



SRA Update

Issue 128 - June 2024

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In this month's edition, there is the opportunity to have your say on our business plan for next year. In it we aim to continue to deliver our priorities, while responding to new and emerging challenges within the sector. Alongside this, we are consulting on practising fees and compensation fund contributions. We have kept fees stable but are proposing that compensation fund contributions need to rise this year. That is to meet the considerable costs of increasing interventions and claims in the last year. You can get more detail on our thinking, and ask questions, at our webinar on our business plan next week. Please let us know your views by responding to our consultation. Also, this month, we have published an updated warning notice on strategic litigation against public participation (SLAPPs), and research on the issues that are driving differential outcomes in legal assessments by ethnicity. You can also find an update on our work investigating the issues falling out of cavity wall insulations claims handled by the SSB Group and Pure Legal.

Paul Philip

Chief Executive

[Have your say on our business plan, budget and proposed fees](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2024-press-releases/business-plan-fees-consultation-2024/) [https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2024-press-releases/business-plan-fees-consultation-2024/]

Have your say on our plans for the coming year by taking part in our 2024-25 Business Plan consultation. As well as outlining our planned activities for the year ahead, the consultation also outlines how we intend to allocate our budget and what that means for our part of the practising certificate fee. It also covers the proposed rise in compensation fund contributions for next year.

[Read more about: Have your say on our business plan, budget and proposed fees](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2024-press-releases/business-plan-fees-consultation-2024/) [https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2024-press-releases/business-plan-fees-consultation-2024/]

[Webinar - find out more about our business plan and compensation fund rises](https://events.sra.org.uk/sra/671/home) [https://events.sra.org.uk/sra/671/home]



Find out more about our priorities for the year ahead at our free webinar on 12 June. Join Liz Rosser, our Executive Director for Operation and Resources, and Policy Associate Richard Silver to learn about the key pieces of work we plan to deliver next year. We will also discuss our proposed budget, and rise in compensation fund contributions, with the opportunity for you to ask questions.

[Read more about: Webinar – find out more about our business plan and compensation fund rises \[https://events.sra.org.uk/sra/671/home\]](https://events.sra.org.uk/sra/671/home)

Exeter research challenges sector to work together 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 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: Exeter research challenges sector to work together 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/)

First-tier complaints information [\[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/research-publications/first-tier-complaints-2023/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/research-publications/first-tier-complaints-2023/)

You have a duty to provide a good standard of service, and complaints are an important indicator of service quality. We ask you to tell us the number of complaints you receive, and we report on the aggregate findings to help raise awareness of ways to reduce them.



[Read more about: First-tier complaints information \[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/research-publications/first-tier-complaints-2023/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/research-publications/first-tier-complaints-2023/)

Generative AI and its impact on legal sector [\[https://youtu.be/7kD7MAcTGQU?si=Su3vP_orlKhhTYkf\]](https://youtu.be/7kD7MAcTGQU?si=Su3vP_orlKhhTYkf)

OpenAI unveiled the next generation of its GPT tool last month, marking a significant leap in generative AI. But what exactly is AI? From next generation concepts to more mundane day-to-day applications, many of you may already be using AI without even knowing it. Our ten-minute video introduction to AI in the legal profession has more.

[Read more about: Generative AI and its impact on legal sector \[https://youtu.be/7kD7MAcTGQU?si=Su3vP_orlKhhTYkf\]](https://youtu.be/7kD7MAcTGQU?si=Su3vP_orlKhhTYkf)

SRA Limited report 2022/23 published [\[https://publications.sra.org.uk/sra-ltd-summary-report-202223-v2/\]](https://publications.sra.org.uk/sra-ltd-summary-report-202223-v2/)

We have published our annual report and accounts – the second full year report of us operating as SRA Ltd. It includes details of how we delivered against our strategic priorities, and financial reports for the year. As well as the full report, we have also published the headlines for the year.

[Read more about: SRA Limited report 2022/23 published \[https://publications.sra.org.uk/sra-ltd-summary-report-202223-v2/\]](https://publications.sra.org.uk/sra-ltd-summary-report-202223-v2/)

Join us at our event to get practical tips on innovating [\[https://www.eventsforce.net/sra/677/home\]](https://www.eventsforce.net/sra/677/home)

Find out about the latest lawtech at our next Innovate taking place at the National Space Centre in Leicester in June. Get exclusive insights and valuable advice about maximising the tech you have already, tips on new ways of working, and the opportunities and pitfalls of adopting AI.

[Read more about: Join us at our event to get practical tips on innovating. \[https://www.eventsforce.net/sra/677/home\]](https://www.eventsforce.net/sra/677/home)

Meet our senior team [\[https://www.eventsforce.net/sra/686/home\]](https://www.eventsforce.net/sra/686/home)

Join us for an informal roundtable and networking event with senior members of our team in Leicester on 19 June. The tea-time sessions will give you the chance to tell us about the key issues you face on a day-to-day basis, feedback and ask questions about our regulatory approach.



