



Solicitors  
**Regulation**  
Authority

# **SRA Summary of Performance Measures and Statistics**

September 2009

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This report provides a summary of the work of the SRA. It allows our stakeholders to monitor our performance against our strategy. Further details of our strategy can be found on our website at [www.sra.org.uk/sra/strategy.page](http://www.sra.org.uk/sra/strategy.page). If you have any feedback or queries regarding the report, please contact us at [managementinformation@sra.org.uk](mailto:managementinformation@sra.org.uk)

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### The SRA regulates

- **118,562** practising solicitors, with a further **30,338** non-practising
- **333** registered European lawyers
- **1,906** registered foreign lawyers
- **10,993** firms, of which **105** are now Legal Disciplinary Partnerships

### In the third quarter of 2009 we have

- effected **32** interventions
- issued **46** sets of proceedings at the SDT
- issued **97** reprimands
- risk assessed **3,047** allegations
- concluded **1,951** casework investigations
- answered **15,563** calls to our Ethics Guidance Helpline
- **1,299** claims in progress on the Compensation Fund representing a liability of **£63.5 m**
- distributed **£7.6 m** from monies held on statutory trust following intervention
- undertaken **205** practice standards monitoring visits to firms

### And in doing so we have...

- answered **83%** enquiries from the public within 30 seconds
- effected **100%** interventions within target
- issued proceedings at the SDT within an average of **5.7** months (6 month target)
- answered **84%** calls to the Ethics Guidance Helpline within 45 seconds
- seen a **20%** reduction in complaints about firms visited by the Practice Standards Unit last quarter
- kept YTD spending within **1%** of forecast
- met required standards in **93%** quality checks on our casework investigations
- met required standards in **98%** quality checks on our applications and enquiries

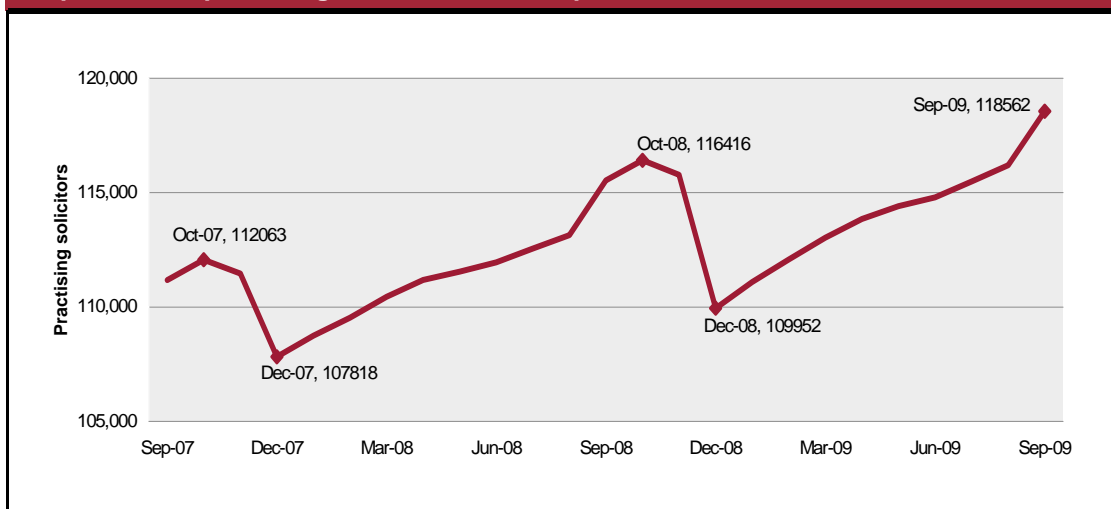
# The Regulated Community

## Solicitors in England and Wales

The SRA regulates solicitors and firms across England and Wales, as well as those working as registered European lawyers and registered foreign lawyers. Our purpose is to protect the public by ensuring that solicitors meet high standards, and by acting when risks are identified.

The practising population continues to grow year on year with 2.6% more solicitors practising at the end of September than at the same point in 2008. There are almost 149,000 solicitors on the roll, 80% of whom are currently practising (118,562.)

### Population of practising solicitors since September 2007

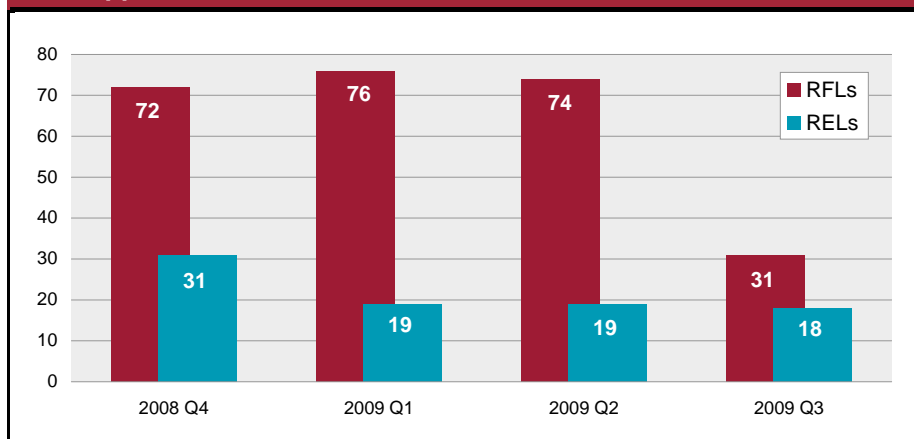


The annual practising certificate (PC) renewal process gives a seasonal pattern to the population size for practising solicitors, which can be clearly seen from the graph above. The peak is in October of each year when PCs are renewed and the fall off from this point occurs as those which have not been renewed are terminated.

### Registered foreign lawyers and registered European lawyers

In addition to solicitors on the roll with practising certificates, there are also a number of registered foreign lawyers (RFL's) and registered European lawyers (REL's) who are regulated by the SRA.

### New applications for RFLs and RELs last 12 months



New RFL applications received in quarter 3 were less than half the number received in any of the previous three quarters. There has been a recent increase in fees payable by RFL's which may be partially responsible for this fall.

# The Regulated Community

## Solicitors' firms

The following table shows a breakdown of solicitors' firms by type at the end of each quarter. The numbers are based on a count of head offices recorded by the SRA.

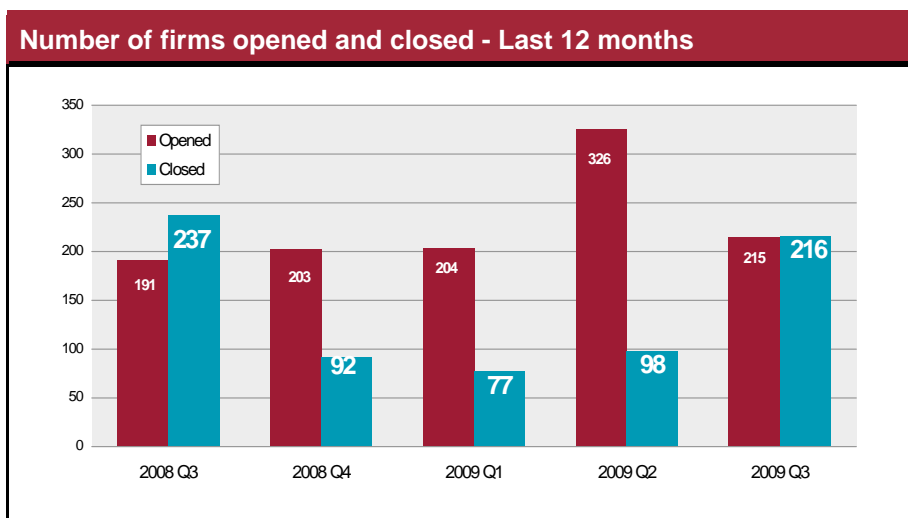
Snapshot by type of firm					
Firm Type	September 2008	December 2008	March 2009	June 2009	September 2009
Incorporated Company	1,275	1,333	1,380	1,467	1,541
Limited Liability Partnerships	885	915	972	1,067	1,101
Multinational / Overseas	219	215	213	202	169
Partnership	4,150	4,126	4,073	3,967	3,897
Sole Practitioner	4,121	4,133	4,155	4,242	4,095
Other	47	48	50	48	48
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,697</b>	<b>10,770</b>	<b>10,843</b>	<b>10,993</b>	<b>10,851</b>

The third quarter of the year saw a fall in the number of sole practitioner firms and partnerships but at the same time a rise in incorporated companies and limited liability partnerships.

This fall in numbers was expected in the third quarter as firms often cease trading at a time which coincides with the end of the indemnity insurance year. The number of firms at the end of September is more than 150 more than at the same time last year; although there was a fall in the number of firms, the year on year trend remains upwards.

## Firms opening and closing

During the last 12 months 948 new firms have opened and 483 firms have closed. A number of firms have merged during this time resulting in an overall increase of around 150 firms in this time. Although there is a peak in firm closures in the third quarter, the number in 2009 was lower than the figure for the same period last year. Firm closures in the third quarter of 2009 are 9% less than the same period in 2008, and the number of new firms opening is 13% up on the 2008 quarter 3 figure.



## Setting the Standards

- To set standards for entry to the profession, professional behaviours and continuing professional development so as to maintain and enhance the competence, performance and ethical conduct of solicitors and uphold the rule of law.
- To set standards for organisations offering legal services.

### Standards of entry

Routes to Qualification				
By admission date	12 m to Sep 08	12 m to Sep 09	variance	% variance
Qualifying Law Degree	3,791	4,225	+ 434	+ 11%
Conversion Course	2,276	2,294	+ 18	+ 1%
QLTT *	2,019	2,226	+ 207	+ 10%
Other	188	216	+ 28	+ 15%
<b>Total admitted</b>	<b>8,274</b>	<b>8,961</b>	<b>+ 687</b>	<b>+ 8%</b>

\* Qualified lawyers transfer test

47% of those admitted in the 12 months to September 09 completed a qualifying Law Degree. 26% had undertaken post graduate study following a non-law degree (often referred to as a 'conversion course', specifically the Post Graduate Diploma in Law or Common Professional Examination (CPE)).

25% of individuals admitted to the roll had qualified under the 'Qualified Lawyers Transfer Regulations' which allow overseas lawyers and other UK qualified lawyers to become qualified solicitors in England and Wales. To do this they must satisfy requirements regarding experience of practising the law of England and Wales and also pass the Qualified Lawyers Transfer Test (QLTT). The increase seen in QLTT applicants in the last 12 months was the result of changes in the regulations which led to a large number of applications before the new regulations came into force in September 2008. A more thorough revision of the rules is currently underway.

The remaining 2% of individuals qualified via another route. They may have achieved qualifications equivalent to a qualifying law degree or CPE, or have been eligible for exemption from the usual requirements.

