

Date	11 February 2025
Item	9
Title	Director of Governance Report
Author	Richard Hood, Interim Director of Governance, Policy and Legal
Purpose	This paper provides an update on the work undertaken in the governance, policy and legal team since the last Board meeting.
Recommendation	To NOTE the update and actions identified
Timing	N/A
Impact assessment	While there are no decisions requiring an assessment, work being undertaken demonstrates that CRL is well-led, consumer-focused and uses learning to improve performance.
Impact on Regulatory Objectives	The assurance provided by this report has a positive impact on the following regulatory objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Public interest - Consumer interest - Independent, strong, diverse profession
Implications for resources	No additional resource implications.
Impact on consumer empowerment	The consumer facing projects carried out and supported by CRL reported in this paper.
Impact on ongoing competence	The Head of Education oversees and manages all matters relating to on-going professional competence.
Publication status	For Publication
Appendices	None

(A) EDUCATION

See the Head of Education’s separate Annual Report paper for updates on activity.

(B) EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

1. At the end of 2024, we analysed the diversity data collected from our staff, Board and panels in September/October 2024. We compared the findings to the data collected in 2021 and prepared a high-level report including information on socio-economic background for the first time. In January, we published the [report](#) on the CRL website.

2. The career progression work is continuing to move forward. We have had several meetings with Nik Miller of the Bridge Group, and met with CILEX to discuss CILEX grades and work carried out in these. Internal work has taken place towards creating the developing typology of seniority and has been shared with the Bridge Group.
3. CRL participated in three Legal Regulators EDI Forums:
 - i. In October the LSB presented and led the discussion on its two pieces of [research](#) work to drive action to enhance legal sector diversity.
 - ii. In November discussions included views on data harmonisation, templates and introducing new questions. The BSB's consultation on its Equality Rules, responses and developing thinking were discussed.
 - iii. In January's forum regulators shared updates and learning on their current work. The LSB provided information about its current approach to developing its EDI statement of policy. This will be considered at the LSB Strategic Board meeting in February and finalised for approval at the April/May Board meeting. A consultation on the statement of policy is planned for summer 2025.
4. In November 2024 and January 2025 we participated in the Judicial Diversity Forum's Combined Statistics Working Group meeting. Discussions included whether declaration rates for specific characteristics are sufficient for 2025 publication and consideration given to the implications of changing diversity questions for disability data collection.

(C) CONSUMER

5. The digital exclusion research has progressed with the research company succeeding in recruiting interviewees using the agreed mitigated approach. A topic guide for the qualitative interviews has been developed for sign off in January.
6. The LSB issued a [statement of policy](#) (SoP) on first tier complaints in May 2024. We have been carrying out work to understand where we might have gaps in our regulatory arrangements and our approach to work required to comply with the SoP. In summer 2024, we met with Legal Ombudsman (LeO) to request additional information and data and followed this up with them. LeO advised that they would engage with all regulators to capture what each requires and look at a sector solution. CRL has been invited to a workshop organised by LeO in early February to take this work forward.
7. CRL participated in the Legal Choices Governance Steering Group meeting at the end of November 2024. The Governance Board has decided not to postpone to next year the evaluation of the website and the budget raised to allow for a more robust

evaluation. Discussions covered the evaluation proposal and an update on the site delivery plan.

8. The RIS project is moving forward with the delivery partner commencing the build for test phase. An extension to the Legal Choices data sharing agreement to cover the provision and use within the development of the RIS has been signed. At the end of November we met with the delivery partner to discuss data requirements for this phase and shared data.

(D) EVENTS

9. CRL's Roundtable Event on 26 February is generating a high level of interest with invitations have been accepted by key participants and stakeholders, and others requesting to attend. The event will address issues relating to Unregulated Legal Services in the light of the research undertaken for CRL by David Mort of IRN. The research can be found [here](#).
10. A CRL contingent will be attending the LSB's Annual Conference on 6 March in London, an event that is always informative and a good networking opportunity.

(E) CONSULTATION RESPONSES

11. Since the last meeting of the Board, CRL has responded to various external consultations, the full responses of which can be found [here](#). These included responses on:
 - i) The LS's consultation on their draft 2025 Business Plan
 - ii) The Office for Legal Complaints (OLC) consultation on the 2025/26 Business Plan and Budget for the Legal Ombudsman.

(F) COMMUNICATIONS: 20 October 2024 – 20 January 2025

(Previous reporting period – 20 August 2024 – 20 October 2024)

12. Since 20 October 2024, CRL has run the following communications campaigns and provided support as follows:

Campaigns

- Transparency project continuation – updates to the SMART badge, landing page design and verification pages for consumers (in liaison with SC and Yoshki).

- Creation of new CRL 3-year strategy web page and publication video – published in November 2024. Included in the Autumn 2024 CILEX Journal.
- Publication of new CRL 2025-2027 Corporate Plan in January 2025 - press release 8 January 2025 (see below for press coverage).
- CPD campaign – reminder emails for 2024 and set up of 2025 CPD sampling exercise. Creation of new CPD sampling webpage. Creation of emails and contact lists for relevant target groups via dotDigital. Addition of new Barbri CPD training resources to the CRL website.
- Publication of the IRN Research paper (unregulated legal services) including press release – November 2024.

