

Council Update

7 May 2004

De-linked Practising Certificates (PCs)

Council was advised that the CEO was working with the Attorney-General's Chambers to review the Act to enable changes to be made to introduce de-linked PCs which was a proposal of the Society announced at the opening of Legal Year 2003.

An E-Annual Report

Ms Malathi Das advised Council that the Publications Committee had proposed two amendments to the Legal Profession (General Meetings) By-Laws, namely to provide for the notice of meeting to be also sent via electronic communication and to provide for the annual report and the accounts to be transmitted by electronic communication.

Council accepted the proposed amendments which would be sent to the Attorney-General's Chambers for review.

A PrimeLaw Commitment Certification Programme for Law Practices

Mr Leo Cheng Suan, as Chairman of the PrimeLaw Committee, advised the meeting that the Committee had decided to work on a commitment programme certification for law practices that either engaged consultants to prepare for the standard or applied to the Society to obtain the quality mark. Such law practices would obtain a certificate from the Society which may be advertised to their clients and their professional indemnity insurers. Such a scheme was in place in the United Kingdom. Council had no objection to the idea in principle.

The proposal was shared with members who attended the dialogue session on PrimeLaw organised by the Society on 11 May 2004.

First Status Report on a Mentor Programme for Young Lawyers

Mr Montague Choy, as co-chair of the Young Lawyers Committee ('YLC'), advised Council that the YLC would present a final report on a pilot mentor programme. This programme would be introduced with 40 senior practitioners acting as mentors. The YLC committee would match a mentor and mentee to provide counselling, leadership development and professional development for a young lawyer.

A second status report would be given to Council at its meeting in June.

A Mass Call Party

Mr Montague Choy reported that a Mass Call Party would be held on 29 May 2004 at the Marriott Hotel. This event, co-organised by the Young Lawyers and Social and Welfare Committees, was the first of its kind. The event was intended to not only give newly-called young lawyers a chance to enjoy their special day but also introduce them to the Society. There would be a poolside dinner followed by a session at the pub and discotheque, Bar None.

Report by the Chairman of the Criminal Legal Aid Scheme ('CLAS') Committee

Mr Sant Singh, Chairman of the CLAS Committee, appeared before Council and shared the plans for CLAS in the coming year:

- 1 To increase the number of active volunteers to a group of 200-250 members.
- 2 To hold free training sessions for young volunteers to better equip them with the skills to conduct criminal trials. The first session had been held in April 2004 and was well received.
- 3 To raise a target sum of \$170,000 at the Society's Annual Charity Golf Tournament for CLAS, to be held on 29 August 2004.
- 4 To review and improve CLASNews to make it more relevant for members and volunteers.
- 5 To give more recognition to CLAS volunteers by inviting them as guests to events organised by the Society.

Council agreed that CLAS volunteers had to be better recognised for the invaluable contributions they made. Council supported the proposal to invite CLAS volunteers who completed assignments as guests of the Society's various social or international events. The first event where CLAS volunteers would be invited would be the luncheon talk by His Excellency, the United States Ambassador on 26 May 2004.

Subordinate Courts Proposed Guidelines for the Appointment, Removal, Training and Execution of the Seizure and Sale by Ad Hoc Bailiffs Appointed by the Subordinate Courts under Section 15A Subordinate Courts Act

The proposed guidelines were approved by Council. The guidelines included consultation with the Law Society on the law practices to be appointed to the panel of bailiffs; the stipulation that law practices must comply with s 78 of the Legal Profession Act when employing a staff to be appointed

as bailiff; and that complaints against bailiffs would be referred to the Head Bailiff except complaints of dishonesty against a lawyer which would be referred to the Society.

Council noted that the Ethics Committee would draw up a Practice Direction to state that a judgment creditor's law practice could not appoint its own staff as the bailiff for the execution of the practice's writ of seizure. Council also noted that the Society's mandatory professional indemnity policy would exclude cover for bailiff work.

The Society's Annual Dinner and Dance

Council agreed that this year's Annual Dinner and Dance on 25 September 2004 would have a theme to make the night more enjoyable and would be accompanied with a four-course fusion cuisine dinner. The concept paper presented by the Social and Welfare Committee was approved by Council.

The Society's Shop, Jus Curio

The Finance Committee of Council made several recommendations to improve Jus Curio which included the stocking of more law books for sale, to form tie-ups with other

Law Societies for the sale of novelty items, as well as to provide a corporate gift service to members and law practices. Council accepted all the recommendations.

Participation in the NUS Career Fair 2005

The NUS Career Fair was organised for graduating students to learn about pupillage placements from the participating law practices. Council decided that the Law Society should participate in next year's Fair to provide a platform for small law firms to showcase pupillage opportunities in their practices.

The Society would send out a fax mailer to law practices with less than six lawyers to gauge their interest to participate at the Career Fair.

Report on the Renewal of Practising Certificates (PCs) for the Practice Year Ending 31 March 2005

Council noted that the number of lawyers who did not renew their PCs was almost similar to last year. The number of lawyers who did not renew their PCs as of 30 April 2004 was 348. The figure was 338 for the previous year.

**Harmon PTI Advertisement
repeat from SLG feb 04
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