

# plan

for complaints handling 2008-09

Issue v 2.1



The independent regulatory body  
of the Law Society of England and Wales



An independent, responsive  
Legal Complaints service of quality

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## INTRODUCTION

There are currently around 120,000 solicitors registered in England and Wales. Whilst the vast majority of their work is conducted well, there are a small proportion of cases where the clients, or other parties involved, are not fully satisfied either about the service provided by, or the conduct of, the solicitor. In the first instance these concerns are dealt with directly with the firm concerned, but if not satisfactorily resolved, the complainant comes to the Legal Complaints Service (LCS) or the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA). At present a total of around 18,000 complaints are received each year.

Two years ago, the Law Society (TLS) separated its role as representative body for solicitors from its regulatory role by establishing two organisations with independent Boards, the LCS and SRA, to which it delegated its regulatory powers and functions including complaints handling.

### Legal Complaints Service

Complaints handling is now the prime purpose of the LCS. LCS resolves complaints from consumers about their solicitors which may require redress (for example, complaints about solicitors' fees, failure to follow direction or delays in communication), and will also refer allegations of misconduct to the SRA. As part of its longer-term strategy, it also wishes to reach out to the profession, supporting solicitors to reduce the likelihood of complaints. Its plan is also to provide feedback to the profession by publishing the number and type of complaints handled by the LCS - this published information will also help consumers of legal services to make a more informed choice when contracting with a solicitor.

As a result of the expected advent of the Office for Legal Complaints (OLC) in 2010 (a newly created independent body for all legal complaints handling), the LCS will also be undertaking work to ensure the organisation is in the best possible position to migrate complaints handling to the OLC.

### Solicitors Regulation Authority

The SRA regulates the profession in the public interest. It is a risk-based regulator not a complaints handling organisation. It deals with concerns raised about the professional conduct (behaviour) of solicitors from three main sources - from people making reports who are not clients of the solicitor concerned; from organisations and individuals who are making those reports from a professional or public duty; and from reports referred from the LCS arising out of investigations into poor service. The SRA can impose sanctions upon solicitors, or prosecute cases before the Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal, which has the power to strike solicitors off the solicitors' roll.

### The Law Society

Whilst TLS retains overall legal responsibility for the way in which regulatory functions are discharged, the Law Society has delegated to the Boards of the LCS and the SRA all the Law Society's regulatory functions, save for the making of rules. Although appointed by the Law Society, the two Regulatory Boards both operate entirely independently of the Society. They have full delegated authority both for all casework and for decisions on regulatory policy. The Law Society Council has not retained any concurrent jurisdiction to deal with those issues.

The Law Society retains some responsibilities that are relevant to the way in which the LCS and SRA Boards carry out their role. In the first place, it is the Law Society Council that approves the overall budget for these Regulatory Boards. The Boards are free to reassign expenditure within the budget settled by the Council. Furthermore, some support services for the two organisations - as well as for the Law Society's representation work - are provided on a central service basis.

In its scrutiny role, the Law Society receives each month the reports provided by LCS and SRA to the Legal Services Complaints Commissioner (the Commissioner) about performance of both regulatory arms. The Law Society staff raise with senior staff of the relevant Board any areas where it appears that performance is falling short of the targets agreed with the Commissioner, and seek assurance that any necessary measures to get back on track are in place. The reports provided to the Commissioner are routinely circulated to the Law Society's Management Board, so that that Board also can identify any areas of concern and seek appropriate assurance from the Chair and Chief Executive of the Regulatory Bodies, who attend for part of almost every Management Board meeting. The Law Society is anxious to ensure that its own scrutiny role adds value, rather than

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merely adding costs. That is why they rely primarily on the reports that LCS and SRA already provide for the Commissioner as the basis for scrutiny of performance. They are satisfied that this represents a proportionate approach to the task.

The Law Society recognises that it is important to help solicitors deal with clients in such a way as to minimise the likelihood of complaints arising, and to deal sympathetically and effectively with any complaints that nevertheless arise. The Law Society's Lexcel scheme recognises firms that have excellent practice management, including in relation to dealing with clients. The Law Society is also in the early stages of working with LCS to identify areas that most frequently go wrong in the solicitor client relationship, with a view to providing increased practical help for solicitors to deal with their clients more effectively.

### The Legal Services Complaints Commissioner

In accordance with section 52(2)(c) and 52(2)(d) of the Access to Justice Act 1999, the Commissioner sets targets and makes recommendations intended to help us towards the effective and efficient handling of complaints for the period 1 April 2008 to 31 March 2009.

The Commissioner has stated her four priority areas for complaints handling as:

1. Speed of complaints handling
2. Fairness of outcome
3. Value for money
4. Cost efficiency of complaints handling

At the end of the Plan year the Commissioner will review our performance, taking into account various factors, including:

- our performance against the targets
- our handling of her recommendations
- our achievement of business improvement

Progress against the Plan, targets and supporting KPIs for each month will be sent to the Commissioner's office on the 17<sup>th</sup> of each month - unless varied by agreement with the Commissioner. The Targets that are not directly measurable (Q1 and T2) will be assessed by internal audit and reported quarterly. In addition, quarterly reports will be sent for each of the 4 quarters in the Plan year.

The Commissioner has issued agreed Counting Rule definitions, and the targets in this Plan are based on the revised interim rules issued on 11 March 2008.

### The Plan

The legal responsibility for submission of a Complaints Handling Plan to the Commissioner under section 52(2)(e) of the Access to Justice Act 1999 remains with the corporate Law Society, so in law this is the Society's Plan. However, for operational reasons TLS regards the LCS and the SRA to whom the responsibilities have been delegated as the owners of the Plan, and responsible for its delivery. This is now the fourth Complaints Handling Plan submitted by TLS, and the second to be created by the LCS and the SRA. The Chief Executives of the LCS and SRA are authorised to submit this Plan for and on behalf of TLS.

This Plan covers the handling of complaints within the LCS and SRA for the period 1 April 2008 to 31 March 2009. It explains the priorities we have set ourselves for complaints handling over the next Plan year and addresses issues raised by our external regulator the Commissioner, the Legal Services Ombudsman (LSO), other stakeholders and our own internal audit function.

Version 2.1 of this Plan is issued to incorporate corrections to the previous issue, clarifications and some updated targets following discussion of version 2.0 with the Commissioner.

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### Target Summary

In total, the Commissioner set 12 targets for 2008/9 under her four priorities. The first 11 are:

Strategic Priority	Targets for 2008/09
SP1 Building on, and maintaining the improvement in the timeliness of handling complaints.	<p>T1 All LCS complaints from the date of receipt to take no longer than 12 months to investigate and conclude, apart from in exceptional circumstances.</p> <p>T2 LCS to refer to SRA within 3 months of receipt all matters of misconduct identifiable at that time.</p> <p>T3 All SRA complaints from the date of receipt to take no longer than 12 months to investigate and conclude, apart from exceptional circumstances.</p> <p>T4 All SRA cases where there is a referral to SDT, from the date of receipt to take no longer than 18 months to investigate and conclude, prepare fully, and lodge with SDT, apart from in exceptional circumstances.</p>
SP2 Improving the outcome of decisions on complaints.	<p>Q1 In 90% of closed complaints, LCS to achieve a fair and reasonable outcome with no significant case failings.</p> <p>Q2 In 90% of closed complaints, SRA to achieve a fair and reasonable outcome with no significant case failings.</p> <p>Q3 78% or more of referrals to the LSO in which the LSO upholds the handling of the case by LCS.</p>
SP3 Successful Implementation by TLS, LCS and SRA of their improvement Plan for complaints handling.	<p>P1 Priority initiatives to support the delivery of TLS's 2008/09 complaints handling Plan are delivered to time and cost in accordance with the Plan, and meet all related milestones and benefits to be realised.</p> <p>P2 Within the Plan year 2008/09 to meet their delegated statutory Public Duty, LCS and SRA to comply with TLS's Public Duty requirements on Equality and Diversity (E&amp;D) including addressing all recommendations made in the LCS E&amp;D audit report May 2007 and the SRA E&amp;D audit report October 2007.</p>
SP4 Improving cost efficiency in the handling of complaints.	<p>C1 LCS to achieve for the plan year 2008/09 a unit cost efficiency saving against its 2007/08 costs of £2,036 achieving a reduction in the average unit cost per complaint to £1,952.</p> <p>C2 SRA to deliver during the Plan year a 5% efficiency in caseworker productivity.</p>

In addition, LCS have set two further Business targets:

Business Area	Target
Informing the Customer	S1 We will ensure at least 80% of our Customers are satisfied with our service.
Coal Health Compensation Scheme	<p>M1 For cases received after 1 February 2008, we will fully investigate the case and inform the customer, in at least 93% of cases, of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adjudication as an option to conciliation</li> <li>• The seriousness category of their complaint and the likely size of award at adjudication</li> <li>• The amount of distress and inconvenience likely to be due in addition to any financial loss.</li> </ul>

The M1 target was subsequently accepted and formally set by the Commissioner as her 12<sup>th</sup> target.

## SECTION 1 - THE LEGAL COMPLAINTS SERVICE

### Receipts

*In 2008/09 we expect to receive this many new complaints*

Received Complaints	Actual - April 2006 to March 2007	Latest Prediction - April 2007 to March 2008	Forecast - April 2008 to March 2009
General (i.e. all apart from Coal Health)	12,893	12,849	13,151
Coal Health	518	1,623	500*
TOTAL Service Complaints	13,411	14,472	13,651
Complaints initiated and referred to SRA	4,917	5,012	5,000
Written Enquiries	6,121	5,899	6,100
Helpline Calls	75,435	71,208	75,400
Others	553	503	500

\* The increased work arising from the Coal Health Compensation Scheme has been as a direct result of specific awareness raising activities over the past year. Resourcing of future CHCS work will therefore be assessed separately when the size of further work is known. The 500 cases forecast represent the base level of work without further awareness raising.