13. The Policy and Stakeholder Engagement Team also provided communications support to the Executive Team and wider team for:

- Review of Client Care letters and complaints communications for 2024. Updates to the CRL Client Care Letters .pdf document.
- DT Hearings information added to the website (including Zoom links) ahead of hearings.
- Continuation of Spindogs quote review for decommissioning of Regulation Matters website.
- Publication of Coroners Court information (CRL been working in partnership with the Bar Standards Board and the SRA to update the Coroners' Court resources).
- Practice Rights LSB application for updates approved. Documents updated on the website for each specialist area.
- Updates to the Financial Sanctions web page, application fees information updates and OFSI Sanctions Risk Assessment.
- CookieBot - new CRL account set up to ensure cookie banner compliance with *Google Consent Mode 2¹*. New CookieBot account set up November. Liaison with Spindogs for new banner set up on the CRL website.
- Update to the Current OFSA general licence - replaced by INT/2024/5334756 on 29 October 2024. Website update, news post and social media.
- CRL Roundtable event 26 February 2025 (London, in person) - Materials preparation (banners, pens and pads). Liaison with external suppliers and venue coordination.
- Emails to all ACCA members in relation to practising certificate renewals via dotDigital.
- CPD 2024 non-compliance reminder emails sent out via dotDigital

- Publication of the IRN research document relating to the Unregulated Legal sector – including press release (26 November).
- Review of CRL's Recruitment Pack for SB ahead of new recruitment campaign
- 2025 Practising Certificate design – main certificate and practice rights certificates design in liaison with CILEX.
- October, November and December CRL Newsletters published (see open rates below).
- CRL's Regulator Performance Assessment to LSB 2024 – return document checks and proof-reading.

Consultations

None for reporting period.

4. CRL Press Coverage

CRL 2025 Corporate Plan:

<https://www.solicitorsjournal.com/sjarticle/cilex-regulation-sets-priorities-for-2025>

[CILEX still undecided on handing regulatory control of members to Solicitors Regulation Authority | Law Gazette](#)

[CILEX Regulator Still Faces Uncertainty About Its Future - Law360 UK](#)

<https://todaysfamilylawyer.co.uk/cilex-regulation-sets-out-its-priorities-for-delivering-forward-thinking-evidenced-based-legal-regulation-in-2025/>

[CILEx Regulation sets out its priorities for delivering forward thinking evidenced-based legal regulation in 2025](#)

IRN Research

[Todays Wills and Probate - CILEX Regulation publishes research on unregulated legal providers and calls for action to protect consumers](#)

[Todays family lawyer - CILEx Regulation publishes research on unregulated legal providers and calls for action to protect consumers](#)

5. CRL editorial

Solicitors Journal – Transparency Rule Change piece from J Barwick – published 04.12.24

<https://www.solicitorsjournal.com/sjarticle/cilex-regulation?pass=h2mk1lho9j>

CILEX Journal content created by PSC and verified by subject area specialists – published 05.12.24. [The Threat of Economic Crime and CRL’s new 2025-2027 Corporate Strategy.](#)

6. Work has also continued for ongoing projects including:

- **Website monitoring and edits**– ongoing.
- **Google Analytics** – Reporting on engagement stats for CRL website and Regulation Matters.
- **Decommissioning of the Regulation Matters website**
 - This project has been delayed due to staff changes at Spindogs. Currently negotiating on the proposed costings. Proposal is to first update the functionality on the CRL website to allow for the addition of Features and Case Studies. Once this has been tested, proven to work effectively and all relevant content moved across, the Reg Matters site will then be taken down.
- **LegalTech** – horizon scanning for innovation initiatives including lawtech and AI activity.
- **BAU communications** – scheduling throughout the year including content creation for: social media, news posts, monthly newsletter and CILEX Journal.

CRL’s communication channels continue to show steady engagement across our main platforms, including the CRL website, social media and newsletters.

7. Website and Newsletter Engagement

CRL newsletter email open rates:

Edition	Open Rate
October 2024	37%
November 2024	39%
December 2024	50%
January 2025	TBC
Industry Standard	15-35%

8. CRL Press Releases

Date	Press release
January 2024	CRL Press release - 2025 Corporate Plan
November 2024	CRL Press release - IRN research on unregulated legal services providers AI Use By Unregulated Legal Service Providers Creates Risk - Law360

9. Engagement and Reach

The following is a summary of CRL's communications engagement* and reach for the reporting period:

Channel	20 June 24 – 20 August 24	20 August to 20 October 24	20 October to 20 January 25	Highest engagement (for reporting period)
CRL Website	Total users: 11,942 Engaged sessions: 32,218	Total users: 12,562 Engaged sessions: 30,155	Total users: 14,888 Engaged sessions: 23,676	Top 5 pages views: 1. Practitioners Directory – 12,959 views 2. Schedules – 5,404 views 3. Home page – 4,248 views 4. Resource library – 2,874 views 5. Chartered legal executives – 2,697 views
LinkedIn followers	4887	4928	4952	Linkedin posts with the highest engagement (top 3): 1. New 2025-2027 Corporate Strategy publication – 7.65% 2. November Board update – 6.82% 3. Enforcement Team Job adverts – 6.15%
LI average post engagement rate*	5.26%	3.50%	4.85%	
Twitter followers	Currently unable to access 'X' analytics	Currently unable to access 'X' analytics	Currently unable to access 'X' analytics	Twitter posts with highest the engagement: (top 3) (Currently unable to access Twitter 'X' analytics - upgrade required)
Twitter average post engagement rate**	Approx 2.5%	Tbc	Tbc	

Regulation Matters website	Total users: 327 Engaged sessions: 143	Total users: 311 Engaged sessions: 160	Total users: 595 Engaged sessions: 242	Top 5 page views: 1. Home page – 279 views 2. Feature Independent practice rights now – 36 views 3. Case studies - Advocacy – 31 views 4. Feature – keep things simple: new work based learning portfolio guidance – 27 views 5. Feature - Your membership renewal – make sure you're prepared – 22 views
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*Industry standards: 2% and above is considered good engagement

**0.33 to 1% is considered very high