriction-rules/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-129-fee-restriction-rules/)

[Make sure clients' interests are central in mergers and acquisitions](#) [\[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2024-press-releases/mergers-acquisitions-warning-notice/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2024-press-releases/mergers-acquisitions-warning-notice/)

Clients' interests must remain paramount during mergers and acquisitions, we have warned. Mergers and acquisitions are legitimate strategies for growth and business resilience. However, we are reminding managers of both buying and selling firms that there are requirements you must adhere to during and after any merger or acquisition.

[Read more about: Make sure clients' interests are central in mergers and acquisitions](#) [\[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2024-press-releases/mergers-acquisitions-warning-notice/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2024-press-releases/mergers-acquisitions-warning-notice/)

[Immediately replace client account shortages, warning notice says](#) [\[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2024-press-releases/client-account-shortage/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2024-press-releases/client-account-shortage/)

We have reminded firms of their duty to replace any shortages on client accounts immediately upon discovery in a new warning notice. Shortages might occur for a number of reasons – such as administrative errors or a cyber-attack - but whatever the cause, you have an obligation to replace immediately any missing money.

[Read more about: Immediately replace client account shortages, warning notice says](#) [\[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2024-press-releases/client-account-shortage/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2024-press-releases/client-account-shortage/)

[Get ready to provide AML information](#) [\[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/firm-anti-money-laundering-sanctions-data-requirements/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/firm-anti-money-laundering-sanctions-data-requirements/)



If your firm is within scope of anti-money laundering (AML) regulations, you need to complete a questionnaire regarding your AML and financial sanctions activity. To help you prepare for this, we have published copies of the questions you will be asked and supporting information on our website.

[Read more about: Get ready to provide AML information \[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/firm-anti-money-laundering-sanctions-data-requirements/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/firm-anti-money-laundering-sanctions-data-requirements/)

Guidance applies to all areas of mass claims [\[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-128-mass-claims/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-128-mass-claims/)

Our warning notice last month focused on mass claims work that involved financial product mis-selling. The warning notice was accompanied by guidance for firms involved in any mass claims work. That guidance highlighted areas where firms could be at risk of falling foul of the rules.

[Read more about: Guidance applies to all areas of mass claims \[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-128-mass-claims/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-128-mass-claims/)

Compliance conference 2024 - save the date [\[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-127-conference-reminder/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-127-conference-reminder/)

This year's Compliance Conference will take place on Tuesday 5 November. As usual, it will be held at the International Convention Centre in Birmingham. The event is open to everyone, not just compliance officers, so if you're interested please hold the date in your diary – bookings will open soon.

[Read more about: Compliance conference 2024 - save the date \[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-127-conference-reminder/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-127-conference-reminder/)

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To ensure we have your current email address, log in to [mySRA](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/mySRA) [\[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/mySRA\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/mySRA) and check your profile.

No subscription request is required.



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