Receipts of new work during 2007/8 have been reasonably stable compared with the previous year, apart from those arising from specific issues such as Coal Health Compensation. We therefore forecast a modest increase in general complaints of 2% on the actual level seen in 2006/7. All other incoming work we forecast to be similar to the 2006/7 actual levels.

This new work will be in addition to the ongoing work (Work In Progress, or WIP) that we will already be progressing at the start of the Plan year:

Consumer Complaints	WIP Forecast for 1 April 2008	Total available workload in year 2008/9
General (i.e. all apart from Coal Health)	2,976	16,127
Coal Health	600	1,100
TOTAL Complaints	3,576	17,227
Complaints initiated and referred to SRA	0	5,000
Written Enquiries	397	6,497

## Targets

### *We will handle this work in such a way as to meet stretching targets*

In order to ensure that we provide a good service to consumers of legal services and the profession, we have identified the four key business priorities for our complaints handling:

- Getting the Right Answer
- Doing it Quickly
- Informing the Customer
- Providing Value for Money

Our business targets are therefore based on these priorities. The four priorities can be assessed by a range of measures, designed to show how well we are performing against various aspects of each priority. For vital measures we have set a target level to be achieved, which will ensure we deliver a good level of performance (with improvement from existing levels where necessary).

#### Target Summary for 2008/9

Target	Actual Performance 06/07	Forecast 07/08	Target 08/09
<b>Getting the Right Answer</b>			
Q1 We will achieve a reasonable outcome and service, without significant failings, on at least 90% of cases closed.	n/a	75% (2007 audit)	90%
Q3 The LSO will support our handling of the complaint in at least 78% of the cases referred.	66%	66%	78%
<b>Doing it Quickly</b>			
T1 We will investigate and resolve all complaints within 12 months of receipt, apart from in exceptional circumstances.	92%	98%	100%
T2 We will refer to the SRA within 3 months of receipt all necessary cases identifiable at that time.	n/a	n/a	100%
<b>Informing the Customer</b>			
S1 We will ensure at least 80% of our Customers are satisfied with our service. (LCS Business Target - not assessed by LSCC)	79%	83%	80%
M1 For cases received after 1 February 2008, we will fully investigate the case and inform the customer, in at least 93% of cases, of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adjudication as an option to conciliation</li> <li>• The seriousness category of their complaint</li> <li>• The likely amount of compensation</li> </ul>	n/a	90%	93%
<b>Providing Value for Money</b>			
C1 We will reduce the cost index of our service by 6% in real terms (compared with 2007 actual costs).	n/a	2046.09 (2007)	2017.74
P1 We will deliver initiatives as required to achieve the business improvement outcomes identified in this Plan.	n/a	n/a	100%

These targets and how we will achieve them is explained in more detail below. Full definitions of the measurement of these targets are in Appendix 2.

Other measures are used as Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). Whilst these are not targets to be achieved, they are useful monitors of our performance over a wider breadth than the targets. The KPIs are summarised in Appendix 3 of this Plan.

## GETTING THE RIGHT ANSWER

### Q1 - Achieving Reasonable Outcome and Service

We will achieve a reasonable outcome and service, without significant failings, on at least 90% of cases closed.

Following our significant improvement in our process quality during the 2007/8 Plan year, we are introducing a new target to reflect the overall level of service our customers receive.

The Commissioner's audit team has previously used a measure of 26 separate aspects of casework to give a combined assessment of

- fair and reasonable outcome
- good customer service, and
- good administrative handling of the casefile.

In the audit in 2007 we only scored 75% against this combined measure. Analysis of the results has shown us that the major contributor (9%) was administrative delay, and we have been improving our processes to reduce this. We therefore expect to now score 84% against this measure. The measure is now being finalised and will be in full use from the start of the Plan year. It will then compile useful feedback during the first quarter and this will inform further quality improvement during the second quarter, so we can commit to achieve average performance of

- 85% from 1 July to 30 September 2008, and
- 90% from 1 October 2008 to 31 March 2009.

### Q3 - LSO Index

The LSO will support our handling of the complaint in at least 78% of the cases referred.

After closure of a complaint, around 7% of our customers ask the LSO to review the case as they are not satisfied either with the outcome or our handling of it. The LSO considers the case and then reports to us her findings, and over the last year the LSO reports have upheld 66% of our cases considered (against the LCS objective of 72%). This feedback can therefore be very useful in further improving our service, so that fewer customers find the need to refer to the Ombudsman.

In 2007 we commissioned an external audit of the LSO reviews, and also analysed the reasons for our under-performance against this target. This work recommended that we can significantly improve our performance against this measure by:

- Agreeing clearer reports from the LSO to facilitate full use of the feedback
- Identifying which reports actually indicate poor service to the customer
- Encouraging the LSO to allow complainants to go through our internal complaints process before considering the cases herself.

It also revealed that the reports generally relate to events occurring many months earlier. This implies that any changes will take several months to effect any improvement in this measure, and this target is structured accordingly.

We will pursue these issues to improve our performance, but recognise that success in this improvement will be conditional on the LSO agreeing to the changes required.

The time lag from event to report indicates it will typically take 9 months for the improvements to show. We will seek to make the changes as soon as possible (we are meeting to discuss these with the Ombudsman in March), so that, if agreed, we can achieve the target level of

- 78% over the last 3 months 1 January to 31 March 2009.

The consistent use of LSO feedback to inform future improvements is planned for the start of the Plan year.

## DOING IT QUICKLY

### T1 - Closures within 12 months

We will investigate and resolve all complaints within 12 months of receipt, apart from in exceptional circumstances.

Over the past year we have continued to improve our speed of case closure, now resolving around 65% of cases within 3 months, and so performing better than comparable benchmark organisations. We are pleased that the Commissioner recognises our strong improvement in this timeliness, such that she no longer requires a 3 month closure target.

Also, we have reduced the number of cases taking over 12 months to resolve. Currently 15 cases roll over this age each month (less than 1% of monthly receipts) and we are steadily reducing this number. However, there will always be the occasional case where it is in the customer's interest to continue beyond 12 months to ensure a fair and reasonable outcome, and the appropriateness of these will be assessed as explained in Appendix 2.

We predict that at 1 April 2008 there will be around 70 cases already between 10 and 12 months old, and we cannot be certain that none would roll over the 12 months. We require 3 months to ensure cases are managed so as to avoid going over 12 months, so we commit to this target, starting from 1 July 2008.

To assist achievement of this target we will bring the existing workflow check on all files remaining open at 9 months forward to 6 months, also using any generic findings to improve our case management processes and/or individual performance as required.

### T2 - Referrals to SRA

We will refer to the SRA within 3 months of receipt all necessary cases identifiable at that time.

Each year we receive around 5,000 complaints which require referral to the SRA. This is due to receiving evidence of possible misconduct which exceeds the 'Threshold Test' set by the SRA (minor misconduct issues are handled within the LCS). Over 90% of these are identified and referred within a few days of arrival; others only become apparent later on during our investigation. Whilst we do not 'dig' for possible misconduct we do want to ensure that any items that are evident are identified and referred as soon as possible, to enable SRA to maintain balanced, risk-based regulation. For that reason, all referrals are made as soon as the need is realised, and currently over 95% of referrals occur within 3 months of a case being received.

To assist achievement of this target we will improve our information gathering and review process, particularly in the early stages of handling a complaint.

## INFORMING THE CUSTOMER

### S1 - Customer Satisfaction with our Service (Business Target, not required by the Commissioner)

We will ensure at least 80% of our Customers are satisfied with our service.

As a consumer service, it is vital that we take account of our customer voice. It is very important to capture, and respond to, the feedback from our customers, so that we can ensure we are delivering a service that truly meets their needs. This approach is strongly supported by the main consumer bodies that have contributed to our target development this year.

Our current performance against this measure is 83% over the past 12 months. National consumer bodies have commented that this is already very good in this field and higher than comparable organisations. We intend to maintain this very high standard whilst we make improvements in other areas such as cost efficiency.

### M1 - Miners' (Coal Health Compensation Scheme) Complaints

This target is covered in the Coal Health Compensation Scheme section later in this Plan.

## PROVIDING VALUE FOR MONEY

### C1 - Cost Index

**We will reduce the cost index of our service by 6% in real terms.**

We are committed to providing a value for money service, and will make real reductions in our unit costs throughout the next three years. Early signs are good, with the total 2008 budget being only 2.9% higher than the 2007 actual spend, having partly absorbed a 5.2% increase in staffing pay costs. This already represents a real reduction in costs from 2007. We intend to deliver further reductions to absorb the pay increases next year and control the service cost over time. In addition to this, we will increase the unit cost efficiency of LCS by 5% during this Plan year.

To represent the service costs of the volume of work handled it is possible to calculate a 'cost per case' value. However, we provide a number of services in addition to the core handling of complaints, so such a measure does not fully represent the overall business. Dividing the total net service cost by the total number of complaints closed during the year does provide a simple indicator to measure overall increasing efficiency, provided this is recognised purely to be a Cost Index, and not the true cost per case.

The phrase 'in real terms' recognises that certain elements outside of LCS's direct control influence the overall cost of the service e.g. inflation and pan-Law Society pay settlements that were decided before the start of the Plan year. The method of determining the target level is therefore to take the 2007 baseline, uplift it for these set increases for 2008 and part of 2009, then reduce that figure by 6%.

