

SRA BOARD
13 July 2016

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Chief Executive's Report

Purpose

- 1 This report sets out progress against our strategic objectives and provides an update on operational performance.
 - Section 1: reports on our priorities and progress against the 2015/16 Business Plan.
 - Section 2: provides an update on operational performance.
 - Section 3: provides details on publication and engagement activity.

If you have any questions about this paper please contact: Paul Philip, Chief Executive, paul.philip@sra.org.uk, 0121 329 6940.

Chief Executive's Report

Section 1: Priorities for 2015/16

- 2 This section provides an update focusing on developments and progress against our 2015/16 Business Plan.

Progress against our 2015/16 Business Plan

- 3 We are making good progress in the work undertaken to achieve the objectives set in our Business Plan. Below, I provide detail of our programme and highlight areas of development and points to note.

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| Objective 1: We will reform our regulation to enable growth and innovation in the market and to strike the right balance between reducing regulatory burdens and ensuring consumer protection | On track |
|--|-----------------|

Looking to the Future

- 4 We are continuing our programme of engagement through a series of consultation events around the country, combined with online resources to help people engage with the proposals. We are also working closely with other networks, for example on the Accounts Rules we are working with regional Compliance Officer for Finance and Administration (COFA) groups and the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW) to understand the views of their members. This activity will continue throughout the 16-week consultation period. We have also undertaken consumer focus groups to gain views about our proposals and understand the type and format of information that will best help them make choices between different types of consumers.
- 5 We have started work on phase two of the Handbook review to simplify regulatory arrangements more widely than the Codes of Conduct and we will be discussing this in detail with the Policy Committee over the coming months.

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| Objective 2: We will work with solicitors and firms to raise standards and uphold core professional principles | On track |
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Training for Tomorrow - Equivalent means

- 6 As at 22 June 2016, the following numbers of equivalent means applications had been received since 01/07/2014, when the new regulations came into force.

Training for Tomorrow - Continuing Competence

- 7 We continue to work to raise awareness of the introduction of the new approach to continuing competence on 1 November 2016. Three events have been run in Cardiff, Manchester and Birmingham with a combined total of more than 150 attendees. We have run a webinar, aimed at solicitors and law firms, on the new approach. This had 600 attendees and more than 150 views on demand on our website. We are running five bite-size seminars on Twitter via Periscope throughout June and July 2016. There have been 750 views of the two sessions already broadcast. We will be holding a specific webinar for members of local law societies on 29 June 2016 focusing on the new approach and how it can work alongside their existing training programmes. There is an ongoing social media campaign promoting the toolkit, resources, case studies, videos and how to adopt the new approach and there will be an SRA update article in the upcoming June e-news.

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| <p>Objective 3: We will improve our operational performance and make justifiable decisions promptly, effectively and efficiently</p> | <p>On track</p> |
|---|------------------------|

Revocations

- 8 The Revocation process continues to progress well and is ahead of schedule. We have now resolved all but eight of the 103 firms referred to Supervision this year because they did not submit an annual return for Practising Certificate Renewal Exercise (PCRE) or pay their periodic fee. Of these eight, we have issued notices of revocation to six firms and are monitoring them to ensure an orderly closure. We have asked for information from the further two firms and will issue notices of revocation to them if required. We expect this project to conclude in July 2016, three months ahead of schedule.

Practising Certificate Renewal Exercise (PCRE)

- 9 Preparation continues for the 2016/17 PCRE. This includes improvements to the current system to support customers who have forgotten their login details: the intention is to create an automated process where possible. In 2015 13,000 calls were received regarding customers forgetting their login details. All of the renewal forms have also been reviewed to ensure that the language used is in line with the communication strategy of "writing the SRA way".

Objective 4: We will work with our stakeholders to improve the quality of our services and their experience when using them

**On
track**

10 Overall we are on track to achieve our 4 objectives.

Section 2: Operational Performance

KPIs

11 We continued to make good progress against our key disciplinary proceedings target by achieving 91% against the 90% target.

Section 3: Publications and Engagement Activity

Diversity data

12 We published the findings from the latest survey of law firms showing that although the legal sector is increasingly diverse, more still needs to be done. Firms have access to the data through a comparison tool on the SRA website and new information and resources were made available to help them promote diversity.

Wellbeing

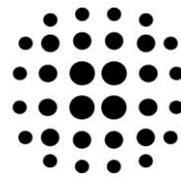
13 We launched our wellbeing campaign on 19 May 2016 ('Your Health, Your Career') during Mental Health Awareness week. The aim of the campaign is to encourage solicitors who are experiencing health and wellbeing problems affecting their work to talk to the SRA early so we can help them manage any regulatory problems.

14 We attended the first meeting of the Professional Wellbeing Taskforce set up by LawCare and the Law Society, which aims to identify how best the legal community can work together to promote and support wellbeing and mental health.

15 We had a really successful and enjoyable day at Pride in Birmingham on 28 May 2016, sending a really clear message of support to our staff and others in the legal sector. We followed this up by sharing an open topped bus at London Pride on 25 June 2016 with other legal regulators including the Bar Standards Board and the Legal Services Board's Consumer Panel.

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13 July 2016

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Public – Item 5

**Solicitors
Regulation
Authority**

| | |
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| Author | Paul Philip, Chief Executive |
| Date | 24 June 2016 |
| Annexes: | |
| Annex 1 | Training for Tomorrow - Equivalent means |

SRA Board
1 June 2016

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Training for Tomorrow - Equivalent means

| EQ App 22.06.16 | Received | Granted | Refused | Withdrawn | Work in progress | Unallocated |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| Common Professional examination | 104 | 50 | 23 | 22 | 9 | 0 |
| CPE for non graduates | 36 | 27 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 |
| Legal Practice Course | 13 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 4 | 0 |
| Period of Recognised Training | 145 | 60 | 16 | 15 | 54 | 0 |
| Professional Skills Course | 7 | 3 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| Morgenbesser | 3 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 |