

CIVIL JUSTICE COUNCIL COSTS COMMITTEE

Letter to COLPs and COFAs

6 November 2013

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing as the Chairman of the Costs Committee of the Civil Justice Council which was set up earlier this year with the immediate task of making recommendations to the Master of the Rolls on updated Guideline Hourly Rates (GHR) for solicitors. GHR affect directly what can be recovered from the losing party in civil litigation and are, therefore, of very considerable importance to litigation solicitors.

The current GHR are out-of-date and based on out-dated information. My Committee has been asked to produce evidence-based recommendations by 31 March next year. We already have some evidence from recent surveys of solicitors' practices, but we need to supplement and cross-check its validity through a survey of our own.

The Committee is therefore publishing its own questionnaire on Friday, 1 November 2013 (at <http://www.judiciary.gov.uk/about-the-judiciary/advisory-bodies/cjc/GuidelineHourlyRatesSurvey2013.htm>) and the purpose of this letter is to ask you to encourage those within your firm who would be in the best position to respond to it to do so. The Law Society has kindly given us your contact details as the one point of contact that the Society has with each firm of solicitors in the country.

I imagine it would be helpful to draw the survey to the attention of the Head of the Litigation Department and/or the chief administration officer of the firm who will either be able to deal with the survey or know where responsibility for completing the survey is best placed.

The completion date for the survey is Friday, 29 November 2013. It has been devised with the assistance of a number of experienced litigation solicitors and we do not believe that it is a particularly complex document to complete. A Word version of the survey is also being provided to allow you to gather the information before filling in and submitting the electronic version.

There will be a good deal of information about the survey on the website when it goes "live" on Friday, including assurances as to confidentiality. The address I gave to the Motor Accidents Solicitors Society last Friday (24 October) will give a clear insight into what is being done. It can be found on the Judiciary website.

It is extremely important that we receive as much information as we can and it is in the interests of the profession to provide that information.

May I please ask you to ensure we receive a response from you firm?

With my thanks in anticipation,

Yours sincerely,

David Foskett, Mr Justice Foskett, Chairman, CJC Costs Committee