The cost reductions will take place during the year, but some cannot be instantaneous; changing the balance of operational to support staff for example requires appropriate review processes to be gone through. The full effectiveness of our cost reduction programme will therefore only be seen by the end of the Plan year, but we are sufficiently confident of our ability to make early changes to commit to this improvement for the current Plan year.

To assist achievement of this target we will introduce a number of specific changes, including:

- adjusting the balance of caseworking to support staff to increase capacity and improve the overall cost efficiency (at present we have identified the need to convert around 12 FTE from support to caseworking),
- developing a 3 year plan to further review roles and functions in the run up to the OLC
- reviewing the use of outsourcing for non-caseworking activities, and
- closely managing the resource used to support other areas, including outsourcing firms, LCOs and the Commissioner's Office, to make the best use of the resources available.

### P1 - Delivering Improvement

**We will deliver initiatives as required to achieve the business improvement outcomes identified in this Plan.**

We have launched improvement programmes to deliver our strategic objectives, as outlined in the next section. At this stage, the ultimate benefits, which will mainly be realised longer-term, are not all quantifiable and so cannot be used to measure our success. Instead, we have identified, where relevant, tangible outcomes to be achieved over the next year.

## Business Improvement Agenda

### *At the same time we will introduce further improvements*

Our improvements for the Plan year 2008/9 are drawn from:

- Improvement Agenda items prioritised by our Board
- Internal improvements driven by the strong management vision
- Performance Targets and Recommendations set by the Commissioner
- External feedback from Consumer bodies and comparative complaints handling organisations.

Our 3-year Improvement Agenda was developed in 2007 by the Board of the LCS in consultation with our key stakeholders: It set out a 'Blueprint' for what LCS should be like in the future and contained three strategic objectives to working towards by 2010. These objectives are:

#### **1. Improve our services**

We aim to improve our services and the way we respond to customers.

#### **2. Inform consumers**

We aim to give consumers the best information available to select and work with a solicitor in the most productive way.

#### **3. Improve standards**

We aim to have a constructive relationship with solicitors. Our aim is to help the profession to reduce the number of complaints they produce.

These strategic objectives are served by individual programmes to ensure that any change work undertaken is aligned with the overall business priorities. Further programmes are also underway to deliver the improvements we want in Equality and Diversity (E&D), People Strategy and work required by the Legal Services Act 2007.

The work required in each programme was determined by comparing the existing situation with the Blueprint. Some of the work has now been completed, and other aspects are no longer considered viable due to the combined effect of the halting of Visualfiles (the intended new IT system) and the expected closure of LCS in 2010 (when complaints handling will be transferred to the newly formed OLC). The programme summaries included here therefore describe only the additional work still to be undertaken. Internal Programme Definition Documents are used to set out the full work, benefits and timescales of each programme.

### **Change Methodology**

We operate a formal project methodology for all significant change. This requires identification of the reason for wanting the change at the outset, along with an evaluation balancing the expected benefits with the cost of undertaking the work. In common with all standard project systems, this evaluation is revisited at each key stage of the initiative (i.e. after scoping, study, design and test) to decide whether or not the change is still worth making. It is therefore normal that some changes are stopped part way through as better understanding is gained, or as business needs change, as it would no longer deliver overall benefit to the business. Instead, if the original need still exists alternative ways of addressing it need to be found.

Success of change should therefore be measured by achievement of the overall business improvement, rather than specific change activities. This approach is referred to as assessing Benefits Realisation. On this basis, we have identified the business benefits we want to achieve through our Improvement programmes. Since some of these are long-term delivery, we have determined some intermediate tangible outcomes which will indicate that progress towards delivery of the eventual benefit is being made. Evaluation of delivery of this Plan would therefore include achievement of these tangible outcomes.

In addition to the far reaching improvement programme outlined we will continue to make other improvements on a 'Business As Usual' basis. This means that they will be managed locally within the organisation, often by staff that are directly involved in casework.

## PROGRAMME 1 - STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1 - IMPROVE OUR SERVICES

*'We will improve our services and the way we respond to customers, by providing a high-quality, accessible, cost-effective and timely complaints service that is fair and is easy to understand.'*

This programme is designed to deliver the Blueprint by achieving the following outcomes. These are both required to meet our business targets set for April 08 - March 09.

- Improve Quality performance to 90% and meet target Q1 (by introducing a new Quality of Outcome measure and improving performance against it)
- Improve our economy and efficiency, continually reducing our service cost in various areas, to achieve
  1. 08/09 cost index target (C1)
  2. Annual spend in 2008 reduced by £0.8m in real terms compared with 2007
  3. Increased caseworker utilisation and overall capacity

### Benefit 1 - Achieving Quality target Q1 reinforces Quality of Service

Realisation Time: April 2009

Measures: Agreed, baselined Quality measure by July 2008  
Target Measure Q1 above 90% for October 08 - March 09  
LSCC assessment in April 2009

### Benefit 2 - Reduced Cost Index and Annual spend builds reputation with key stakeholders

Realisation Time: April 2009

Measures: Cost Index of no more than £2017.74 for Plan year 08/09  
2008 Annual spend

### Benefit 5 - Improved Caseworking Utilisation will reduce future staffing costs

Realisation Time: Mar - Dec 2009

Measures: Closures per total paid operational FTE  
Cost reduction targets for 2009

The benefits will be realised from changes delivered by a suite of projects, currently including:

- New Quality measure
- Cost Index modelling and reduction
- Improved LSO referral assessment
- Increased cost recovery
- Review of Reasonable Offer (ROM) process
- Improving utilisation in support teams
- Optimising caseworking checks and reviews

## PROGRAMME 2 - STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2 - INFORM CONSUMERS

*'We aim to give consumers the best information available to select and work with a solicitor in the most productive way. We will provide information to educate and empower them to make the right decisions at every stage of the legal process.'* (See our website [www.legalcomplaints.org.uk](http://www.legalcomplaints.org.uk) )

This programme is designed to deliver the Blueprint by achieving the following outcomes.

- All miners involved in the Coal Health Compensation Scheme are aware of whether they have grounds for complaint, and cases resolved for those who proceed to complain.
- Decision and possible preparation for publication of Solicitors Complaints Records, including:
  1. Evaluation of feedback received from consultation
  2. A prepared implementation plan to enable quick delivery if the decision to publish complaints is made.
  3. Consideration of Phase 2, developing a system for publishing conciliated complaints.
- Publication of an Annual Report

### Benefit 1 - Consumers able to be better informed on complaint trends

This should result in more informed interactions with the legal profession, so bringing a secondary benefit to LCS of lower formal complaints

Realisation Time: September 2008

Measures: Availability of Annual Report

### Benefit 2 - Demonstration of LCS being open and transparent with our information

Realisation Time: July 2009

Measures: Decision on publishing complaints  
Availability of key data  
Use of our information services

### Benefit 3 - Consumers able to be better informed on selecting solicitors

This should result in more informed interactions with the legal profession, so bringing a secondary benefit to LCS of lower formal complaints

Realisation Time: July 2009

Measures: Decision on publishing complaints  
Use of our information services

### Benefit 4 - Ensured access to redress for former miners and representatives

Realisation Time: complete by close-down of LCS

Measures: % of relevant Miners contacted and informed

### Benefit 5 - Final resolution of Coal Health Compensation Scheme complaints

This will also be a conclusion for LCS, so resources can be redirected to handling current complaints, and avoids the issue being carried into the OLC.

Realisation Time: complete by close-down of LCS

Measures: % of Miners contacted and informed

The benefits will be realised from changes delivered by a suite of projects, currently including:

- Coal Health Awareness Phase 2
- Publishing Complaints Records
- New Annual Report

## PROGRAMME 3 - STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3 - IMPROVE STANDARDS

*'We aim to have a constructive relationship with solicitors. Our aim is to help the profession to reduce the number of complaints they produce, by working collaboratively with TLS and the SRA.'*

This programme is designed to deliver the Blueprint by achieving the following outcomes.

- An annual award for exceptional client care.
- Improved solicitors' access of our services
- A system to regularly collect solicitor feedback on our complaints service, and use the results to inform changes to improve our service (quality and accessibility) to the profession
- A suite of training materials to be made available to solicitors to help them improve complaints handling and to reduce numbers of complaints.
- Regular and routine publication of good practice advice, matters of interest and trends in complaints handling.
- Effective lines of communication with TLS and SRA to review solicitors guidance materials and to share information on complaints handling
- Progressive integration and then hand over activities for Improving Standards to TLS in line with their Client Care and Complaints Handling Capacity Development Plan

### Benefit 1 - Complaints Handling Improvement from better solicitor interaction with LCS

This is the main LCS benefit of this programme, expected as the outcome of solicitors being better informed, improving client care and understanding and respecting our role in complaints resolution.

Realisation Time: June 2009 to June 2011

Measure: Solicitors Feedback rating  
Timeliness of closures  
Total number of receipts, compared with number of practicing solicitors and level of current legal work  
Feedback from Solicitors Advisory Panel

### Benefit 2 - Raising awareness of the importance of good client care

Realisation Time: Oct 2008 to Mar 2009

Measures: Quantity of mail shots to the profession highlighting award  
Number of applications for Client Care Award  
Column inches promoting Awards event in legal press  
Use of 'winner' badge in corporate materials  
Feedback from feedback forms, talks, seminars and training events

### Benefit 3 - Firms better informed how to achieve good client care and handle complaints effectively

Realisation Time: Oct 2008 to June 2009

Measures: Distribution volume of LCS/TLS literature  
Dissemination of Best Practice from Client Care Awards  
Use of our services (website, Lawyer line, conferences etc)  
Requests for talks and seminars  
Take up of training events that utilise LCS training materials  
Feedback from feedback forms, talks, seminars and training events

### Benefit 4 - Reduction in LCS resource required to inform the Profession

Realisation Time: March 2009

Measure: LCS resource required for informing profession  
Updates to training courses and education modules  
Volumes of training courses, information packs and other complaints handling materials on offer by key stakeholders

The benefits will be realised from changes delivered by a suite of projects, currently including:

- Annual Client Care award
- Improve solicitors' access to our service
- Gather solicitors' feedback
- Information packs, education and training
- Publish Client Care Guide

## PROGRAMME 4 - EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

*'We will strive to be a transparent, fully accessible, fair and inclusive complaints handling body providing a non discriminatory service to all. We will guarantee that our staff work for a fair and diversity orientated employer - an employer which has the skills, knowledge and capability to respond effectively and appropriately to the diverse consumer base we serve.'*

Further Equality and Diversity (E&D) improvement underpins all other work. The baseline audit in March 2007 identified 50 items needing attention. We addressed and prioritised them all at that time and made a 3 year plan to complete them. The top 16 were achieved as planned during 2007/8 through CHIP 1, and have been confirmed by the repeat audit in February 2008.