## Setting the Standards

### Education & Training

The Education and Training unit ensure that the training provided to new entrants to the profession, as well as training and continuing professional development of existing solicitors, is of a high and consistent standard. They authorise providers of the Legal Practice Course, the Professional Skills Course, training contracts and continuing professional development.

#### Legal Practice Course (LPC)

LPC providers are initially authorised by the SRA and are then required to submit an annual report. There is provision for the SRA to visit the providers to monitor them where necessary. Changes to the LPC will come into effect in September 2010, however 16 providers are already working within the new requirements. A further 21 providers are expected to be authorised during the fourth quarter of 2009. The SRA has recently recruited 86 external examiners who will ensure that the provision of the new course is consistent across the country.

#### Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and Professional Skills Course (PSC)

The Education and Training Unit authorise providers of CPD and the PSC and monitor them by way of delegate questionnaire. In the last quarter there were 53 new applications for authorisation for external CPD providers and 116 applications for authorisation from in-house providers. Also 196 existing providers were monitored in this time.

Further information about this monitoring will be available in our next report.

#### Training contracts and work-based learning

Firms of solicitors wishing to take trainees, must be authorised to do so by the SRA and are subject to monitoring by the SRA. Firms must also apply to the SRA for permission to make variations such as taking on additional trainees, or arranging secondments to other organisations as part of training.

In the last quarter, 224 training contract applications were received and 43 training contract providers were visited for the purpose of monitoring.

The work-based learning pilot, launched in September 2008 continues investigating a new approach to the assessment of trainees during their period of experience in practice. 26 applicants were approved in April to begin their work-based learning this September. An initial report has been presented to the SRA's Education & Training Committee, with an evaluation report due to follow in November. Monitoring of firms involved in the pilot will take place from September to December 2009.

#### Education and Training policy work

Work is also continuing in a number of areas of policy development. Revision to the rules concerning the transfer of qualified lawyers from other jurisdictions is underway with draft regulations and an Equality Impact Assessment now completed. Implementation of new rules is planned for September 2010.

The quality and standards framework project ran a public consultation on their 'Agenda for Quality' during the third quarter of 2009 and analysis of responses is currently taking place.

A handbook for the Higher Rights of Audience scheme has been approved during September, and course providers have had the opportunity to express interest and provide their feedback.

## Support & Monitoring

- To provide information, advice and support to solicitors and organisations to help them comply with the standards set.
- To operate processes to monitor compliance with standards, so as to identify cases requiring remedial, investigative or other regulatory action.

### Ethics Guidance Service

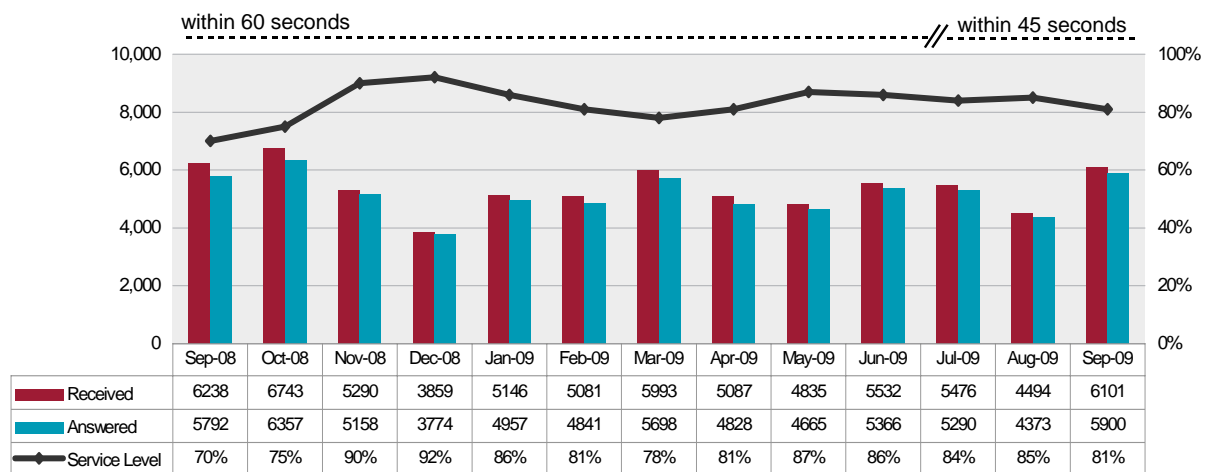
The **Professional Ethics Guidance Team** provides confidential guidance to help solicitors comply with their professional obligations. The Helpline is open 5 days a week, and also deals with written and email enquiries.

Helpline staff provide guidance on complex issues such as conflicts of interest and retainers. The most common areas of enquiry during the last quarter were:

- confidentiality and disclosure
- accounts rules
- Practising Certificates

The team produce guidance available on our website covering topics of enquiry and important topics such as preparation for Alternative Business Structures which has been updated this quarter.

### Calls to the Ethics Guidance Helpline



The service level for the Ethics Guidance Helpline changed during 2009. Prior to July 2009, staff aimed to answer calls within 60 seconds. This was reduced in July 2009 to 45 seconds. The service level on the graph above shows the percentage of calls that were answered within these times.

The Ethics Guidance Helpline has been working to increasingly stretching targets through 2009. In quarter 1 the target for answering calls was raised from 70% within 60 seconds to 80% within this time frame. In quarter 3 the target time to answer a call was reduced from 60 seconds to 45 seconds. Despite this, the Helpline has continued to meet this target throughout quarter 3, answering 83.5% of calls within service level.

Furthermore, the proportion of calls abandoned during quarter 3 is the lowest for any quarter since 2007. Just 3.2% of calls received between July and September 2009 were abandoned.

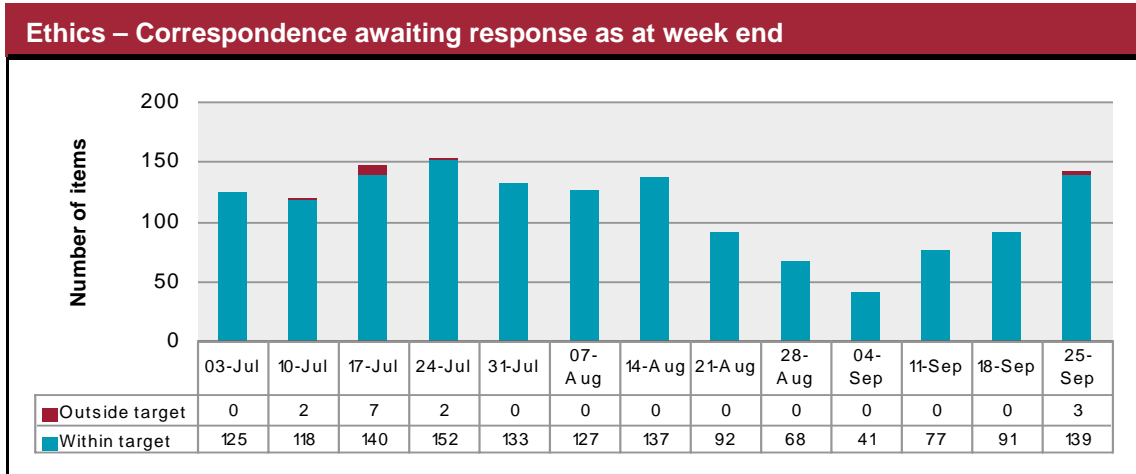
Whilst the number of calls received to the Ethics Guidance Helpline fell by more than 6% compared with the same period last year, the number of answered calls rose marginally to some 15,563 calls - again the highest number since 2007.

Since the profession are now able to access guidance on ethical issues online, we expect call volumes to continue to reduce. The reduced abandonment rate also minimises the need for repeat calls.

## Support & Monitoring

The volume of correspondence received by the **Ethics Guidance** unit continues to rise each quarter. A sudden increase in correspondence and telephone calls to the helpline. This was due to renewal of PC's and issues with indemnity insurance and the filing of accountants reports which increased the workload of the team .

In quarter 3 a total of 1,134 written enquiries were received, up from 1,099 in quarter 2 and 1,039 in quarter 1. The team aim to respond to all correspondence within 10 working days. The graph above shows how many items are outstanding at the end of each week and of those how many are still within the 10 day target. In quarter 3 less than 1% of this correspondence was outside target.



The average level of outstanding correspondence at the end of each week in quarter 3 is 112 items, lower than quarter 1 (123) and quarter 2 (153).

## SRA Roadshows

The SRA holds regulation roadshows for solicitors across England and Wales.

The roadshows offer an opportunity to find out more about the work of the SRA, ask questions and raise any concerns.

In the six months to September 2009, roadshows were held in Llandudno, Manchester, Birmingham, Preston and London attracting over 500 attendees in total.

There are a further three roadshows taking place in the final quarter of the year, details of which can be found on the SRA website:

[www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/update.page](http://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/update.page)



## Client Care Seminars

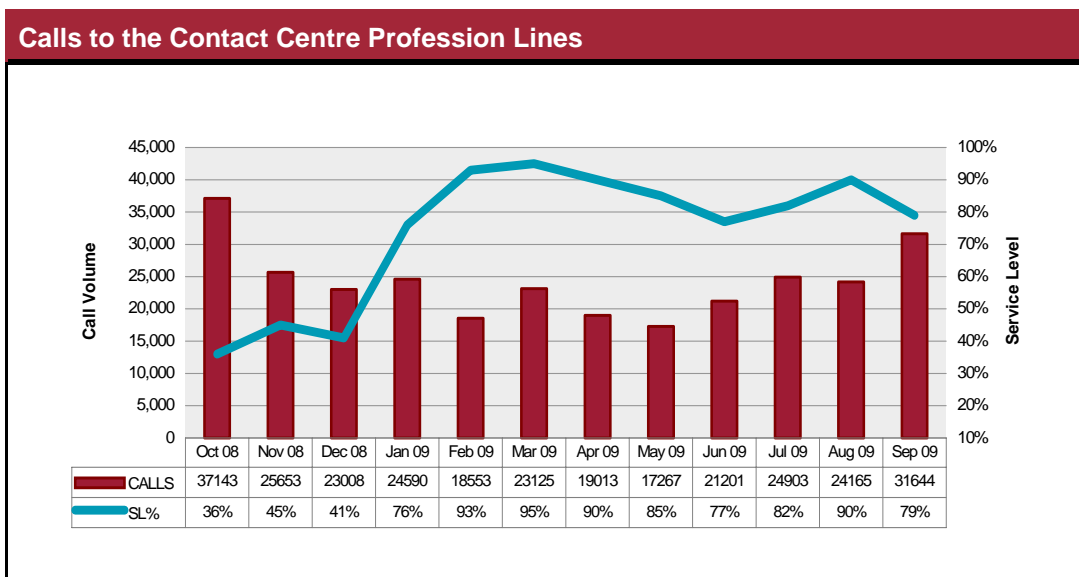
The **Practice Standards Unit (PSU)** aims to improve standards of practice in the profession through the promotion of client care and practice excellence. This is achieved in part through an educational programme of client care seminars which take place around the country. Up to the end of September 2009, 9 client care seminars have taken place with a further 28 taking place in the final quarter of 2009. Solicitors in the areas where the seminars are to be held will receive a mailing in advance to notify them of the seminars.

