

Sarah Eastwood

Solicitor

273782

[Agreement Date: 16 January 2025](#)

Decision - Agreement

Outcome: Regulatory settlement agreement

Outcome date: 16 January 2025

Published date: 3 February 2025

Firm details

No detail provided:

Outcome details

This outcome was reached by agreement.

Decision details

1. Agreed outcome

1.1 Ms Sarah Eastwood, a solicitor, agrees to the following outcome to the investigation of her conduct by the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA):

- a. she is rebuked
- b. to the publication of this agreement
- c. she will pay the costs of the investigation of £300.

2. Summary of Facts

2.1 On 6 September 2024, Ms Eastwood was involved in a road traffic collision with another vehicle. Police attended the scene and she was breathalysed at the roadside. She was arrested on failure of the roadside breath test.

2.2 At the police station, she was found to have 85 microgrammes per 100ml of breath which exceeded the prescribed limit of 35 microgrammes per 100ml of breath.

2.3 On 24 September 2024, at County of Wiltshire Magistrates' Court, she pleaded guilty to driving a motor vehicle with excess alcohol



contrary to S5(1) a of the Road Traffic Act 1988 and Schedule 2 of the Road Traffic Offenders Act 1988.

2.4 On the same date, she was given the following sentence:

- a. a fine of £1,666
- b. disqualification from driving for 22 months
- c. a surcharge of £666 and prosecution costs of £85.

2.5 She was offered a reduction of her disqualification period of 22 weeks if she successfully completed a driving course, approved by the Secretary of State, by 19 December 2025.

2.6 Ms Eastwood reported the conviction to the SRA on 4 October 2024.

2.7 She has booked a place on an approved driving course which will be completed during January 2025 and has paid the first instalment of the course fee.

3. Admissions

3.1 Ms Eastwood makes the following admissions which the SRA accepts:

- a. that by driving after having consumed a level of alcohol in excess of the legal limit, for which she was convicted, she breached Principle 2 of the SRA Principles, which says:

'You failed to act in a way that upholds the public trust and confidence in the solicitors' profession and in legal services provided by authorised persons.'

.4. Why a rebuke is an appropriate outcome

4.1 The SRA's Enforcement Strategy and its topic guide on driving with excess alcohol convictions sets out its approach to the use of its enforcement powers where there has been a failure to meet its standards or requirements.

4.2 When considering the appropriate sanctions and controls in this matter, the SRA has taken into account the admissions made by Ms Eastwood and the following mitigation which she has put forward:

- a. She promptly reported the conviction to the SRA and co-operated with its investigation.
- b. This was an isolated incident and she has no prior convictions.
- c. She has shown insight and remorse for her actions.

4.3 The SRA considers that a rebuke is the appropriate outcome because:

- a. Ms Eastwood was directly responsible for her conduct.



- b. Her actions were reckless and disregarded the risk or potential risk of harm to people and property that her actions might cause.
- c. She was found to have a level of alcohol that was more than double the prescribed limit.
- d. As a result, she received a period of disqualification that was beyond the minimum period for such offences.
- e. The collision resulted in damage to the property of the other party.

4.4 A rebuke is appropriate to maintain professional standards and uphold public confidence in the solicitors' profession and in legal services provided by authorised persons.

4.5 A rebuke is also intended to deter the individual and others from similar behaviour in the future. Any lesser sanction would not provide a credible deterrent to Ms Eastwood and others. A rebuke meets the requirements of rule 3.1 of the Regulatory and Disciplinary Procedure Rules.

5. Publication

5.1 The SRA considers it appropriate that this agreement is published in the interests of transparency in the regulatory and disciplinary process. Ms Eastwood agrees to the publication of this agreement.

6. Acting in a way which is inconsistent with this agreement

6.1 Ms Eastwood agrees that she will not deny the admissions made in this agreement or act in any way which is inconsistent with it.

6.2 If Ms Eastwood denies the admissions or acts in a way which is inconsistent with this agreement, the conduct which is subject to this agreement may be considered further by the SRA. That may result in a disciplinary outcome or a referral to the Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal on the original facts and allegations.

6.3 Denying the admissions made or acting in a way which is inconsistent with this agreement may also constitute a separate breach of principles 2 and 5 of the Principles and paragraph 7.3 of the Code of Conduct for Solicitors, RELs and RFLs.

7. Costs

7.1 Ms Eastwood agrees to pay the costs of the SRA's investigation in the sum of £300. Such costs are due within 28 days of a statement of costs due being issued by the SRA.

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