[Read more about: Meet our senior team](https://www.eventsforce.net/sra/686/home)
[<https://www.eventsforce.net/sra/686/home>]

Researchers and our corporate strategy

[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/corporate-strategy/#collapse_f008]

Some of you might be contacted by Thinks, a research company carrying out a study for us on our work and delivering our corporate strategy. The survey will explore your views on progress against our mission to drive trust and confidence in legal services. If asked to take part, responses will be treated confidentially and data reported at aggregate level, meaning it will not be personally identifiable to you.

[Read more about: Researchers and our corporate strategy](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/corporate-strategy/#collapse_f008) [https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/corporate-strategy/#collapse_f008]

Catch-up on our QWE webinar [<https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/events/on-demand-events/qwe-basics/>]

Did you miss our webinar on what on-the-job training is needed to qualify as a solicitor through the SQE route? You can catch up on all things Qualifying Work Experience through our on-demand webinar. That includes what counts as QWE and what doesn't, how a candidate records their QWE, and how a solicitor confirms QWE and what they're confirming.

[Read more about: Catch-up on our QWE webinar](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/events/on-demand-events/qwe-basics/) [<https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/events/on-demand-events/qwe-basics/>]

Share your thoughts on protection for clients

[<https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2024-press-releases/consumer-protection-review-launched/>]

We want to hear your thoughts on our review of consumer protection arrangements in response to shifting risks in the sector. The review focuses on how to reduce the risk of something going wrong at a law firm, while finding the right balance between protections and potential impact on the cost of legal services. Included in this review is consideration of compensation fund arrangements.

[Read more about: Share your thoughts on protection for clients](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2024-press-releases/consumer-protection-review-launched/)
[<https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2024-press-releases/consumer-protection-review-launched/>]



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 [\[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources-archived/your-health-your-career/\]](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. We have updated our warning notice on strategic litigation against public participation (SLAPPs) to incorporate the findings from a range of work: our thematic review, our investigations, and engagement with those involved in reputation management and media work. The warning notice includes information on caselaw and making sure representing your client's interests does not override your other duties and obligations. Last month we published a warning notice on financial product mis-selling claims. This month we highlight our guidance on mass claims work in general. And just a 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.

Paul Philip

Chief Executive

SLAPPs – warning notice update [\[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2024-press-releases/updated-slapps-warning-notice-2024/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2024-press-releases/updated-slapps-warning-notice-2024/)



Although firms must seek to represent a client's best interest, that should never cross the line into abusing the legal process or over-riding a solicitor's duty as an officer of the court. We have updated our warning notice on strategic litigation against publication participation (SLAPPs) to help those who conduct litigation and who give dispute resolution and pre-action advice to make sure they understand their duties and recognise red flags when it comes to clients' instructions.

[Read more about: SLAPPs – warning notice update \[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2024-press-releases/updated-slapps-warning-notice-2024/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/2024-press-releases/updated-slapps-warning-notice-2024/)

New guidance on mass compensation 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: New guidance on mass compensation 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/)

Anti-money laundering: Get the basics right [\[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/home/hot-topics/anti-money-laundering-get-the-basics-right/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/home/hot-topics/anti-money-laundering-get-the-basics-right/)

We want to help solicitors and law firms stop criminals using the profession to launder money. We've published a brand-new hot topic on getting the basics right, from guidance on whether your firm is in scope, to the documentation firms are required to have in place.

[Read more about: Anti-money laundering: Get the basics right \[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/home/hot-topics/anti-money-laundering-get-the-basics-right/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/home/hot-topics/anti-money-laundering-get-the-basics-right/)

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/]

New legal services general licence

[\[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-127-new-ofsi-licence/\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-127-new-ofsi-licence/)

The Office of Financial Sanctions Implementation has issued a new legal services general licence. This allows those working for those designated under the sanctions regime to receive payment, as long as they adhere to certain terms. The new licence was issued at the end of last month.

[Read more about: New legal services general licence](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-127-new-ofsi-licence/) [https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/sra-update-127-new-ofsi-licence/]

Watch-again – your AML questions

answered [https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/events/on-demand-events/aml-qa-2024/]

Catch up with our latest anti-money laundering webinar, where we answered the questions you ask us the most. Source of funds, client due diligence and assessing risk are all covered by our experts, along with other queries raised as the session progressed.

[Read more about: Watch-again – your AML questions answered](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/events/on-demand-events/aml-qa-2024/)
[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/sra/news/events/on-demand-events/aml-qa-2024/]

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