## Support & Monitoring

### Enquiries from the profession

The **Contact Centre** answer general enquiries and queries, both from the profession and the public.

The Contact Centre offers dedicated lines for the profession, students and the public as well as a number of seasonal lines which take calls relating to specific areas of enquiry such as solicitor annual enrolment, PC applications / renewals and firm based regulation. The dedicated firm based regulation line has received over 6,000 enquiries concerning the Legal Services Act 2007 since its inception in January 2009.



Over the last quarter, the **Contact Centre** received 80,712 calls from the profession of which 52,279 calls were to the profession line and 28,433 calls to the seasonal lines. The majority of the calls into the seasonal lines were via the student lines with 24,515 calls last quarter. The contact centre aim to answer 70% of calls within 60 seconds. The overall level achieved over the third quarter of 2009 was 83%, slightly lower than the previous quarter, but still above their target.

## Support & Monitoring

### Monitoring visits to firms

As well as providing an educational programme of client care seminars the **Practice Standards Unit** (PSU) aims to assist practitioners to improve standards and service by monitoring compliance with the rules of professional conduct. This is achieved through monitoring visits carried out by the unit.

Firms are profiled for monitoring visits by the Risk Assessment & Designation Centre. The visits aim to raise standards by obtaining agreement and consensus from firms for improvement where any breaches of the rules are identified.

PSU Monitoring Visits			
Volumes	Q1 2009	Q2 2009	Q3 2009
No. of Visits	218	214	205
On-Site Days	530	512	433

A sharper, risk-based approach is leading to fewer short visits this year, with an increase in longer, fuller visits instead. The focus has therefore shifted from numbers of firms visited to numbers of days spent on-site where we are able to spend more time actively giving thorough support and advice to firms. On-site days is based on the number of on-site days per person per firm visited.

The Practice Standards Advisers will give a grade after each visit that takes place.

The systematic grading system is based on a 1 to 9 scale, 1 being the least serious and 9 being the most serious. It makes use of the SRA risk classification, but also incorporates other factors including the impact on clients of any breaches identified.

PSU Monitoring Visit Grades				
Overall Grade	Q4 2008	Q1 2009	Q2 2009	Q3 2009
1	9	2	0	0
2-4	67	63	45	37
5-7	146	135	155	134
8-9	12	12	13	11
Awaiting Grade	1	7	1	23
<b>Total Visits</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>219</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>205</b>
<b>% Grade 5 - 9</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>79%</b>	<b>71%</b>

A firm receiving an overall grade of 1 will have had no or only minor breaches of SRA rules and regulations. There would be no impact on clients and no further action would be required as a result of the visit. At the other end of the scale, a firm receiving a grade of 9 will most likely have had systematic and serious breaches of SRA rules and regulations with a significant impact on clients and further action would need to be taken promptly.

A combined score is shown for grades 5 - 9 as these grades represent those firms that had either serious breaches of SRA rules and regulations or required a referral to another part of the SRA for further investigation. The increase in grade 5 –9 seen in quarter two is primarily caused by a decrease in grade 4 and a subsequent increase in grade 5.

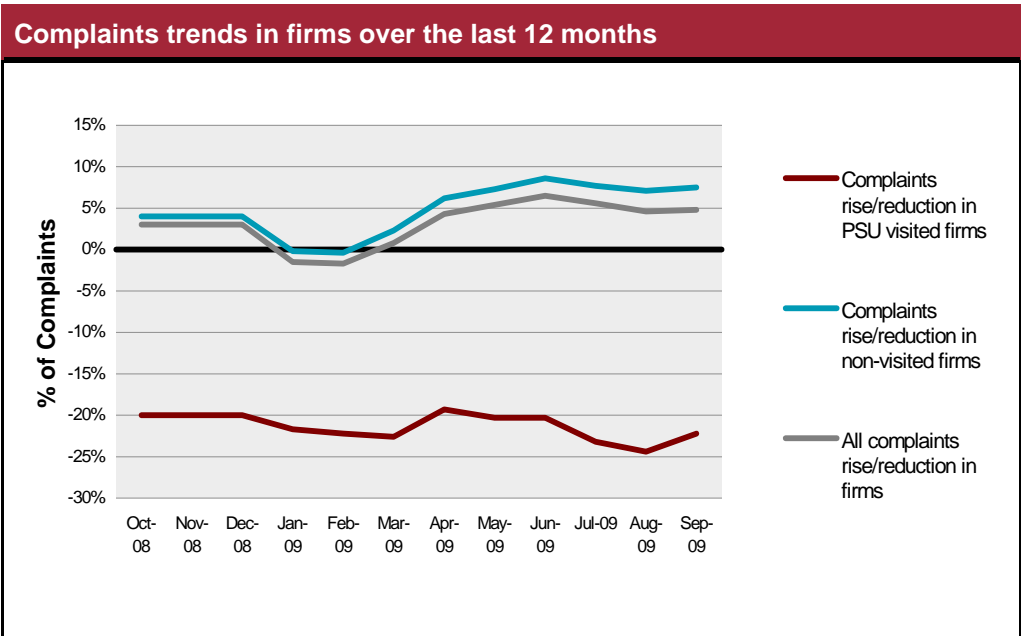
Following a visit, PSU may make referrals to other SRA units for further action or for information. 1.5% of firms were formally referred to another SRA Unit for action in the last quarter, as compared with an overall percentage of 4.4% over the 12 months to June.

In addition, 11 intelligence referrals were made by PSU in the last quarter (33 in the last 12 months) where information was shared with other departments.

# Support & Monitoring

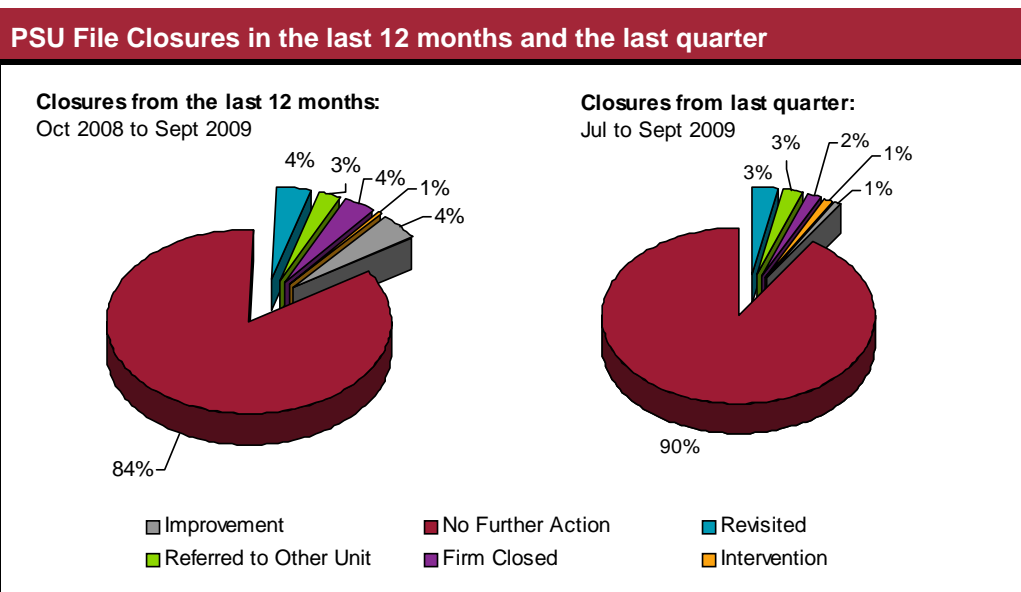
## Reviews following monitoring visits

Following each visit, desk-based reviews are planned at 9 and 15 months to determine whether improvements have been made, or any further action (such as scheduling a revisit) is required.



The graph above is based on numbers of new complaints referred to the Legal Complaints Service and SRA.

Firms receiving a monitoring visit from PSU generate between 19 and 24% fewer complaints following a visit, whereas firms who have not received a visit from the unit generate between 0 and +9% complaints over the same period.



Each visit file is given a final outcome upon closure. In the last 12 months 88% of files have been closed with either 'Improvement' or 'No Further Action'. Visit files are usually reviewed both 9 and 15 months after the visit to see how the firm has progressed. At these review periods a decision can be made to either close the file or extend the review period further if a firm's progress is not satisfactory.

# Consumer Protection, Enforcement & Discipline

- To secure effective insurance and compensation arrangements for the profession to protect consumers in cases of client loss, for example, through negligence, dishonesty or insolvency.
- To tackle unacceptable professional or organisational performance, misconduct and dishonesty by firm, fair and timely regulatory and disciplinary action.

## Information & intelligence received

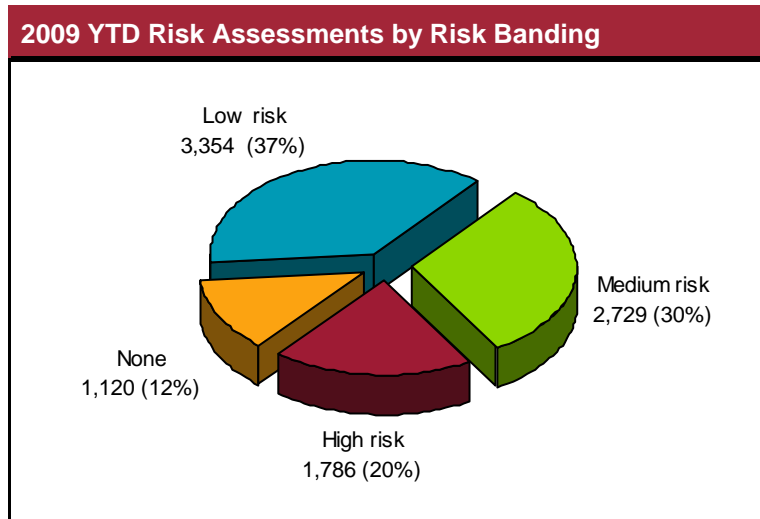
The Risk Assessment & Designation Centre (RADC) is the primary gateway for the receipt of regulatory information other than confidential intelligence, which is gathered by our Fraud & Confidential Intelligence Bureau (FCIB).

The RADC and FCIB work in parallel operating a consistent risk assessment process designed to be compliant with the Government's principles of better regulation:

<b>Proportionate</b>	Regulators should only intervene when necessary. Remedies should be appropriate to the risk posed, and costs identified and minimised.
<b>Accountable</b>	Regulators must be able to justify decisions, and be subject to public scrutiny.
<b>Consistent</b>	Government rules and standards must be joined up and implemented fairly.
<b>Transparent</b>	Regulators should be open, and keep regulations simple and user-friendly.
<b>Targeted</b>	Regulation should be focused on the problem, and minimise side effects.