This programme is designed to deliver the Blueprint by achieving the following outcomes.

- Improve the way in which we collect, retain and analyse our customer profiling data and then analyse our complainant database
- Effectively communicate information about the LCS to diversity groups who are not currently using our service and those who come from traditionally 'hard to reach' communities
- Establish a staff advisory group on diversity issues to inform the LCS as an employer and a service provider
- Establish an advisory group on disability consisting of staff (internal) and bodies/groups who work for the interests of disabled people (external)
- Introduce monitoring of data on religion and sexual orientation
- Create a dedicated area on our internal website to communicate equality and diversity information
- The Equality and Diversity Vision and Strategy (to achieve a good standard of E&D consideration across LCS) will be formulated by September 2008 and then embedded across the organisation, driven by the dedicated Equality and Diversity Manager.
- Initial Impact Assessment of a further 30 policies/procedures within the Plan year to assess which require deeper review.
- Compliance with TLS's statutory requirements on Equality and Diversity by 31 March 2009.

### Benefit 1 - An accessible customer service tailored to the diverse needs of consumers and solicitors

Realisation Time: March 2009

Measures: Increased website access hits  
Good feedback from disability advisory group  
Collection, retention and analysis of customer profiling data

### Benefit 2 -Stakeholder engagement and effective communication of our Equality and Diversity vision

Realisation Time: September 2008

Measures: 80% staff respond positively in survey regarding knowing what the vision is  
Increased collaboration with a range of external stakeholders  
Increase in diversity of responses to LCS consultations  
Results from benchmarking exercise

### Benefit 3 - Becoming a fair and diversity orientated employer and service deliverer

Realisation Time: March 2009

Measures: Diversity vision statement and strategy communicated to staff  
LCS behavioural competencies reviewed  
Improved collection, retention and analysis of employee profiling data  
Staff Survey measuring LCS's current status as a diversity oriented employer.  
Full impact assessment on all relevant policies, processes and practices  
Evidence from equality impact assessments is published externally

The benefits will be realised from changes delivered by a suite of projects, contained within:

- LCS Equality and Diversity Action Plan 2008-2010

## PROGRAMME 5 - PEOPLE STRATEGY

*'We will ensure that the organisation is fit for purpose in respect of the people within the organisation, both now and for the future as the organisation goes through the handover to the OLC.'*

This programme is designed to deliver the Blueprint by achieving the following outcomes.

- Updated Capability Guidelines by the end of August 2008 to support performance management and increasing productivity.
- An Induction programme for non-caseworking staff by the end of September 2008, to ensure the development of skills, knowledge and behaviours required for delivery of the business plan.
- A 'Stress Project Group' to ensure compliance with legal and policy obligations in relation to stress and supporting staff in a target driven environment. The Risk Assessment will be conducted by November 2008 and training for Managers implemented by the end of March 09.
- A succession planning process for key roles by the end of March 2009 to aid staff retention.

### Benefit 1 - Increased performance leads to lower staffing costs

Realisation Time: Mid 2009

Measures: Appraisal levels of staff  
Take-up of performance improvement programmes  
Staffing costs

### Benefit 2 - Improved Staff Morale

Realisation Time: Mid 2009

Measures: Absenteeism  
Attrition  
Staff Survey results

The benefits will be realised from changes delivered by a suite of projects, currently including:

- Capability guidelines
- Consistent Induction process
- Stress Management for staff
- Key Role succession planning

## PROGRAMME 6 - LEGAL SERVICES ACT 2007

*'We will be guided by the Legal Services Act (LSA) and current thinking about the future OLC in achieving our stated aim of being a high quality complaints handling service.'*

Our key concerns are continuity of service as responsibilities are handed over to the OLC (expected in 2010) and the set up and running costs of the new operation. We are committed to working with TLS, Ministry of Justice (MoJ), Legal Services Board (LSB) and OLC to ensure that our knowledge and expertise about complaints handling informs this process, and that our resources and expertise are made available as required to ensure a smooth transition to the new complaints handling organisation. We also must make sure that we handle complaints efficiently and effectively as the LSA is implemented, beginning with the introduction of new forms of legal practice and a move to entity based regulation expected from March 2009.

Additionally one of the aims of the LSA is to ensure that redress is easily understood and accessible. We are committed to making sure that consumers are not confused as the changes to the legal services market begin in advance of the inception of the OLC. A smooth and well-planned handover to the OLC is very important so consumers can continue to access redress easily, and so that solicitors know how (and by whom) any complaints against them will be handled.

This programme is designed to deliver the Blueprint by achieving the following outcomes.

- To ensure LCS meets its obligations to resolve complaints in accordance with the reforms of the LSA, introducing changes as required and achieving agreed timescales for the commencement of the Act.
- To be a high quality complaints handling organisation that effectively and appropriately shares its expertise to inform the successful creation of the OLC.

### Benefit 1 - Continued good service through compliance with mandatory changes in the Act

Realisation Time: Mid 2009

Measures: Meeting all mandatory requirements of the Act  
Meeting public duty responsibilities

### Benefit 2 - Maintain LCS reputation

Realisation Time: Dec 2009

Measures: Feedback from external stakeholders (MoJ, NCC, Which? etc)

### Benefit 3 - Maintain Consumer Confidence through smooth transfer to OLC

Realisation Time: Dec 2010

Measures: Views of external stakeholders (MoJ, NCC, Which? etc)

The benefits will be realised from changes delivered by a suite of projects, currently including:

- Entity based regulation
- Conduct Referrals
- Interest Certificates
- Remuneration Certificates
- Handover mechanism to OLC

Along with the significant change management work required by such a substantial change.

## Coal Health Compensation Scheme (CHCS)

We are committed to build on the learning of the past year and move forward to address complaints from former miners and their relatives in a way that is customer-focussed and transparent. For both individuals and the profession, the issues arising from inconsistent handling of this scheme are still a reality and we aim to bring closure to this as quickly as possible for all concerned.

Over the past year we have piloted awareness raising sessions to help former miners and their relatives understand how their original claim should have been handled, and what action they could take if they were dissatisfied with the service they received. This was a great success. Of the 3,500 miners contacted in the Rother Valley pilot, around 350 raised complaints, recovering on average over £500 each in awards and compensation.

Our sweeping initiative to be launched this year will make available this approach to all relevant former miners and relatives, producing the clear benefit that all appropriate consumers will be fully informed about their situation. This initiative will therefore be managed under Programme 2 - Inform Consumers.

The measurable outcome of this initiative is:

- Raising the awareness of the large number of former miners and relatives (estimated to be up to 500,000) who may have cause to complain about their treatment under the Coal Health Compensation Scheme. This would be an awareness-raising exercise to make available to a large number of potentially vulnerable consumers the opportunity to obtain fair resolution for their particular situation.

At present, agreement is still to be gained with other stakeholders before the initiative can go ahead, but once started we will be phasing the communication to avoid overloading our staff and impacting delivery of our other targets. The size and speed of later phasing can only be determined once the initial response is known, so the overall initiative may extend beyond this Plan year.

In order to scope the project we plan to do the following:

- Costing Exercise
- Investigate funding options (both within 3 months)
- Look at phased roll-out e.g. by constituency where there is willing MP, or by firm. Most likely to be phased over 12 months to enable any resulting workload to be appropriately phased.
- Measure impact on workload of initial mail outs and judge whether later mail outs need to be slowed down or sped up
- Measure effectiveness through firms reporting on progress
- Regularly communicate on progress with BERR

### Target

#### M1 - Miners' (Coal Health Compensation Scheme) Complaints

For cases received after 1 February 2008, we will fully investigate the case and inform the customer, in at least 93% of cases, of all the following.

- Adjudication as an option to conciliation
- The seriousness category of their complaint and the likely size of award at adjudication
- The amount of distress and inconvenience likely in addition to any financial loss

During the 2007 special audit, the OLSCC measured our performance on sharing the IAG at 89%, exceeding the target of 88% set for all casework (target Q3, 2007/8). This M1 target includes additional items as shown above, meaning that last year's achievement is not a valid baseline. We are therefore committing to both a stricter measure and a 5% increase on last year's target level.

### KPI

In addition to the Miners KPIs listed in the Appendix, these will be reported as they are directly relevant to the initiative explained above.

- Number of former miners or relatives written to each month
- Amount recovered for miners or relatives each month
- Number of CHCS cases open for longer than 9 months (to monitor any adverse impact of the initiative on our ability to handle complaints in a timely way)

## Closures

*We therefore need to resolve this many complaints*

Case Closures	Actual April 2006 - March 2007	Latest Prediction April 2007 - March 2008	Required April 2008 - March 2009
General (non- Coal Health)	12,052	11,576	11,963
Coal Health	787	944	812*
Cases outsourced	2,214	1,480	1,560
TOTAL IPS Complaints	15,053	14,000	14,335
Complaints initiated and referred to SRA	4,917	5,012	5,000
Written Enquiries	6,276	5,794	5,450
Helpline Calls	74,541	69,641	73,892
Other	615	498	500
Total Items handled	96,485	89,933	99,177

\* The number of CHCS cases may well rise, depending on the outcome of our proactive work in that area.

