

## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CRIMINAL CONTRACT CONSULTATIVE GROUP 31 AUGUST 2001**

Present: Robert Brown (LCSSA), Tim Colliou (Legal Services Commission), Richard Collins (Legal Services Commission), Andy Grant (Legal Services Commission), Greg Lewis (Law Society), Katherine Pears (Legal Services Commission), Steve Wedd (CLSA), Rodney Warren (Law Society / CLSA)

### 1 Apologies

Hilary Moufid (Legal Services Commission)

### 2 Restructuring of Police Station Work

The data relating to the Police Station Telephone calls was handed over to the Law Society. The Commission undertook to provide the outstanding data as soon as it could be extracted.

It was agreed that deadlines should be set in order to progress the work to meet the specified time scale. A joint meeting will be arranged between the LSC and the LS group working on developing alternative proposals.

### **ACTION**

- **TC and GL to arrange meeting**

### 3 Volume 4 of Legal Services Commission manual

The LSC invited the group to encourage feedback, thoughts and suggestions on how volume 4 of the Legal Services Commission manual could be improved. The LSC would also investigate whether the manual was available on CD ROM.

The LSC will ensure that all components of the manual are available on the Legal Services Commission website.

Robert Brown will review Volume 4 for publication and Katherine Pears will contact Sweet and Maxwell directly.

### **ACTION**

- **KP to establish availability of Volume 4 on CD ROM**

### 4 Training

The LSC invited the LS to provide a practitioner to speak to the trainee's at the next three Contract Compliance and Cost Assessment training sessions. The dates and locations of these sessions are:

Week commencing 17 September, Nottingham Hilton

Week commencing 24 September, LSC, Red Lion Street  
Week commencing 29 October, LSC, Red Lion Street

## **ACTION**

- **Confirmation of professional representatives at training**

### 5 Information Technology Issues

It was agreed that it would be best if the LS and LSC worked closely with the 9 suppliers already identified in “The Law Society Software Solutions” guide. A nominee from the LSC and LS would work with John Miller at the Law Society

### 6 Quality Mark

The group noted that the Law Society was formulating a response to the Quality Mark consultation paper and that this would be forwarded accordingly.

### 7 Reconciliation

The LSC reported that the current national average of payments made vs work claimed was now 73%. The LSC reported that the current average assessment rate on non-standard fees was 12.6% but that this broke down into a national rate of 6.8% and a rate of 24% for London.

The current time take to process a non-standard fee claim was 12 days.

The group reviewed the effect of the 1<sup>st</sup> reconciliation exercise and noted that the next reconciliation exercise would take place in October and would be to 90 – 95%.

## **ACTION**

- **LSC to provide breakdown of information on pre-contract CLAIM8 claims**
- **LSC to provide information on number of cases reported.**

### 8 Recruitment

The group noted that anecdotal evidence of increasing difficulty in attracting new criminal defence solicitors into the profession. The LSC said that it was considering undertaking an age profiling exercise of duty solicitors. It was agreed that this is an appropriate area for the group to work together. A meeting was arranged to specify the scope of the work.

## **ACTION**

- **Tim Collieu and Greg Lewis to liase over date for meeting**

## 9 Financial Monitoring Group

The LSC confirmed that Steve Orchard had sent a letter to the president concerning the twice yearly meetings of the financial monitoring group.

## 10 Crown Court Work

The LSC confirmed that it would assume responsibility for Crown Court work from April 2003 and that the group would be provided with further information at subsequent meetings.

## 11 File Review Payments

The LSC explained that it was amending the way file review claims were to be claimed. This involved the introduction of a new form that would be returned to a firm's CDSM. Details would be sent direct to the profession. The reason for the change was to be able to demonstrate sufficient control of the process.

## Any Other Business

- The LSC noted that it was advertising for office heads for the Public Defender Service in the Sunday Times on 2 September. The specified locations were Cheltenham/Gloucester and Abingdon.
- The group noted the introduction of the night court pilot and the need for remuneration issue to be addressed for defence solicitors.