Reports of regulatory information are assessed using an objective system that incorporates definitions of risk based on our Code of Conduct 2007. This is coupled with a subjective assessment of intent, of the credibility of the information presented and an assessment of background information held about the firm or individual in question.

An overall risk score is generated which is used to designate the report to the most appropriate operational unit within the SRA.



Each item received into the RADC and FCIB is assessed for risk and is categorised as either high, medium, low or no risk. The chart above shows the output from these two units by risk banding for the first nine months of this year. Half of the items assessed were considered to be high or medium risk.

There are also three categories of compliance risk identified during the risk assessment process. These are efficiency, management and administrative competence, financial issues and legal competence. Further information regarding the SRA's risk based approach can be found on our website ([www.sra.org.uk/sra/strategy/risk.page](http://www.sra.org.uk/sra/strategy/risk.page)). The number of allegations received within each category is analysed further on the following page.

# Consumer Protection, Enforcement & Discipline

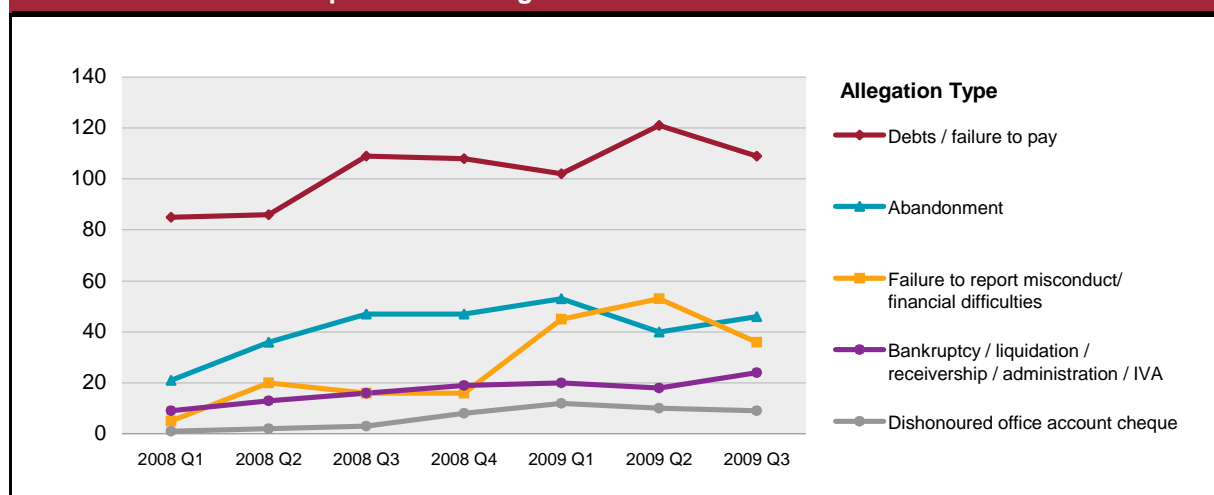
## Allegations received by compliance risk

Total allegations by category		Q4 2008	Q1 2009	Q2 2009	Q3 2009
<b>Efficiency, management and administrative competence</b>		<b>1,307</b>	<b>1,329</b>	<b>1,344</b>	<b>1,709</b>
.. of which..	Character and suitability	956	806	908	1,237
	Conflict of interest	69	77	53	122
	Requirements/ framework of practice	282	446	383	350
<b>Financial</b>		<b>615</b>	<b>686</b>	<b>730</b>	<b>889</b>
.. of which..	Abandonment of practice	47	53	41	46
	Costs/ fees/ referrals	43	68	70	71
	Financial	233	332	353	429
	Fraud/ dishonesty/ money laundering	292	233	266	343
<b>Legal competence</b>		<b>276</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>334</b>	<b>449</b>
.. of which..	Breach of undertaking	156	125	102	167
	Mortgages and property	97	126	169	176
	Professional competence/ client relations	23	49	63	106

Improvements to working processes saw a 25% increase in the number of risk assessments undertaken in quarter 3 2009 as compared to quarter 2. Some allegation types have shown a particular increase, notably financial issues such as failure to account.

The graph below shows the change in some specific allegations which may indicate the increased pressure on solicitors as a result of the current economic situation. The SRA continues to monitor changes in patterns of allegations to promptly identify potential problems within the profession.

## Indicators of economic pressures: allegations received



FCIB collates confidential information and intelligence relating to fraud and dishonesty (and other misconduct) within the profession and as such, has contacts across the SRA, the Legal Complaints Service and various external bodies including the enforcement authorities, financial institutions and other regulators.

FCIB also has responsibility for investigating specific offences under the Solicitors Act 1974, such as bogus solicitors, who are individuals who falsely claim to be a solicitor.

## Fraud & Confidential Intelligence Bureau

Receipts & referrals	Intelligence logged	Referrals made	% High risk referrals	% Med risk referrals	% Low risk referrals
Q1 2009	498	80	54%	31%	15%
Q2 2009	766	154	46%	32%	21%
Q3 2009	783	133	49%	31%	20%

# Consumer Protection, Enforcement & Discipline

## Forensic Investigations

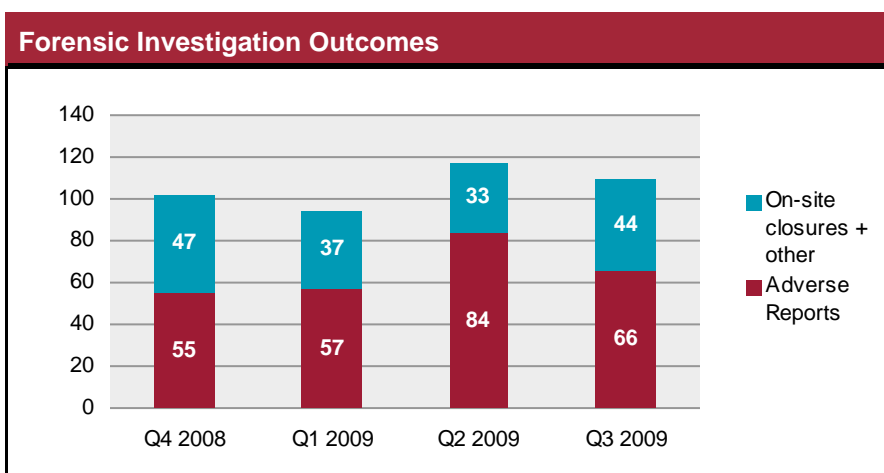
**Forensic Investigations (FI)** carry out targeted investigations of firms following the risk assessment of internal referrals from a variety of departments. Forensic Investigators visit firms and adduce evidence of things such as the misuse of client money, serious misconduct or malpractice, dishonesty, fraud and money laundering.

At the conclusion of an investigation, an on-site certificate is issued to the firm where the identified breaches or conduct are not material or minor corrective action is required following an investigation. Alternatively, where there is evidence of serious breaches of the rules or professional obligations, misconduct or dishonesty an adverse report will be issued which can result in regulatory sanction, disciplinary proceedings and / or intervention. The FI report will be referred to other departments within the SRA responsible for enforcement actions.

### Forensic Investigations summary

Year on year	12 months to Sept 08	12 months to Sept 09	Variance	Monthly average to Sept 09
New investigations authorised	396	522	32%	43.5
Investigations Concluded	415	423	2%	35
Rescinded / Other	73	94	29%	7.8

The table above shows throughput figures for the unit. The number of investigations opened and closed in any one month fluctuates, but the number of investigations authorised year on year shows there has been an increase between the year to September 2008 and the year to September 2009. The closure figures are split to show those investigations that reached conclusion against those that were rescinded where no investigation took place (for example if the firm no longer poses such a risk, has closed down, or where it is appropriate to await the outcome of some other activity). Both have shown an increase year on year, although there was a greater rise in the number of rescissions. Some files are closed for a temporary period, for example if progression on a matter is dependent on progress of other internal or external work. These temporary closures are excluded from these figures and figures for previous quarters have been revised in the chart below as a result of this.



This chart shows the number of closures split by those which involved an adverse report, and other investigations concluded. Some 60% of visits concluded in quarter 3 had an adverse report, a lower proportion than in quarter 2 but greater than the final quarter of 2008 and first of 2009. In quarter 3 2008 66% of visits involved an adverse report.

The number of receipts was slightly higher in quarter 3 than earlier in the year even with a particularly small number of receipts during August. The work in progress for the unit continues to fall, 27% lower in quarter 3 2009 than in quarter 3 2008.

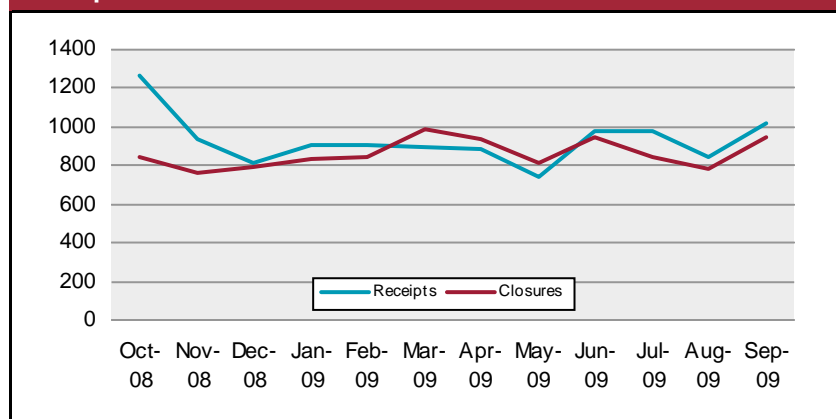
## Consumer Protection, Enforcement & Discipline

### Casework Investigations

Casework Investigations primarily take place within the Conduct Investigation Unit (CIU) and Regulatory Investigations (RIU). CIU deals initially with all third party (non-client) complaints of misconduct received by the SRA as well as referrals of conduct information from the Legal Complaints Service. RIU investigates information about regulatory breaches and deals with adverse reports referred by Forensic Investigations. A small number of complex and multiple investigations are dealt with in Casework Investigations & Operations (CIAO).

### Conduct and regulatory receipts and closures

#### Receipts and Closures



The chart on the left shows new conduct and regulatory investigations, as well as numbers closed each month.

September and October see a peak in regulatory applications each year, whilst numbers of investigations do not show particular seasonal patterns.

June and July saw higher than usual levels of new conduct investigations commencing, but these are now returning to usual levels seen over the year.

The peak in October corresponds with the Practising Certificate renewal period and reflects those Regulatory applications referred to RIU. This seasonal peak is seen every year. The rise in receipts in September 2009 marks the start of this seasonal increase.