This volume of closures, together with achieving the target levels of timeliness, will maintain the low levels of WIP needed to allow quick allocation of new cases and so minimise delay. The forecast levels are shown below.

Case Type	Predicted WIP 1 April 2008	Forecast WIP 31 March 2009
General (non- Coal Health)	2,976	2,604
Coal Health	600	288
TOTAL IPS Complaints	3,576	2,892
Written Enquiries	397	1,047

## Staffing

### *To do all this we will need this many people*

Based on existing working arrangements, the level of work forecast would require staffing and budget that would not allow us to reach our cost reduction goals. So, we plan to increase the capacity strategically through increased productivity and transferring some support posts into caseworking as explained earlier.

The numbers budgeted for 2008/9 are therefore:

Business Area / FTE	Actual End of Year 2006/7	Actual End of Year 2007/8	Establishment 1 April 2008	Planned Average FTE 2008/9
Board	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
Operational Caseworking Staff	200.5	227.7	209.5	221
Operational Support Staff	123.5	146.5	154.4	143.8
Adjudicators	-	-	-	5
Other LCS Support Staff	48.6	33.6	38.5	36
<b>Total</b>	<b>373.1</b>	<b>408.3</b>	<b>403.0</b>	<b>406.3</b>
Of this, LSCC Support	5	5	5	4

## Budget

*And all this will cost this much money*

£,000	Authorised Budget 2008	Plan Budget 08/09
In-house Caseworking	17,739	17,868
Outsourced services	1,175	1,200
Cost Recovery	(300)	(300)
LCS Strategic Support	3,795	3,855
Controllable Costs Sub-total	22,409	22,623
LSCC Support	1,121	1,080
LCS Sub-total	23,530	23,705
TLS Cross-charges	7,960	7,961
Total Budget	31,490	31,664

TLS's financial year (and LCS's authorised budget) runs from 1 January to 31 December each year. The Plan budget is therefore projected by taking a pro rata increase for the 3 months that fall into 2009.

## SECTION 2 - THE SOLICITORS REGULATION AUTHORITY

### Targets

In 2008/09 we expect to receive more complaints

Conduct Complaints	Actual - April 2006 to March 2007	Latest Prediction - April 2007 to March 2008	Forecast - April 2008 to March 2009
Complaints	4,748	4,858	4,985

This is based on predicted receipts as follows:

Annual increase in normal complaints of 2.5% (The forecast is a 5% uplift on the 06/07 actuals)

In order to regulate the profession effectively, we intend to achieve the targets set out below.

#### Delivering High Quality Outcomes

Good regulatory decisions

#### Timeliness

Closures within 12 months

Closures of conduct cases referred to SDT within 18 months

#### Providing value for money

Caseworker productivity

These targets are explained in more detail below.

Full definitions of the measures for these targets are in the Appendix 2.  
KPIs required to support achievement of these targets are in Appendix 3.

### 2.1 DELIVERING HIGH QUALITY OUTCOMES

The SRA agrees with the Commissioner's objective of setting a 90% target for quality of casework, following the great improvements made on timeliness and process adherence in the last two years. As a public interest regulator, our main priority must be to ensure high quality in the investigation of information received in order to deliver fair and reasonable regulatory outcomes.

We will use the combined measure of outcome quality which has been baselined during 2007/8 - combining our current casework measure (file reviews), the feedback received from Adjudicators on the case notes we submit and the LSO Index to ensure a fair, reasonable and proportionate outcome.

Although we are already close to achieving this target some specific actions planned to ensure it is delivered are:

- more regular management reviews, benefiting from the smaller teams (following an internal restructure from two to three teams), and using OLSO, adjudicator and file review feedback
- more regular file reviews with clearer assessment and feedback methodologies agreed with the OLSCC
- systematic training of caseworkers to develop their skills on the new Code of Conduct and in certain specialist areas
- some tightening of the self review rules and their application

**Target Q2:**

At least 90% of cases closed will have evidence to show a level of casework quality which will deliver fair and reasonable regulatory outcomes and no serious administrative failings.

## 2.2 TIMELINESS

We are pleased that the Commissioner recognises our strong improvement in timeliness of case handling during 2007/8, so that a 3 month closure target is no longer proposed. We agree with this approach, although we will continue to monitor it as well as a revised 6 month KPI with the aim of maintaining our recent performance of closing 85% of cases within that timeframe.

### Closures within 12 months

We are again pleased that the Commissioner has agreed to our proposal to treat RDCs as new referrals of information. This will mean that from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2008 an RDC will start its life from the date it is "received" stamped in SRA.

We also welcome the agreement to change the start date of RDCs that are still work in progress as at the 31 March 2008 to their new start date (RDC creation date) on 1 April 2008. This will enable a clearer and more consistent tracking of all RDC matters, which is very much in line with overall targeting principles.

This year we have reduced the number of cases taking over 12 months to resolve; the volume of files that roll over this age each month is reducing significantly.

We predict that at 1 April 2008 there will be around 35 cases already between 10 and 12 months old, and we cannot be certain that none would roll over the 12 months. We require 3 months to ensure cases are managed so as to avoid going over 12 months, so we commit to this target, starting from 1 July 2008.

A small number of cases quite properly take longer than 12 months to conclude. The rationale for this and how the SRA propose to handle such cases is given in Appendix 2.

Counting rules remain unchanged from the current plan year

The following actions will be taken to ensure the tighter monthly measure is met:

- more regular management reviews and action plans, benefiting from the smaller teams
- development of the timeliness tracking sheet for use throughout the Plan year
- decision-making improvements by end Q3 (see 2.4.1 below)
- special efforts to improve casenote timeliness
- fast track process for SDT approvals when developed and implemented later in 2008 available

**Target T3:**

**SRA will close all cases within 12 months of receipt, apart from in exceptional circumstances.**

### Closures within 18 months

The Commissioner now wishes to set a target for the small number of complaints-based cases which are referred to the Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal. The target and methodology for counting this target (see Appendix 2) have been set in line with discussions with her office and are subject to further review with the OLSCC.

The SRA is also working to identify and remove any unnecessary delay across all its regulatory activities. Most cases prosecuted at the SDT are based on intelligence-led investigations, not arising from complaints, can often be complex and in some cases strongly defended. They need to be prepared with skill and care.

The SRA agrees with the Commissioner that in the public interest the period spent from decision to prosecute a case to lodging with the Tribunal should be kept as short as is consistent with proper preparation. 6 months has been the expected average time to prepare across all cases, which has historically been published to stakeholders. In practice around 55% of cases have been prepared within that timescale.

Further opportunities to reduce delay have been identified and for that reason the SRA has introduced a key performance indicator to lodge 70% of cases within 6 months of the decision to prosecute and 90% within 12 months on average during the Plan year. The SRA will publish its performance against that KPI during 2008. Although the KPI covers activities which extend beyond the Commissioner's remit, the SRA recognises the Commissioner's interest in this area and will discuss progress with the Commissioner.

The SRA is aiming, subject to review, to increase this 6 month KPI to 75% in 2009, and 77% in 2010, as part of our culture of continuous improvement, and for 100% to be lodged within 12 months (although in practice there may be some exceptional cases which quite properly require longer than 12 months).

**Target T4:**

All SRA complaints where there is a referral to SDT, from the date of receipt to take no longer than 18 months to investigate, authorise, conclude, prepare fully and lodge with the SDT, apart from in exceptional circumstances or where the case to be prosecuted at the SDT involves allegations arising from any other investigation.

## 2.3 PROVIDING VALUE FOR MONEY - CASEWORKER PRODUCTIVITY

The SRA welcomes the Commissioner's decisions to continue with the measure and methodology adopted in 2007/8 to measure caseworker efficiency. Our aim is to continue with improvements seen to date by:

- developing and refining our processes - including case note writing and decision-making from end Q3 (see 2.4.1 below)
- more regular management reviews and action plans, benefiting from the smaller teams
- any benefits to be secured from the introduction of our new IT system, now not likely before late in the Plan Year

**Target C2:**

We will deliver during the plan year a 5% improvement in caseworker productivity.

## DELIVERING IMPROVEMENTS

**Target P1. We will deliver initiatives as required to achieve the business improvement outcomes identified in this Plan.**

The SRA have identified a number of areas across the organisation where we intend to make additional improvements during 2008 and 2009 the Plan year. Three of these improvements which are relevant to this complaints handling Plan are outlined in the next section. Progress on these projects will be tracked and shared with the OLSCC during the Plan year where any specific impact on SRA work arising from complaints is identified (most clearly in the Decision-making project).

## 2.4 FURTHER IMPROVEMENTS PLANNED

### 2.4.1 Improved decision making

This project is aimed at implementing the Board's proposals by the end of 2008.

Benefits to be realised include:

- Greater consistency in the decision making levels across SRA
- Reduction in costs assuming some decision making takes place at a lower level
- Improvement in timeliness as more decisions will be taken internally, with less need to pass files externally to adjudicators / panels

The principal benefit expected in handling information and investigations arising from complaints is likely to be in timeliness, starting from Q4 2008, on the minority of cases that currently go to adjudication (10% of caseload) and on to SDT (2.5% of caseload).

#### 2.4.2 Process standardisation

The output of CHIP 2 this year is to implement the new business process model as part of our IT rollout phase: Law Society funding for this project has yet to be secured and we have identified no alternative option for making major improvements in our caseworking processes.

