

## Alerts

### *Warning: WhatsApp messages misusing the name of Melissa Coakley*

18 January 2022

Members of the public have received WhatsApp messages misusing the name of Melissa Coakley in relation to a supposed foreign acquisition.

#### *What is the scam?*

Members of the public have received WhatsApp messages misusing the name of 'Melissa Coakley' in relation to a supposed foreign acquisition.

The messages were sent using a contact number of '44 7920 439097' and provides a further contact number of '+44 7818 083878' and an email address of 'melissa.coakley@cliffordchancelawfirm.com'.

The messages misuse the name and photograph of a genuine solicitor (see below).

Any business or transaction through the above contact numbers and email address are not undertaken by a solicitor's practice authorised and regulated by the SRA.

#### *Is there a genuine firm or person?*

The SRA authorises and regulates a genuine solicitor called Melissa Coakley who is a Partner at Clifford Chance LLP.

The genuine Melissa Coakley has confirmed that she does not have any connection to the WhatsApp messages referred to above.

#### *What should I do?*

When a firm's or individual's identity has been copied exactly (or cloned), due diligence is necessary. If you receive correspondence claiming to be from the above firm(s) or individual(s), or information of a similar nature to that described, you should conduct your own due diligence by checking the authenticity of the correspondence by contacting the law firm directly by reliable and established means. You can contact the SRA to find out if individuals or firms are regulated and authorised by the SRA and verify an individual's or firm's practising details. Other verification methods, such as checking public records (e.g. telephone directories and company records) may be required in other circumstances.