#### Outcomes of Casework Investigations

Outcome category	2008 Q4	2009 Q1	2009 Q2	2009 Q3	% variance from last quarter
No regulatory action required	1,196	1,272	1,343	1,149	-14%
Regulatory action taken	363	388	367	341	-7%
Referred to SDT	99	99	116	118	2%
Added to existing DPs	-	-	21	40	90%
Other ongoing action	102	120	119	303	155%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,760</b>	<b>1,879</b>	<b>1,966</b>	<b>1,951</b>	<b>-1%</b>

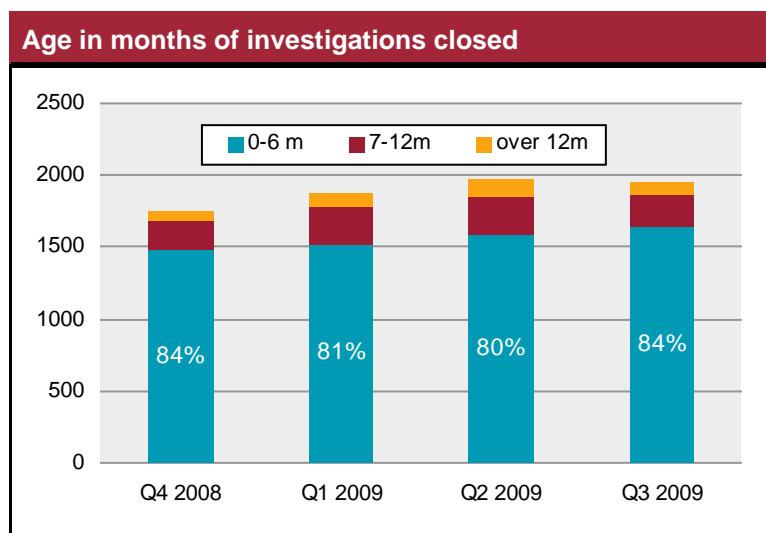
The table above provides an overview of the outcomes for investigations taking place within the caseworking units. The regulatory steps taken are shown on page 17. It should be noted that the number of matters with the outcome of 'SDT referral' will exceed the number of actual tribunal cases, as an individual may be investigated under several conduct or regulatory file references.

In May 2009 a new outcome was created to record where a file is added in to disciplinary proceedings already underway. These were previously counted as 'other ongoing action' and so the two outcomes have now been split. This quarter has seen a large increase in the numbers of files closed due to action going on elsewhere as many matters have been referred to PSU for inclusion in a field-based inspection rather than being dealt with by a desk-based investigation.

## Consumer Protection, Enforcement & Discipline

### Timeliness of Casework Investigations

The chart below shows the age profile of all investigations closed in the last 12 months. In the last quarter, the number of investigations completed has remained around the same level as the previous quarter. However, a higher proportion of these files were closed within 6 months.



### Regulatory Applications

Caseworking units also handle regulatory applications such as those relating to practising certificate conditions, approval of employment or submission of accountants reports.

From 1 July 2009, Section 12 of the Solicitors Act 1974 (as amended) was replaced by Regulation 3 of the Solicitors Practising Regulations 2009. Regulation 3 allows conditions to be placed on a solicitor's practising certificate when that certificate is renewed. The new regulations also enable us to place conditions upon the registration of an REL or RFL (registered European lawyer or registered foreign lawyer) and upon the recognition of a Sole Practitioner.

The conditions may restrict where or in what capacity a solicitor can practise.

### Outcomes

Many low-risk or straightforward Section 12 and Regulation 3 applications are handled by staff within the application-handling units without the need to escalate to caseworking units. The closures here relate only to those cases which were higher-risk or required more in-depth investigation.

The information on page 19 provides a comprehensive picture of the numbers of individuals being made subject to practising or registration conditions.

Of the 228 caseworked Regulation 3 applications concluded this quarter, 69% related to individual who were already subject to Section 12 / Regulation 3 when applying. Of these 158 cases, conditions were continued or varied in 79% of cases, and lifted in 20%. In one case, we exercised our discretion to refuse to issue a practising certificate.

Of the remaining 31% applications from individuals newly subject to Regulation 3, conditions were applied in 44 cases (62%).

6 applications were dealt with in respect of the new SRA Recognised Bodies Regulations 2009 which enable us to place conditions on a firm's recognition. 1 recognition was refused and conditions were placed on two other recognised bodies.

The unit also dealt with over 200 other applications, the majority of which relate to the requirement to file regular accountants reports with the SRA.

# Consumer Protection, Enforcement & Discipline

## Regulatory action & disciplinary outcomes

Investigations into allegations of misconduct may result in a range of outcomes. Where no action is required, this may be because allegations were not found to be upheld, but it may also be the case that there was insufficient evidence available to form a judgement, or that other circumstances have arisen in the meantime (for example, the incapacity of the solicitor involved).

Where issues are identified, there is a scale of possible action to be taken. In order of increasing severity:

**Letter of advice** – this is a letter advising the firm or regulated person that they have breached a rule. It is used where there has been a minor breach and where there is a low likelihood of it being repeated.

**Finding and warning** – this outcome is used where the breach of a rule has had a moderate impact on a client or member of the public and where there is a low/moderate likelihood of the misconduct being repeated.

**Reprimand or severe reprimand** – These two sanctions, severe reprimand being the most harsh, are used where the impact of the misconduct is high. The likelihood of repetition can vary greatly.

**Referral to the Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal (SDT)** – the SDT is an independent tribunal and has wider powers in relation to the application of sanctions than the SRA. We will refer a firm or regulated person to the SDT for a decision when we consider our own powers are insufficient given the seriousness of the misconduct. The SDT has the power to, for example, suspend a solicitor from practice or strike their name from the roll of solicitors. Therefore, a referral is made in the most serious cases.

In addition to these outcomes, we can take other action such as imposing conditions on a solicitor's practising certificate (PC). This is not a disciplinary sanction, but a regulatory measure.

Over the last 12 months, regulatory action taken has included the following:

### Cases subject to regulatory action

Outcome	2008 Q4	2009 Q1	2009 Q2	2009 Q3
Letter of advice	195	187	188	164
Finding & warning	78	98	67	74
Reprimand or severe reprimand	103	87	93	97
Referral for disciplinary proceedings	102	116	109	130

Note: in some cases multiple individuals involved in one case may be subject to the same regulatory action. The figures above show a count of cases resulting in each level of action, not individuals.

Files culminating in referral for Disciplinary proceedings are sent on to our Litigation and Legal Advice Unit who will examine the evidence available and merits of the case before confirming whether proceedings will be issued or an alternative outcome may be suitable.

### Practising Certificate & Registration conditions

#### Application of conditions

Count of individual affected	2008 Q4	2009 Q1	2009 Q2	2009 Q3
Solicitors with PC conditions applied	162	202	191	197
REL's or RFL's with conditions applied	-	-	-	4

The Solicitors' Act 1974 offers discretion with regards to the issue of PCs and allows us to apply conditions where appropriate. For example, an individual may be barred from holding client money, from working in particular areas or law, or may be required to undertake certain training. These are not intended to be punitive, but as pragmatic measures to ensure public protection.

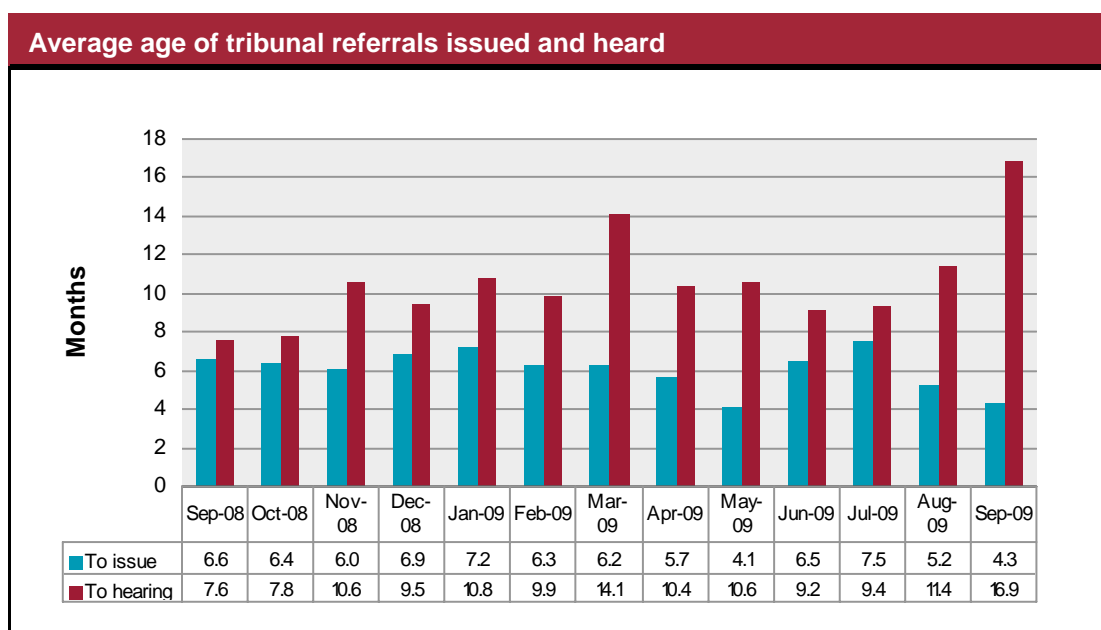
# Consumer Protection, Enforcement & Discipline

## Disciplinary Proceedings

All casework investigations resulting in a referral for disciplinary proceedings are passed to our Litigation and Legal Advice Unit.

Each set of proceedings issued may be the culmination of several different casework investigations concerning the same individuals or firm, that we choose to combine into a single case.

Our Legal Advocates (or solicitors that we appoint) will put together a case to issue before the Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal (SDT), and aim to do so within a target of 6 months. The SDT, in turn, aims to hear matters within 6 months of issue. This quarter, we issued 46 sets of proceedings.



The SDT has the power to strike a solicitor from the roll, suspend a solicitor from practice and to apply fines and reprimands. There are also some non-solicitors brought before the Tribunal by the SRA under Section 43 of the Solicitors Act 1974. This allows the SRA to restrict the employment of certain individuals within regulated firms where necessary.

Orders made by the SDT are recorded by the SRA when they come into effect, which in most cases is immediately, but in a few cases there may be a time lapse.

The table below provides a breakdown of the orders made by the SDT on cases issued by the SRA.

<b>SDT Orders</b>				
<b>Year on year</b>	<b>12 months to Sept 08</b>	<b>12 months to Sept 09</b>	<b>Variance</b>	<b>Monthly average to Sept 09</b>
Fined	116	150	+ 29%	10.2
Struck off	50	68	+ 36%	4.8
Suspended	51	44	- 14%	3.4
No Order	8	19	+ 138%	0.9
Reprimand	49	50	+ 2%	4.6
Other	21	33	+ 57%	1.8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>295</b>	<b>364</b>	<b>+ 23%</b>	<b>25.7</b>

There continues to be an increase in the number of fines issued by the Tribunal, and the trend observed previously of a reduction in orders to strike off is now reversing, with a 36% increase year on year.