Benefits to be realised include:

- More robust and efficient risk assessment
- More accurate and comprehensive timeliness tracking by risk category
- Faster and more reliable access to documentation (scanning, storage, search engine etc)
- Improved efficiencies in file management and investigations
- Improved MI to support performance management

Specific benefits in handling information and investigations arising from complaints are unlikely to be realised before Q1 2009 because of the delayed IT project.

#### 2.4.3 Year 3 of Equality and Diversity (E&D) programme

Year 3 is about data collection, early analysis and additional initial assessments of our procedures and policies. The main objective is to ensure SRA Board decisions are implemented during the IT rollout phase, the timing for which depends upon Law Society funding decisions. It is not possible to set a target in this area for two reasons. The report on which it is proposed to be based has yet to be finalised and there is no firm timescale for funding and implementing our IT project, on which delivery also depends.

Benefits to be realised from the project include:

- SRA holding more robust data on Informants
- SRA holding more robust data on Solicitors
- SRA could identify the E&D characteristics of people using our services on X% of our cases, allowing representative analysis of our service offering to guide further improvement
- Five procedures/policies in our complaints handling department will be initially assessed by Q4 2008 to identify what actions should be taken to provide a fair and equitable service and avoid discriminatory outcomes

An exercise to improve our data on the profession is planned and budgeted by the end of 2008. Collection of better data on informants is also planned to start, but subject to the availability of additional funding which has not yet been agreed. It will involve sending questionnaires (with our acknowledgement) to informants starting by the end of Q2 2008. The data will then be stored on an enhanced version of ROAD. It is this element of the proposal that requires additional funding and development time. Where the Informant is a solicitor, we will be collecting data from them in their capacity as a solicitor (i.e. from the profession)

Progress on the last two initiatives is of course highly dependent on the timing and scope of the SRA's IT project, which is currently unclear. The SRA's plans to invest in improved IT systems are subject to the current Law Society IT strategy review, whose timing and outcomes are unknown.

## Resources Required

The SRA plan to manage the forecast volume of receipts while meeting the targets set out in this plan. We aim to reduce work in progress by some 5% over the plan year to some 950 cases using the resource levels forecast below, adjusting the mix of outsourced and in-house activity as required.

Business Area / FTE	Actual End of Year 2006/7	Forecast End of Year 2007/8	In-year Losses	In-year Recruitment	Planned End of Year 2008/9
Board	1	1			1
Operational Caseworking Staff	32	27.7		4.7	32.4
Operational Support Staff	28	25.6	1	3.0	27.6
Other Support functions	4	4			4
<b>Total</b>	<b>65.0</b>	<b>58.3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7.7</b>	<b>65.0</b>

Budget projection £,000	Projected Actual 2007/8	Reported TOTAL Budget 2007/8	SRA Budget 2008/9
Dedicated staffing	2,350	2,673	2,712
Outsourced services	470	350	354
Direct support costs	1,570	1,602	1,483
Income	(310)	(125)	(323)
Contribution to the Office of the Commissioner costs	340	374	374
<b>Total Budget</b>	<b>4,420</b>	<b>4,874</b>	<b>4,600</b>

## SECTION 3 – LSCC RECOMMENDATIONS

### 1. Development of a quality measure

Q/R1 – The LCS should begin work before 31 March 2008 to have in place an initiative agreed by the Commissioner that develops and implements a robust quality measure for its complaints handling and produce by July 2008 a baseline of current performance. This should include:

- Identification and prioritisation of criteria that enables the quality of outcome and decisions to be measured in all complaints.
- Assessment of sample sizes required to produce a robust and representative baseline for quality.
- Methodology for measuring against the criteria to assess performance.
- A proposal for the level of improvement necessary against the baseline.

#### *LCS Response:*

*To avoid duplication of work, this is being amalgamated with development of the Outcome and Service target Q1. The measurement mechanism has been successfully piloted and is being introduced across LCS in time for the start of the Plan year, along with guidelines to ensure consistent measurement. This new measure will produce a baseline after the first quarter of information is collected i.e. by July 2008. Information on sample sizes will be discussed with the OLSCC separately, along with the methodology guidelines. Once proven suitable this year, this measure will be adopted as the LCS standard for outcome and service.*

#### *SRA Response*

*Given that our proposal in measuring Quality Target Q2 has now been accepted by the OLSCC we now assume that this recommendation is no longer applicable to the SRA*

### 2. Raising awareness and complaint prevention

P/R1 – TLS, LCS and SRA should develop a range of proposals for implementation during the 2008/09 Plan year, including the consideration of publishing solicitors complaints records to support a more effective solution through a collaborative approach to:

- Raise awareness amongst consumers to support them in making a positive choice when selecting legal services.
- Improve the solicitors handling of complaints and client care.
- Where complaints records are published to ensure that this includes adjudicated decisions, and conciliated complaints, which on the merits of the complaint, are upheld against the solicitor.

#### *LCS Response:*

*During 2007/8 we have developed collaborative working between TLS, LCS and SRA to raise the awareness of good client care. This has resulted in a number of initiatives where we are jointly sharing our experience to benefit both the profession and the customer:*

- *We have monthly meetings with the SRA Online service, providing information on complaints handling for their regular subscribers. We are currently in discussion with TLS to start up our own service, accessing their subscription list.*
- *We liaise regularly with TLS Knowledge Management and SRA's PSU to discuss what information we share on our website.*
- *TLS have invited us to run one of their regular Road Shows, featuring handling Complaints*
- *We are just agreeing with TLS the introduction of an Excellence in Customer Service Award to be added to the TLS awards night in November.*

*Our other activities under our core improvement programmes cover the work we are doing to support consumers.*

#### *SRA Response*

*This recommendation is already under way within SRA with processes either already in place (PSU) or being further developed, for example on intelligence & information gathering, or to enable the relevant publishing of adjudicated decisions (where there are findings). While this will work*

*closely with LCS to ensure that our work is complementary and appropriate links are established for consumers. This will also be subject to continuous review and improvement. We believe this fulfils the requirements of the Commissioner's recommendation.*

### 3. Complaint Prevention

A/R1 - LCS and SRA should from 1 April 2008, include in its decision letters, appropriate details of the correctional action the firm or solicitor need to take to address the identified failings from complaints made against them. The approach should be taken on all decisions, whether conciliated or adjudicated.

This recommendation supports LCS and SRA's overall objectives for improving complaints handling at the front end by solicitors.

#### *LCS Response:*

*We have considered many ways to support solicitors in improving their client care, from wide - ranging seminars and publications reaching a large sector of the profession to ideas such as this, giving specific and focussed information to each solicitor at the conclusion of a complaint investigation. Whilst we have been keen to consider this latter approach, the increased pressure on caseworker efficiency and the cost target this year means that any activity must be proportionate and indicate good value for money. Sample feedback from the profession indicates that this recommendation is not universally required as there is ample opportunity to discuss issues and ways of improving with our caseworkers during the resolution of a complaint.*

#### *SRA Response*

*In SRA significant resources are applied to give advice to the profession on the improvement of their business and how breaches of the rules may be avoided. Ethics guidance service and our PSU visit programme, together with the encouragement of continuous professional development are the major ways to in which this service is delivered.*

*Our regulatory decisions on the compliance side of the SRA are based on determining whether or not a solicitor has breached certain rules. If we are satisfied that is the case, we must then decide what the appropriate action to take is. By the very fact that a rule is deemed to have been breached, it is self-evident that a solicitor should not repeat that breach.*

*In those a cases where there is insufficient evidence to make a formal sanction we do provide advice to solicitors on the relevant aspects of their work that should be reviewed. We already do this using a Letter of Advice.*

### 4. Improved Conciliation / Reasonable Offer Made

A/R2 - LCS should review its policies on conciliation/ROM, and particularly the policy that suggests caseworkers must share offers with the consumer as soon as these are made. It should consider using its own internal audit function to establish current practice and ways in which the policies could be improved. This should include a review of how much investigation is required to enable caseworkers to provide sufficiently robust advice and guidance to consumers on any offers of conciliation/ROM put forward by solicitors. The results of this review should be reported to the Commissioner.

#### *LCS Response:*

*In early 2007, the LCS began a review of conciliation, looking to good practice in the area of alternative dispute resolution and in ombudsman and complaints handling organisations to inform our approach and how we determine what is fair in resolving complaints. In addition, our ongoing review of policies has also indicated that developing a short statement that tells our caseworkers, consumers and our stakeholders what we want conciliation to look like in the LCS is a priority area. Our aim is to ensure conciliation operates fairly for both consumers and solicitors. We expect to be ready to discuss with our Board in April and will consult with key stakeholders as appropriate.*

*The review of our ROM policy has started with a workshop this month (March 2008). The timescale for the results of this review will be communicated once finalised.*

*SRA Response - Not applicable to SRA work*

## SECTION 4 - APPENDICES

### Appendix 1 - Glossary

Throughout this document, we have tried to avoid using either technical 'jargon' or complicated words. Where this has not been possible or a very specific interpretation is required, a list is provided below to aid understanding.

