

Minutes of Investigations Oversight Committee Meeting 24 February

Location	Present	In Attendance
8 Weymouth Street London W1W 5BU	Nabila Zulfiqar (Chair) Jagtar Singh Danna Walker	Simon Howard Helen Ransome

Note	Action
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1 **Apologies**

None

2 **Minutes of previous meeting**

Amendment required at item 3. Initials "NZ" recorded incorrectly as "NS". The minutes were otherwise agreed.

Action: SH to amend minutes.

Matters arising

Matters arising were discussed as follows:

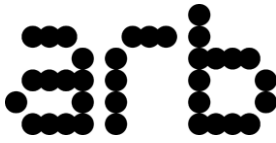
SH confirmed that a strategy has been put in place to target regulatory guidance towards those architects who appear at greatest risk of regulatory failures. This will include regular email advice columns, and CPD events focussing on how to avoid disputes and complaints.

DW attended the Investigations Pool (IP) meeting of December 2016.

Action: SH to advise IOC on IP meeting dates in 2017.

SH reported that the Professional Conduct Committee decisions have been amended to provide the outcome at the start of the document.

SH reported that all of ARB's investigations procedures have now been mapped.



3 Investigations Pool update

The IOC discussed the IP Annual Report 2016, and in particular, the cases in 2016 which had been referred back to the IP by ARB's solicitor for further consideration.

JS queried the high percentage of complaints relating to architects in Scotland and suggested further research into the reasons for these complaints.

The IOC asked about the training provided to IP members. SH explained that all new IP members receive training on ARB's processes and relevant law. He confirmed that IP members would receive E&D training on unconscious bias later in the year.

SH reported that the IP portal is now being tested. It is planned to be launched at the IP meeting in April.

4 Professional Conduct Committee (PCC) update

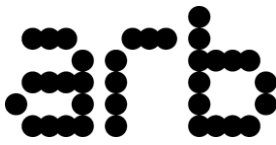
The IOC considered the PCC decisions reached since its last meeting. In particular:

- A case where the architect had been erased by the PCC following a decision by the Board to permit his re-entry to the Register following a previous erasure order. SH highlighted the reputational risk posed in such cases
- The IOC also questioned whether complainants who are architects who were found to have acted without integrity in bringing an allegation would be subject to an investigation themselves. SH acknowledged that no potential complainant should be discouraged from making allegations by the threat of disciplinary action if they are not upheld, but agreed that the Registrar would consider any individual cases.

Action: SH to consider whether in future any architect complainants' conduct should be investigated by the Registrar.

DW suggested posting statistics around complaint outcomes on the ARB website. While these statistics may be available elsewhere on the website, they would be most helpful and informative in the professional conduct section.

Action: SH to look into publishing broader data around investigation outcomes in the relevant area of the new website.



5 Update on legal services providers

SH assured the IOC that the performance of its solicitors is monitored closely to ensure continued improvement in terms of efficiency and value for money.

6 Key Performance Indicators

The tabled KPIs were considered by the IOC.

SH reported that the IP is performing well against its KPI but is working at full capacity to achieve this. Similarly, performance in terms of the listing of PCC cases is constrained by both the PCC rules and the limited membership of the Committee. As a result, there is limited scope to reduce this KPI. There is however scope for improvement in the provision of solicitor reports to the PCC.

SH reported that there is scope to reduce the 'in office' KPI from 16 weeks to 14 weeks and that this would be actioned.

Action: SH to reduce the 'in office' KPI and report against the new target in future.

DW queried performance against the overarching 56 week KPI for the completion of cases from start to finish. This figure is not generally reported but SH agreed to produce performance figures before the next meeting.

Action: SH to circulate performance data regarding the 56 week KPI.

7. Update on Legal challenges

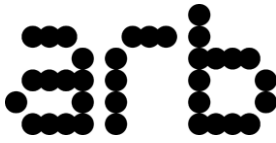
SH updated the IOC on any outstanding legal challenges.

8. Costs

SH provided the IOC with a summary of 2016 costs. He explained that the overspend on Professional Conduct Committee was as a direct result of an 80% increase in the totality of hearing days during 2016, rising from 31 to 77.

9. Third Party Review 2016 Annual Report

The IOC discussed the Third Party Review Annual Report. In particular, the importance of the IP's role in considering the complaint and all of the evidence in the round. It reiterated that the IP should not feel bound by the allegations as drafted and should pursue any matters of potential unacceptable professional conduct



and/or serious professional incompetence.

10. Communications update

SH reported that efforts had been made to arrange visits to Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland local chapters, so that CPD sessions could be provided on matters of good professional practice. The IOC discussed the importance of architects understanding these issues when setting up a business for the first time.

The IOC asked that all communications form part of the Communications Strategy to ensure the work is reported to the Board. It highlighted the importance of understanding the objectives of the Communications Strategy so that the impact of work undertaken can be measured effectively.

Action: SH to ensure Communications Strategy reflects all work being undertaken by Professional Standards.

Action: SH to look to produce guidance for those architects setting up business for the first time

11. Board Effectiveness Review for IOC

The IOC examined the results of the Board Effectiveness Review. It was pleased with the findings which indicate that the IOC understands its remit and is functioning effectively. The IOC highlighted the effective support provided by staff and put its thanks on record.

The IOC discussed its role in horizon scanning, particularly in light of the Section 14 Review. The IOC agreed to add this to the agenda for future meetings.

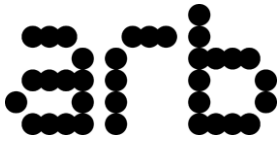
Action: SH to add Horizon Scanning to future IOC meeting agenda.

The IOC discussed its attendance at PCC hearings and agreed not to be prescriptive about the frequency of observations. It suggested annual attendance as a guide.

Action: SH to send upcoming PCC dates to IOC members

12. AOB

None raised.



Note

Action

Date of next meeting: 9 June 2017 (9:30 start.)

The Committee agreed to a 9:30 start at the June and October 2017 meetings.