# Consumer Protection, Enforcement & Discipline

## Interventions

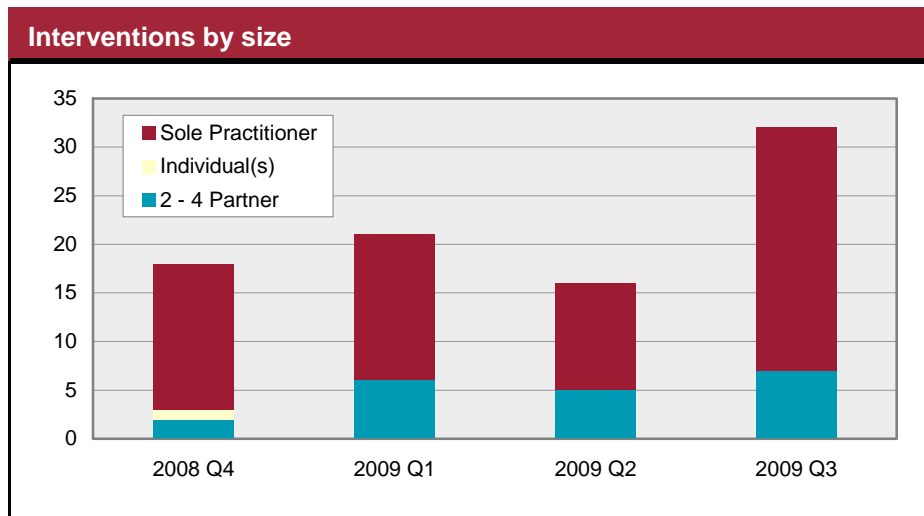
We intervene into a practice when we need to protect clients' interests and client money. This usually has the effect of closing down the firm. 32 interventions took place in the last quarter, of which nine involved reason to suspect of dishonesty. This is a significant increase on overall numbers taking place in the last 12 months.

### Interventions Summary

12 month figures	Interventions effected	Suspected Dishonesty	Non-Dishonesty	Individual(s)	Sole Practice	2 - 4 Partner firm
12 months to Sept 08	<b>72</b>	34	38	5	53	14
12 months to Sept 09	<b>87</b>	26	61	1	66	20
% variance	<b>+ 21%</b>	- 24%	+ 61%	- 80%	+ 25%	+ 43%

The number of interventions for the 12 months to September 2009 was 21% higher than in the 12 months previous and 118% higher than in the 12 months to September 2007.

The chart that follows shows the number of interventions effected in each quarter over the last 12 months by size. There was a huge increase this quarter following 17 interventions in August alone. This supports the overall upward trend shown in the table above.



The majority of interventions are into practices run by a sole practitioner. In cases where the intervention is not into a sole practitioner then typically all partners within the firm (or members of an LLP / directors of a company) will wholly be subject to the intervention. Occasionally we will intervene into the practice of an individual within a firm, leaving the rest of the firm to continue. There were no interventions into firms of more than 4 partners (or equivalent).

Certain grounds for intervention relate most commonly to sole practitioners (for example incapacity as a result of ill health or accident and abandonment). This is because the impact of one individual becoming incapacitated within a larger firm would generally be less severe, whereas in relation to a sole practitioner it can be catastrophic. Abandonment interventions also present similar issues.

In the last 12 months there were 3 interventions into sole practitioners' firms on the grounds of incapacity. There were 12 interventions involving bankruptcy or the insolvency of an LLP.\*

\*NB: Due to the increasing numbers of LLPs we have recently made changes to allow us to distinguish between

# Consumer Protection, Enforcement & Discipline

## Grounds for Intervention

### Most common grounds for intervention

<i>For the 72 interventions between Oct - Sep '08 and the 87 interventions between Oct- Sep '09</i>	12 months to Sept 08		12 months to Sept 09	
	No. interventions	% of interventions	No. interventions	% of interventions
Accounts Rule breaches	36	50%	47	54%
Protect interests of clients / beneficiary	-	-	38	44%
Suspected dishonesty	34	47%	26	30%
Breaches of the Code of Conduct	14	19%	17	20%
Abandonment of Practice	8	11%	16	18%

The circumstances in which we can intervene are set out in statute, and include a public interest test. The 5 most common grounds for intervention over the last 12 months are shown in the table above - many interventions take place for several different reasons so may have multiple grounds.

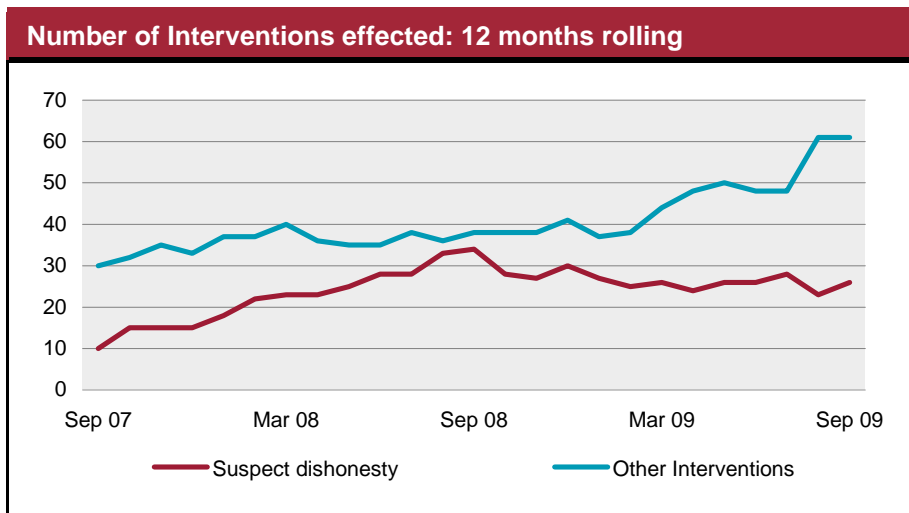
'Protect interests of clients / beneficiary' has been recorded as grounds for an intervention since the enactment of the relevant provisions of the Legal Services Act 2007 on 31st March 2009. This relates to where a solicitor has acted in such a way that the interests of former or potential clients require protection.

## Timeliness

Where dishonesty is suspected, the unit's target is to effect the intervention within 3 working days.

Otherwise the target is 5 working days. All interventions taking place in the last 12 months were within the target.

## Long term trends



During the last year the proportion of interventions where dishonesty was suspected has decreased from 47% to 30%. The last quarter saw 28% of interventions with suspected dishonesty as a ground. However, the proportion of interventions where dishonesty has been suspected has been much lower in the past. In 2005 just 15% of interventions carried this ground.

## Consumer Protection, Enforcement & Discipline

### Claims management

The **Claims Management Unit** handles applications for grants from the Compensation Fund from people who have suffered financial loss due to a solicitor's dishonesty or failure to account for monies received.

The vast majority of claims on the Fund relate to firms that have been intervened into. Claims Management works together with the Accounts Assessment team who hold a firm's monies on trust following an intervention to ensure that a firm's client's, any agents owed fees or lending institutions who may have had funds held in solicitors accounts are protected in the event of an intervention.

### Claims and Payments made in the last 12 months

#### Overview of claims and payments

	Q4 2008	Q1 2009	Q2 2009	Q3 2009
No. of new claims	457	566	848	581
Total amount claimed	£41.46 m	£30.18 m	£21.43 m	£26.22 m
£ paid out	£2.49 m	£2.03 m	£3.30 m	£4.47 m

The table shows a quarterly comparison of claims made on the fund and payments issued in the last 12 months.

Figures are shown as currently recorded, but the value of claims may change during the course of an investigation.

The number of claims received reduced significantly in the third quarter, from a higher than average number in the previous quarter. The amount claimed however increased by almost £5m. The average amount claimed increased to around £45,000 from around £25,000 last quarter. Despite the large increase, the average in quarter three was still substantially below the levels experienced at the same time last year.

The payments made in the last quarter were higher than in recent quarters. The majority of the payments are related to general client money, however a large portion of the increase in the period was due to payments relating to probate matters - over £0.75m - and over £300,000 of mortgage related payments.

#### New claims received

Number of claims by reason	Q4 2008	Q1 2009	Q2 2009	Q3 2009
General client money	282	320	489	276
Counsel Fees	80	132	75	117
Mortgage fraud / misappropriated mortgage advance	32	52	65	40
Costs and disbursements	11	14	35	1
Ratification	6	0	0	9
Unredeemed mortgage	1	0	6	6
Experts Fees	2	4	68	4
Probate - balance due to estate	17	17	33	34
SDLT/Rule 14	4	8	25	40
Gross overcharging	1	1	1	4
Retention	2	3	20	17
Other / Unspecified *	19	15	31	33
<b>Total</b>	<b>438</b>	<b>551</b>	<b>817</b>	<b>548</b>

\* A large proportion of claims categorised as 'other' would be those relating to non-barrister professional fees.

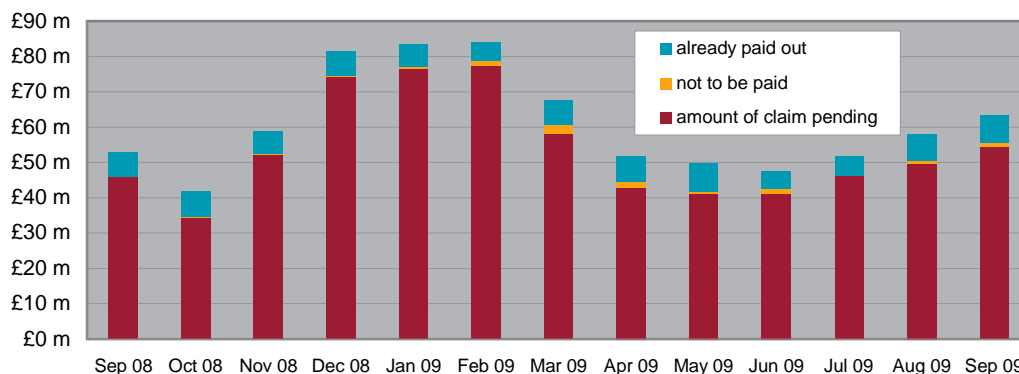
The majority of the decrease seen in claims in the last quarter was attributable to a fall in claims for general client money. Although there was a 44% fall in the number of claims in this category, the actual value of these claims increased by 20% - from almost £10m in the second quarter of 2009 compared with £12m in the third quarter.

# Consumer Protection, Enforcement & Discipline

## Ongoing Claims

The graph below shows the total value of the 1,299 claims currently under investigation.