Term	Means
BERR	Department for Business, Enterprise & Regulatory Reform. The Government department to ' <i>boost productivity and keep the UK competitive and an attractive place to do business, especially in challenging economic times, as well as to help companies succeed overseas and to bring foreign investment to the UK</i> ' (BERR website).
Case	The investigation into a complaint about the service received from a solicitor or a complaint which includes an allegation of misconduct.
CHIP	Complaints Handling Improvement Project. These are the projects previously undertaken to improve our overall complaints handling service.
Commissioner	Legal Services Complaints Commissioner. The Commissioner is appointed under Section 52(2) of the Access to Justice Act 1999 to monitor the handling of complaints about solicitors
Complaint	Complaint means both consumer complaints, in which solicitors' customers seek redress, and allegations about solicitors' misconduct, whether made by solicitors, customers or by third parties. The term 'complaint' does not include enquiries where we provide information, clarification, or explanation of jurisdiction. These are counted separately and recorded as 'Enquiries'.
Consumer Complaint	A complaint specifically about inadequate professional service provided by a solicitor. These are all investigated by LCS and, if considered appropriate, compensation (redress) is awarded.
Creation date	The date on which the case is entered onto our systems at the start of the process. This is normally within 1 working day of receipt. This date is used instead of the Receipt Date (which can only be obtained by manual audit) to generate Management Information in an efficient and timely way.
Customer	Someone who uses the services of the LCS, concerning dissatisfaction with the services delivered by a solicitor
File	The paper and / or electronic records of our Complaints Handling.
Informant	Someone who informs the SRA of an allegation of misconduct.
Informants Protocol	SRA policy which governs communication with informants who make reports of professional misconduct. The protocol forms part of the SRA's risk-based approach to professional regulation and distinguishes informants with an interest from those without an interest.
Informants with an interest	Informants who are personally affected and / or have suffered personal detriment by the alleged misconduct, whether or not the solicitor in question has acted for them.
Informants without an interest	Informants who are not personally affected by the alleged misconduct and who are therefore making a report in either an official capacity, out of professional duty or out of public duty.
KPI	Key Performance Indicator - a measure used to assess the effectiveness of a particular process, system or service
LCO	Local Conciliation Officer. Resources around England and Wales who can be called upon to have face-to-face contact with customers/informants where this is necessary to suitably progress the case e.g. vulnerable customers or where there are communication difficulties.

LCS	The Legal Complaints Service - the independent complaints handling body of the Law Society of England and Wales. This is the organisation handling service related customer complaints about solicitors.
LSO	Legal Services Ombudsman, appointed by the Lord Chancellor to oversee complaints about solicitors, barristers, legal executives, licensed conveyancers, trade mark attorneys and patent agents by the six professional bodies responsible for setting and maintaining standards of conduct and service within the legal profession. The Ombudsman cannot be a qualified lawyer and is completely independent of the legal profession.
OLC	Office for Legal Complaints - the new, fully independent ombudsman scheme being set up by the Government to handle all legal complaints. It is established by the Legal Services Act 2007 and is expected to become operational during 2010, after which LCS will close.
OLSCC	Office of the Legal Services Complaints Commissioner, in Leeds.
Receipt date	The stamped date of receipt. This date is treated as day 1. This means that to achieve a 5 day target, cases received on Monday 1 <sup>st</sup> would need to be actioned by close of business on Friday 5 <sup>th</sup> .
Redress case	Consumer complaint
Regulation case	A case where allegation(s) of misconduct are raised and require possible investigation leading to possible regulatory sanctions by the SRA.
RDC	Redress and regulatory case. A complaint which may contain both consumer complaint and allegations of misconduct. Such cases are handled separately for each element of the complaint. LCS will investigate whether the consumer complaint merits redress; the SRA will separately consider whether regulatory action should be taken in relation to the solicitor and/or firm involved.
ROM	Reasonable Offer Made. In consumer complaints resolution, where the solicitor has offered reasonable compensation for the loss and distress caused. If the customer chooses to not accept this offer the complaint is closed.
SRA	The Solicitors Regulation Authority - the independent regulatory body of the Law Society of England and Wales. In this document 'SRA' is used to refer to the unit handling allegations of misconduct by solicitors (Conduct Assessment and Investigation unit). However, the SRA has a much wider regulatory remit.
Substantive response	Accurately identifies all customer/informant issues, specific to the customer/informant's circumstances and serves to progress the case.
Summary closed	This refers to those cases handled in SRA which are either 'excluded', 'out of time' or where there is clearly or likely to be no misconduct.

## Appendix 2 - Target Measurement Method

### GETTING THE RIGHT ANSWER

#### Q1 (LCS) - Achieving Reasonable Outcome and Service

This target is designed to increase the proportion of cases where we provide an overall quality service to the customer, including reasonable outcome, appropriate consideration of the customer's circumstances and good progress and administration of the case.

In April 2009 a sample of consumer complaints will be selected by the OLSCC for audit that are representative of the age profile of closures and the receipts profile during the year. The sample will be drawn from cases opened on or after 1 October 2008 and closed on or before 31 March 2009.

To determine whether the outcome and service can be described as reasonable for the consumer, each complaint file will be examined against a number of high level criteria that are grouped under three main headings:

- Decision making
- Consumer circumstances (e.g. elderly, vulnerable)
- Administration of complaint

The review will measure whether:

- The outcome for the consumer is reasonable with no significant failings on the file; this would be considered a pass
- The outcome is reasonable for the consumer but there are some significant failings on the file; this would be considered a fail
- The outcome was not reasonable for the consumer; this would be considered a fail

The full list of criteria considered in assessing reasonable outcome and service are set out in the LSCC Quality of Outcome Audit document. To enable consistent measurement against these subjective criteria, the LCS Guidelines will be used as an agreed, but non-exhaustive indication of interpretation (both documents available separately).

Not all aspects of the criteria will apply to each case and therefore, only relevant criteria will be assessed on each file. There must be evidence on the file that an issue has had significant adverse impact on the customer for it to register as a case failing.

Once determined, the overall performance of LCS will be inferred from the sample result by adding the appropriate 95% Confidence Interval as determined by standard auditing practice. Achievement of the target will constitute the Upper Confidence Limit being at or above 90%.

#### Q2 (SRA) - Delivering High Quality Outcomes

This target is designed to increase the proportion of cases where we provide an overall quality service to the customer, including reasonable outcome, appropriate consideration of the customer's circumstances and good progress and administration of the case.

##### Agreed measurement and audit methodology

The Commissioner will check delivery of the target against the agreed combined index measure detailed above, through a sample audit. This sample will be drawn from a random sample of cases opened on or after 01 April 2008 and closed on or before 31 March 2009, covering summary closures and a balanced age profile.

A full description of the criteria against which case outcomes will be measured by internal SRA auditors and checked by OLSCC is: (as per methodology submitted on 25 January 2008 - and subsequently agreed with OLSCC on 28 February 2008)

#### Q3 (LCS) - Legal Services Ombudsman (LSO) Index

This target is designed to assess the quality of LCS decisions and processes, by reference to the independent review of the LSO.

The measure for a month is calculated by expressing the number of reports returned in that month where our handling is supported by the LSO as a proportion of the total number of reports returned from the LSO in that month.

We are currently in discussion with the LSO to amend the index scoring. In the interim, reports will be counted as supporting our handling if they are:

- No Further Action (all count)
- Critical report, but the customer is not significantly disadvantaged
- Recommendation to reconsider, where the outcome did not significantly change as a result of our reconsideration, and/or the recommendation is on the basis of new evidence unavailable to us during our investigation
- Recommendation to pay compensation, where the compensation was in line with our policy in force at the time

## DOING IT QUICKLY

### T1 (LCS) - Closures within 12 months

This target is designed to ensure all cases are concluded within 12 months of receipt where possible.

It is measured as the proportion of LCS cases received in a calendar month that are closed within 12 months of the receipt date. It therefore applies only to cases received on or before 31 March 2008.

At the end of the Plan year, should any cases have gone over 12 months old from the date of receipt in year, then the Commissioner's Office may undertake a review of these cases to determine the reason and assess whether any were not due to exceptional circumstances.

Cases taking longer than 12 months will have done so for one of three reasons:

- The case has been handled well, but the complexity or dependency on other items means it takes longer than normal (e.g. the speed of closure is dependent on a third party outside of our control). This would be a pass. Examples of allowable conditions would be Re-opened cases, cases retained whilst we contact the solicitors' insurers after a failure to pay, extended unavailability by the customer or solicitor, delay whilst the solicitors file is called in, Adjudicator granting the right to review.
- The case suffered some avoidable delay, but this was detected in good time, rectified and recovery action taken (both on the case and where necessary with the operation) but the case still took longer than 12 months. This would be tolerated in small numbers.
- The case suffered some avoidable delay which was not adequately addressed. This would be a fail.

### T2 (LCS) - Referrals to SRA

This target is to ensure that referrals to SRA are identified and completed quickly.

It applies to all cases received by LCS on or after 1 April 2008 and on or before 31 December 2008.

The progress against this target shall be assessed from KPIs indicating the number and age profiles of referrals to the SRA. If this number is considered excessive, the OLSCC may audit some of the transfers made after 3 months to determine whether the need for referral was identifiable within 3 months of receipt. For the purposes of this target, the 3 month period concludes on the date of receipt in SRA.

In assessing whether the referral was identifiable within 3 months, the following will be taken into account:

- Normal processing time for caseworkers to receive and review post
- The necessity in some instances to contact the solicitor or other parties to confirm evidence
- 'Identifiable' means on the basis of information which we could reasonably have been expected to gather at the start of the investigation.
- Normal time taken to analyse information, assess against the Threshold Test and confirm with technical support where required, before the decision to refer is taken.
- Normal time taken to complete referral documents, copy the physical file and transfer to SRA offices (internal SLA allows maximum 5 working days from referral decision to receipt in SRA)

### **T3 (SRA) - Closures within 12 months**

There will always be the occasional case that takes longer than 12 months to complete. This is for one of three reasons:

- The case has been handled well, but the complexity or dependency on other items means it takes longer than normal. (e.g. a new report is received from an informant and needs to be added into the current file or where a number of files need to be grouped together creating a small multiple or where a file requires an FI on-site inspection; or where a matter is deemed suitable for SDT referral and therefore may often require more detailed evidence to be gathered)
- The case suffered some delay or mis-direction, and this was detected, rectified and recovery action taken (both on the case and with the case-worker) but the case still took longer than 12 months. e.g. a file where there had been some delay, but no more than that defined in the Target paper dated 17<sup>th</sup> Dec 2007 (page 9)
- The case suffered some delay or mis-direction, which was not adequately addressed.

