December 2009

Dear Consultee

Joint consultation by the Solicitors Regulation Authority, Bar Standards Board and ILEX Professional Standards on advocacy standards

We are pleased to publish the enclosed consultation paper on quality standards for criminal advocates. This paper represents a joint commitment between the SRA, BSB and ILEX Professional Standards to developing common standards that can be applied across our respective professions with a view to fostering consistent standards of advocacy throughout the legal profession.

We are attempting to develop common standards that can be applied to all advocates in all areas of practice. This will require ensuring that standards and their associated competencies are applicable in a wide range of contexts. This is a significant task and we therefore plan to undertake it incrementally starting where there has been greatest interest in the consistency of advocacy competence and performance, namely criminal practice. This consultation paper therefore seeks views on proposed common standards for criminal advocates.

Ensuring that advocates are practising to expected standards is fundamental to the justice system. The public must have confidence that their lawyer is competent to represent their best interests in court. The issues raised in this consultation paper therefore have wide reaching effects and we are keen therefore to hear from anyone who has views on the proposed advocacy standards.

The consultation paper will appear on our respective websites. The deadline for responses is 22 March 2010. The addresses for responses are:

Solicitors, solicitor firms and related organisations should reply to:

Advocacy Standards consultation
Education and Training Unit
Solicitors Regulation Authority
Ipsley Court, Berrington Close
Redditch
B98 9TD
Trainingconsultations@sra.org.uk

Barristers, Chambers, Specialist Bar Associations, Circuits and other Bar related organisations should reply to:
Legal executives and related organisations should reply to:

ILEX Professional Standards
Luane Nesbit
ILEX Professional Standards
Kempston Manor, Kempston
Bedford MK42 7AB
info@ilexstandards.org.uk

Organisations that have an association with each of our bodies such as the Legal Services Commission, Ministry of Justice etc, should reply to the Bar Standards Board address. If you are unsure to whom you should respond please contact Oliver Hanmer at ohanmer@barstandardsboard.org.uk

We look forward to receiving your responses

Yours faithfully

Peter Williamson
Chair, Solicitors Regulation Authority

Ruth Deech
Chair, Bar Standards Board

Alan Kershaw
Chair, ILEX Professional Standards