### Value of open claims at month end



The value of open claims has increased over the last quarter by almost £16m and stood at £63.5m at the end of September.

## Payments on Application Concluded

The following table shows whether claims that were closed in the last 12 months were paid, either partially or fully. Over the last 12 months, the proportion of claims that have been paid has remained relatively stable. At the same time the proportion paid in terms of amount has also remained approximately unchanged.

### Claims closed

Payment status	Q4 2008	Q1 2009	Q2 2009	Q3 2009
No. of claims closed	499	648	519	536
Payment made	27%	25%	31%	29%
Not paid	73%	75%	69%	71%

The next table shows the amount claimed on closed matters and the amount paid on those claims.

### Payments on claims closed

Proportion paid	Q4 2008	Q1 2009	Q2 2009	Q3 2009
Total amount claimed	£28.25m	£46.34m	£41.58m	£16.82m
Total paid out	£3m	£3.63m	£4.59m	£2.19m
% paid	11%	8%	11%	13%

It is important to note that some claims that have been closed may be reopened for further consideration at a future date, as around one in five claims are closed because the claimant is exploring other remedies for recovery of losses.

## Consumer Protection, Enforcement & Discipline

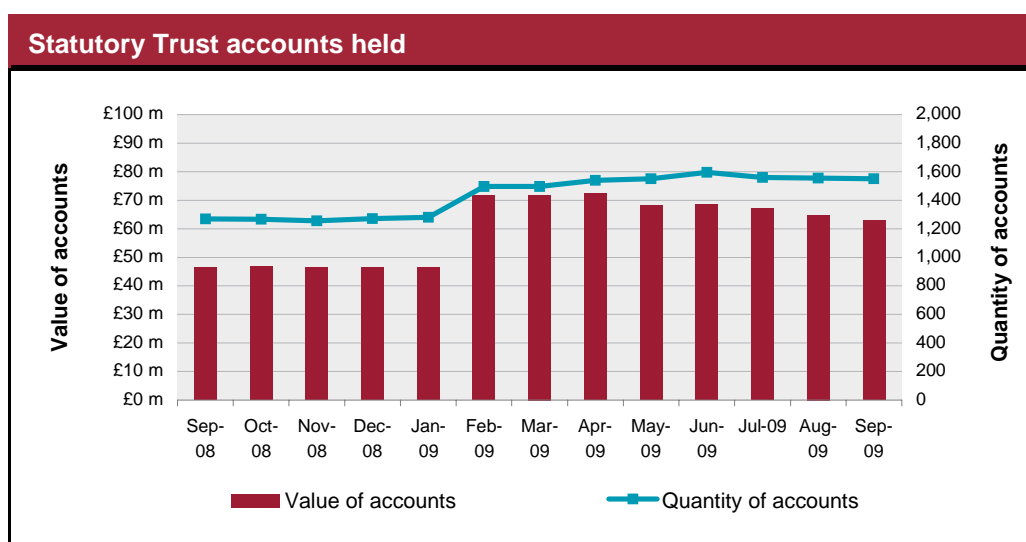
### Statutory Trusts & Intervention Archives

The accounts records and paperwork at an intervened firm may have been very poorly kept and money is often missing from client or office accounts.

The Accounts Assessment team try to reconstruct the accounts and to identify those to whom the money belongs. Immediately following an intervention, our appointed agents (another firm of solicitors) will begin this work, which is later brought in-house to the Accounts Assessment team. A special project team works on accounts relating to historical interventions.

The aim is to return all client monies to the right clients. In the meantime the SRA holds these monies 'on trust.' The Team does its best to contact people whose money might be held in the trust and invites applications to be made when it considers it may have found the right owner.

Clients with a beneficial entitlement to monies held on trust may have made a claim on the Compensation Fund in the interim. The Compensation Fund can then claim for some or part of any grant paid by way of a subrogated claim against the Statutory Trust Accounts.



It was agreed in January of this year that the monies held by intervention agents should be brought in house and invested together with the other trust accounts. This resulted in the spike between January and February shown on the graph above.

Intervention agents are now required to account for monies held within 30 days of the intervention.

Distributions this quarter were just over £7 m, bringing the total this year to date to almost £20 m.

#### Summary of Movement this year to date

9 months Jan to Sep 09	Jan 2009 position	New accounts + additional deposits	Distributions made	Sep 2009 position
Volume of Accounts	1,272	450	- 171	1,551
Value of Accounts	£46.4 m	£36.4 m	- £19.8 m	£63.0 m

Note: value of accounts is also affected by interest earned and changes in exchange rates.

Intervention archives look after the files and papers found at an office when the intervention takes place. After the intervention agent has dealt with any live matters, by returning the files to clients so that they can appoint new solicitors, all remaining client files and paperwork are sent to the SRA.

The archive team sort and catalogue every box of files. Original documents such as wills and deeds are identified, and each item can be tracked individually to allow for quick retrieval should the item be requested by the client. Over 330,000 individual files have been sorted this year to date.

## Access to Justice, Transparency and Consumer Information

- To promote choice, innovation and accessibility in the provision of legal services through various types of business structure
- To provide information to help consumers to make decisions about legal services and to understand the standards they are entitled to expect

### The Legal Services Act 2007

The Legal Services Act 2007, which came into effect on the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2009, brought with it significant changes in the structure of solicitors' firms and subsequently the way in which the SRA regulates them.

The SRA now has direct powers to regulate all firms, whether they are bodies corporate (LLPs or companies) or partnerships (as recognised bodies), or the practices of sole practitioners (as recognised sole practitioners); the SRA's rules apply not only to solicitors, but to any firm regulated by the SRA and to all other lawyers and non-lawyers who are managers or employees in the firm.

The act also allowed for the creation of Legal Disciplinary Practices (LDPs), which are a new type of firm comprising solicitors and non-solicitors. LDPs can be owned and managed by a combination of different types of lawyer, and up to 25% non-lawyers, but there can be no external ownership of an LDP.

The Legal Services Act will also eventually lead to the introduction of alternative business structures (ABSs) which will be another new type of law firm allowing for the possibility of greater non-solicitor ownership and potentially external ownership. The exact nature of ABSs is yet to be established, but the SRA will apply to the Legal Services Board to regulate them.

As at the 30th September 2009, 105 firms had taken advantage of the opportunity to become LDPs. These ranged from small firms with only two managers to firms with over 100.

#### LDPs by size

No. of managers	No. of LDPs
2 to 4	43
5 to 10	30
11 to 25	20
26 to 80	8
81 +	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>105</b>

#### Managers in LDPs

Manager type	No. of managers
Solicitors	1,335
Legal Executives	46
Other lawyer managers	4
Non-lawyers	71
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,456</b>

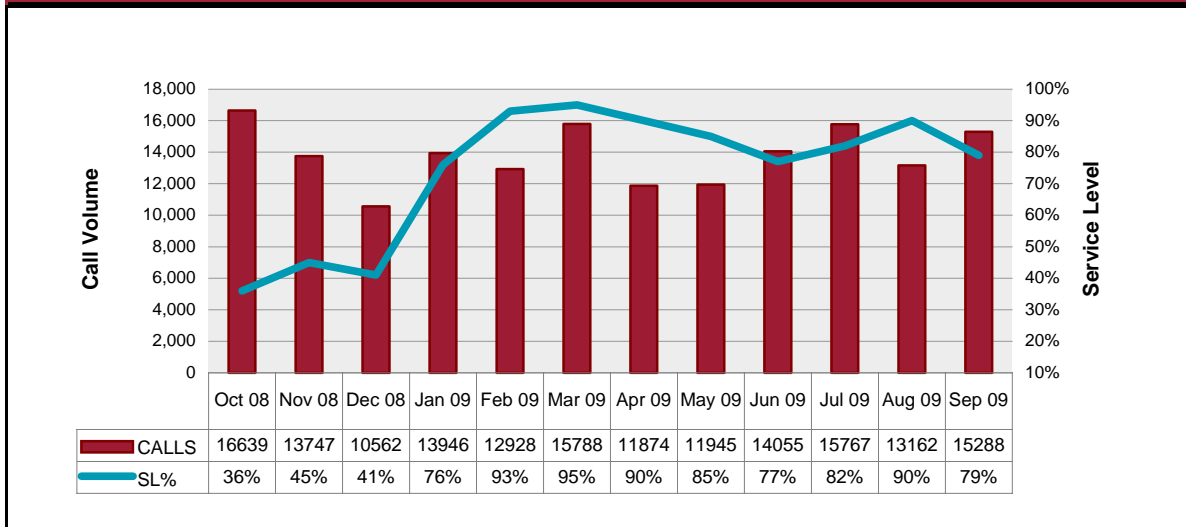
Almost 1,500 managers now work in LDPs. Non-lawyer managers include professions such as accountants, teachers and lecturers.

# Access to Justice, Transparency and Consumer Information

## Enquiries from members of the public

As well as dealing with enquiries from the profession (see page 9), over the last quarter, the Contact Centre received some 44,217 calls from members of the public. This was a 17% increase on the last quarter. Within the third quarter of 2009, 83% of calls were answered within 60 seconds, well above the target of 70%.

**Calls to the Contact Centre Non-Profession Line**



We also receive requests from members of the public who wish to trace a member of the profession, this might be for example connected to assistance they require from the solicitor or help with tracing their family history. We may also receive requests from members of the profession to trace another solicitor in order to assist them with work they have been requested to do for their clients. On average we receive around 135 tracing requests each month.

## Publication of decisions on the web

One of the ways in which the SRA has improved transparency, and enabled consumers to make better-informed decisions about legal service providers is the publication of decisions on our website ([www.sra.org.uk](http://www.sra.org.uk)).

The SRA publishes decisions resulting from investigations that we started on or after 1 January 2008, and decisions taken to prosecute an individual at the Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal (SDT) where the SDT has certified on or after 1 January 2008 that there is a case to answer.

The SRA generally publish decisions only after the expiry of an appeal period; most published decisions will be removed from our website after three years.

The SRA do not publish all types of decision but those we do include:

- decisions to prosecute at the SDT,
- decisions to control how an individual practises,
- decisions to close a practice,
- agreed outcomes with individuals.

## Access to Justice, Transparency and Consumer Information

### Published Decisions

Category of decision	12 months to Sept 09	Q3 2009
Prosecute	61	5
Control on individual's practice	267	66
Closure of practice	83	27
Agreement	29	6
<b>Total No. of Decisions</b>	<b>440</b>	<b>104</b>
<b>No. of Individuals to which decisions relate</b>	<b>385</b>	<b>100</b>

The above data is based on decision date and there are more decisions than individuals, as individuals are commonly the subject of more than one decision. The decisions can be found at [www.sra.org.uk/consumers/solicitor-check.page](http://www.sra.org.uk/consumers/solicitor-check.page)

### Disclosure of reasons for investigations

The SRA recognises that providing reasons for an investigation maximises the transparency and fairness of its processes, may help those subject to investigation to respond constructively and can help to reduce the stress involved. Many investigations and inspections are based on non-confidential information or for reasons that are already known to the regulated person. This is, however, not always the case, and some constraints on disclosure must, therefore, remain.