We propose to report any cases that do take longer than 12 months to close, with the reason for the extended period, and make such cases available for review by OLSCC. We consider that both the first two situations should be considered as acceptable, but the last would not and could constitute a failure of the target. (The acceptance of the second case is particularly necessary for the early months on the new Plan year, where cases may be rolling over that were nearing 12 months during the end of the current Plan year.)

### **T4 (SRA) - SDT lodging within 18 months**

Proposed methodology for reporting T4 (lodging within 18 months) is to count from date of receipt to date of lodging with SDT all cases arising out of a single complaint and not subsumed into multiple and complex other intelligence/information driven investigations. This would apply to all SRA complaints cases started after October 1st 2007.

## **INFORMING THE CUSTOMER**

### **S1 (LCS) - Customer Satisfaction with our Service**

This target is designed to maintain our consistently high level of customer satisfaction with our service.

It is measured as the proportion of Customer Feedback Forms (CFFs) returned in the month where the customer indicates they were either satisfied or very satisfied with the overall service we provided.

The CFF is sent out 2 weeks after closure of a case. It is a good vehicle to gauge satisfaction as it covers all areas of the business, and achieves a very high return rate (around 40% - exceptionally high for consumer surveys). We know there is a strong division in views between those customers who have obtained what they consider a satisfactory outcome (over 90% satisfaction with our service) and those whose complaint was not upheld (only around 40% satisfaction with our service) and it is now accepted that these results are influenced by the outcome itself. However, we wish to include both these groups, so as to be fully representative, recognising that different action may be relevant to ensure satisfaction in the different situations.

### **M1 - Miners Complaints**

This target is designed to ensure that former miners or relatives are given the correct information to enable them to make an informed decision on their complaint.

In April 2009 a sample of Coal Health Compensation Scheme complaints will be selected by the OLSCC for audit that are representative of the age profile of closures and the receipts profile during the year. The sample will be drawn from cases opened on or after 1 February 2008 (following the Commissioner's Special report) and closed on or before 31 March 2009. Any cases selected for audit that did not result in a financial agreement will be excluded from the sample and replacement cases selected.

To satisfy the requirements of this target, there must be evidence on the file that the relevant section of the Guidance on Compensation (GoC) has been shared with the customer, along with the option of adjudication. 'Appropriately investigate' on these cases implies:

- analyse the complaint
- confirm the complaint with the customer
- put the complaint to the solicitor
- consider any response to establish whether a deduction has been made
- If so, consider what advice was given about costs generally and the deduction
- If there is evidence that inadequate adequate advice was not provided, consider the impact of this on the customer
- Alternatively, if the solicitor makes an offer to settle the complaint without providing a full response or evidence of the advice provided, without an acknowledgement of poor service, consider whether the offer is in line with adjudicators' compensatory awards on previous, similar CHCS complaints
- Inform the customer of any offer and advise on the reasonableness of that offer
- Proceed to conciliation or adjudication

## PROVIDING VALUE FOR MONEY

### C1 (LCS) - Cost Index

This target is designed to decrease the cost index, by reducing total service cost and/or by increasing the number of closures.

The overall cost index for the organisation can be calculated for any period of time, by dividing the adjusted total service costs by the total number of cases closed over that period. The adjustment is designed to take out those aspects which are not expected to be a requirement for the OLC.

Adjusted total service costs =

- All LCS costs, including cross-charges from TLS
- Less all income generated
- Less OLC Transition costs
- Less TLS cross-charges for Central HRD, Central Research, Central Communications
- Less two thirds of TLS cross-charge for General Counsel
- Less any special costs e.g. restructuring, additional Coal Health work.

Total number of cases closed =

- All LCS complaint closures (CROs and CDTs, but not ENQs or Rem Certs)
- Plus cases concluded and transferred to SRA as an RDC

The baseline for 2007 is therefore £29,314,379 / 14,327 closures = 2,046.09.

### C2 (SRA) - Caseworker Productivity

This target is designed to increase the cost efficiency of SRA casework.

The target will be missed if the efficiency in caseworker productivity for the year 01 April 2008 to 31 March 2009 is less than 5% higher than the 2007/8 baseline of 5.37 closures per FTE and must be at least 5.64.

### P1 (LCS & SRA) - Delivering Improvement

This target is designed to ensure we deliver the stated outcomes of our improvement programmes, so ensuring achievement of the long-term benefits.

To satisfy the requirements of this target, the timely and successful delivery of the tangible outcomes set out in this Plan will be assessed. Whilst the final assessment will be made in April 2009, assurance will be gained by provisional assessment at each monthly review meeting between the OLSCC and LCS/SRA.

## Appendix 3 - Measurement Indicators

There are generally two types of indicators:

- General Indicators (GIs) measuring items we cannot directly control (e.g. receipts)
- Performance Indicators (PIs) measuring items we can control (e.g. WIP)

The Commissioner has requested the following indicators to be produced and reported each month.

### LCS KPIs

#### Getting the Right Answer

Q1 KPI 1	Number and percentage of LCS referrals to LSO
Q3 KPI 2	LCS complaints upheld by LSO decision type
CS KPI 1	LCS Satisfaction with service
CS KPI 2	LCS Satisfaction with outcome
CS KPI 3	Proportion of complaints about LCS handled under their internal complaints procedure
RW KPI 1	LCS Number of reports and average time taken to write a report for adjudication

#### Doing It Quickly

T KPI 1	Age profile (in months) of carry over to 08/09 as at April 08 - one off information requirement
T KPI 2	Age profile of closures at 3 months for LCS
T KPI 3	All work in progress by age profile
T KPI 4	Number of receipts for LCS (not a KPI, but included here for ease of reference)
T KPI 5	Number of closures for LCS
T KPI 6	Number and age profile of unallocated cases split by LCS, LCS specialist
T KPI 7	Number of closures per FTE by LCS caseworker
T KPI 8	Number of LCS case transfers and average age of case at transfer
T KPI 9	Timeliness by outcome type
T KPI 10	Age profile of, and number of LCS help-line and written enquiries received and closed
T KPI 11	Number of cases over 12 months old at the end of the previous month (including roll over data)
T KPI 12	Total number of LCS cases transferring into the 'insurer recovery' category each month
T KPI 13	Total number of closures each month in the 'insurer recovery' category
T KPI 14	Total age profile of each case at transfer into the 'insurer recovery' category
T KPI 15	The total number of months each case spends in the 'insurer recovery' category before final closure
T KPI 16	How many cases resulted in compensation being awarded by the Solicitor, by the insurer and the amount paid.

#### Providing Value for Money

P1 KPI 1	A detailed breakdown of the total LCS budget to support the delivery of TLS's 2008/09 Complaints Handling Plan
P1 KPI 2	All resources information (including LCS staff, outsourcing, Local Conciliation Officers) to support the delivery of TLS's 2008/09 Complaints handling Plan

#### Other

In relation to the Coal Health Compensation Scheme:

TLS	Details of Ex-Gratia Advance Awards made to Miners each month, including numbers, smallest, largest and average award and total amount paid per month and YTD profile of cases where award has been made.
LCS	Number of Miners cases received each month
LCS	Number of Miners cases closed including age profile at closure and type of outcome
LCS	Miners WIP at the end of each month, current age profile and carry over for current month and year
LCS	Details of Special Payments made to miners each month, including numbers, and average awards and total amount paid per month and YTD.
LCS	Numbers of staff within the Coal Health complaints handling team, by Team Manager, Caseworkers etc
LCS	Closures per caseworker within the Coal Health complaints handling Team

## SRA KPIs

### SRA Priority 1 KPIs - Delivering High Quality Outcomes

QKPI1	Number of and average size of special payments made for its own service failings to consumers
QKPI2	Number and percentage of referrals to LSO
QKPI3	Complaints upheld by the LSO by outcome, case, type, method of decision
QKPI4	The percentage of referrals to the LSO in which the LSO upholds the handling of the case
SDT KPI	Breakdown of numbers referred and sanctions imposed by the SDT
SRA KPI	Breakdown of sanctions imposed by the SRA
CSKPI1	Satisfaction with service
SKPI2	Proportion of complaints about the LCS handled under their internal complaints procedure
RWKPI1	Average time taken to write a report for adjudication

### SRA Priority 2 KPIs - Timeliness

TKPI1	Age profile (in months) of carry over to 08/09 as at April 08 - one off information requirement
TKPI2	Age profile of closures at 6 months
TKPI3	All work in progress by age profile
TKPI4	Number of receipts for SRA
TKPI5	Number of closures by type
TKPI6	Number and age profiles of unallocated cases including assessment stages
TKPI7	Number of closures per FTE caseworker
TKPI9	Timeliness by outcome type
TKPI10	Number of cases over 12 months old at the end of the previous month

### SRA Priority 3 KPIs - Cost Efficiency

CKPI1	A detailed breakdown of the total budget to support the delivery of TLS's 2008/09 Complaints Handling Plan
CKPI2	All resources information (including staff, outsourcing, Local Conciliation Officers) to support the delivery of TLS's Complaints handling Plan

Proposal by the OLSCC to require formal KPI reporting on SRA miners' cases is subject to the same issues, including jurisdiction, which were clarified during our recent discussions and are not therefore included in the plan. The SRA will continue to share with the OLSCC regular informal updates on progress in investigations and prosecutions of CHC cases.