Details will not normally be disclosed where the SRA considers that there is a risk that disclosure could:

- Breach any duty of confidentiality
- Disclose or risk disclosure of a confidential source of information
- Significantly increases risk that those under investigation may destroy evidence, seek to influence witnesses, default, or abscond; or
- Otherwise prejudice or frustrate an investigation or other regulatory action

A new recording system has been in operation since May 2009 to capture data on when and why these constraints on disclosure are applied. Data recorded during quarter 3 indicates that reasons for investigation could be disclosed in 99% of cases. As with the previous report, the main reason cited for information classed as unsuitable for disclosure was a risk that those under investigation may destroy evidence, seek to influence witnesses, default, or abscond. Risk of disclosure of a confidential source of information was the second most common reason for not disclosing the reasons for an investigation.

### Information received Q3 2009

Month	Disclosable	Non-disclosable	Total
July 2009	1195	8	1203
August 2009	910	6	916
September 2009	767	15	782
<b>Q3 2009</b>	<b>2872</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>2901</b>

## Organisational Improvement

- To demonstrate value for money in all our dealings
- To attract and retain high calibre staff committed to service excellence

### Quality Measures

Quality reviews of casework and application handling are undertaken regularly and form part of our performance management framework. Senior technical staff will provide a score based on factors such as technical accuracy, communication and work management (timeliness and record keeping).

Data currently available covers our 3 investigative caseworking teams and their administrative support team, "Outsourcing & Operations Support", as well as those handling bulk applications and dealing with enquiries received by our Contact Centre

Scores this year to date have been as follows:

#### Quality Reviews

% meeting required standard	Q4 2008	Q1 2009	Q2 2009	Q3 2009
<b>Casework investigations &amp; administrative support</b>				
Conduct Investigation Unit	69%	68%	84%	83%
Regulatory Investigation Unit	-	96%	100%	100%
CIAO *	-	95%	94%	93%
Outsourcing & Operations Support	-	90%	96%	96%
<b>Applications &amp; Enquiries</b>				
Applications	93%	97%	97%	98%
Contact Centre	98%	92%	96%	98%

\* CIAO = Casework Investigations & Operations

# Organisational Improvement

## Budget Report

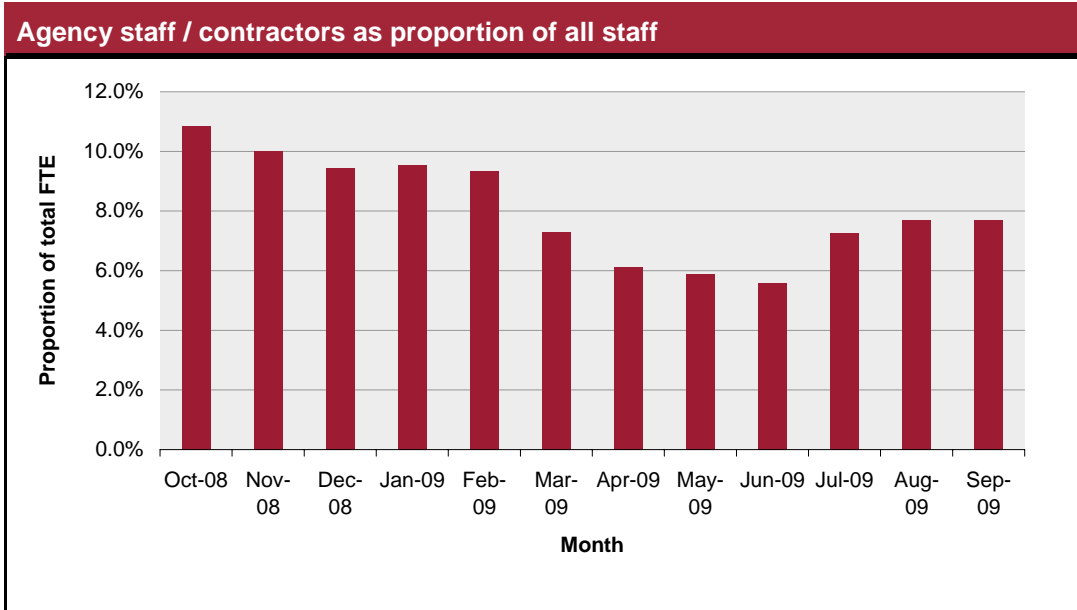
Summary of SRA expenditure and income this year to date:

<b>Direct Costs Summary for the 9 months to September 09</b>				
<b>Amounts in £000's</b>	<b>YTD actual</b>	<b>YTD forecast</b>	<b>variance</b>	<b>% variance</b>
Total Staff Expenditure:	18,659	18,814	155	0.8%
> Salary Costs	18,535	18,716	180	1.0%
> Other staff costs	124	99	-25	-25.3%
Total Administration Costs	11,685	11,997	313	2.6%
Total Other Costs	3	2	-1	-
<b>GROSS Expenditure</b> (before recoveries)	30,346	30,813	467	1.5%
Recoveries	-8,444	-8,526	-82	1.0%
<b>GROSS Expenditure</b> (after recoveries)	21,902	22,288	385	1.7%
Income	-5,333	-5,653	-320	5.7%
<b>NET EXPENDITURE</b>	16,570	16,635	65	0.4%

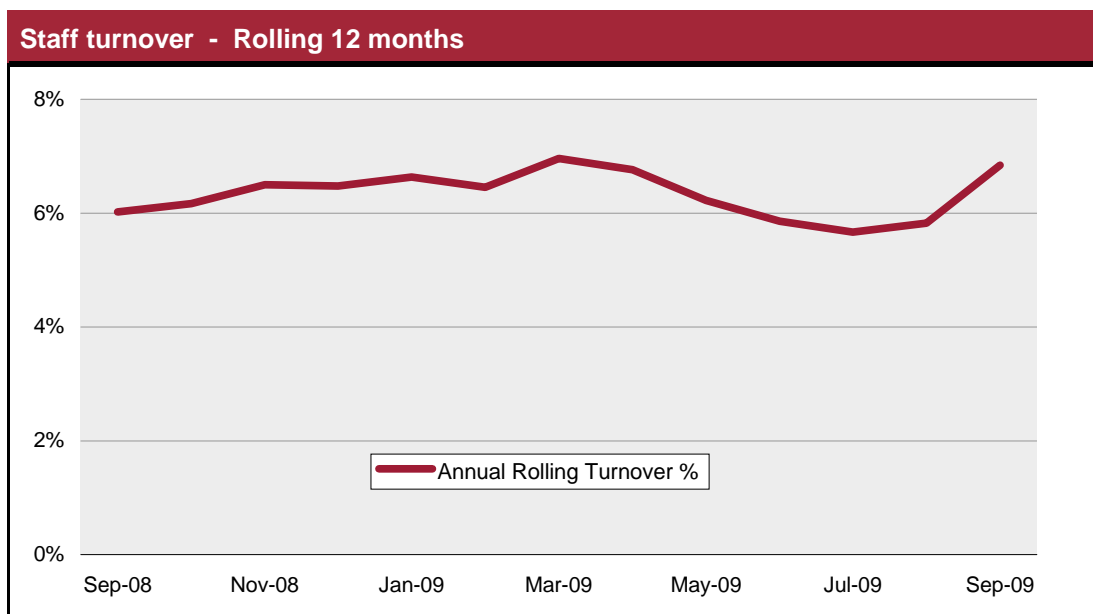
# Organisational Improvement

## Human Resources & Development

As at 30th September 2009, the SRA has 534 full time equivalent (FTE) permanent employees. Our full establishment includes another 99 FTE positions (currently vacancies), giving a budgeted FTE of 633. There are 29 fixed term temporary employees and 47 agency and contractor staff sitting against those positions. The proportion of agency and contractor staff shown by the chart below is higher than in the previous quarter but remains relatively low compared with earlier months. The number of agency and contractor staff is typically higher from October due to the PC renewal exercise



Staff turnover for the last 12 months stands at 6.8% - a similar level to that seen in the earlier part of 2009. At the end of quarter 2 staff turnover was at it's lowest at 5.7%. The staff turnover calculation is the number of staff leaving in the previous 12 months as a proportion of average headcount during the same period.



# Glossary

Abbreviations and internal terms used within this report:

<b>ARP</b>	Assigned Risks Pool
<b>ASC</b>	Application by Solicitors' Clerk
<b>CDT</b>	Conduct complaint
<b>Compliance Directorate</b>	SRA Directorate dealing with all investigation and enforcement work, together with much of the work formerly dealt with by the former OSS Solicitors' Practice Unit
<b>Conduct and Service</b>	Normally referring to the work of CIU, but also ICT. This is the distinction made by the SRA between complaints of poor <i>service</i> , for which redress can be offered (handled by the LCS), and complaints of misconduct
<b>CRB</b>	Criminal Records Bureau
<b>Decisions</b>	There are two sorts of decisions: those made by Adjudicators, where there can be a number of decisions in relation to a matter, and the decisions (orders) by the SDT which tend to be the decision on the totality of a case presented to them – more usually one case, one decision
<b>FI</b>	Forensic Investigations Unit who deal with high risk cases requiring on-site investigation.
<b>FTE</b>	“Full-time equivalent”, a measure of the number of staff based on hours worked The budget FTE - actual FTE equals the number of vacancies
<b>HRD</b>	Human Resources & Development
<b>Intervention</b>	A formal decision of the adjudication panel to intervene into a solicitor's practice, which results in all monies and papers held by the solicitor being taken by the Law Society. Interventions are subject to a statutory appeal direct to the High Court
<b>Inspections</b>	Term normally used in connection with Accounts Inspections by the Forensic Investigation department
<b>LCS</b>	Legal Complaints Service
<b>LDP</b>	Legal Disciplinary Partnership:
<b>LLP</b>	Limited Liability Partnership
<b>LSCC</b>	Legal Services Complaints Commissioner
<b>PC</b>	Practising Certificate
<b>PSU</b>	Practice Standards Unit
<b>QLTT</b>	Qualified Lawyers Transfer Test
<b>RDC</b>	Redress Conduct - conduct issues arising from a redress matter handled by the LCS.
<b>REL</b>	Registered European Lawyer
<b>RFL</b>	Registered Foreign Lawyer
<b>SDT</b>	Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal
<b>SRA</b>	Solicitors Regulatory Authority
<b>Throughput</b>	The volume of cases passing through the SRA from creation to completion
<b>Tribunal</b>	The independent Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal (SDT)
<b>WIP</b>	Work In Progress - cases which are continuing