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ANNUAL REPORT

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INTRODUCTION

I am pleased to present the Annual Report of the Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal (SDT) for the year 2022.

Throughout the year, the SDT experienced notable change especially during the latter part of 2022. These changes included bidding farewell to some of the Tribunal's long-standing and distinguished members, including former President of the Tribunal, Andrew Spooner, Nalini Chavda, who had served as a Lay Member since 2006, and Solicitor Member Simon Tinkler who (amongst many others) skilfully chaired the Leigh Day case. In addition, there were significant alterations to the staff team, with the departure of Geraldine Newbold, Karen Wood, and Klaudia Lyczkowska, I would like to acknowledge the dedication of all of these Members and staff to the Tribunal over the years.

Sadly, in November, we received the news that Solicitor Member Peter Davies had passed away. Peter was a much-respected member of the Tribunal having been appointed in 2001. Peter sat on numerous complex cases throughout his extensive career at the Tribunal and cared deeply for the profession he served. He is greatly missed by his friends and colleagues at the SDT.

Following a successful recruitment campaign, we welcomed a new cohort of 21 Members in June. We have achieved a more balanced gender representation and improved the representation of various protected characteristics, however we acknowledge that there is further work to be done in enhancing the ethnic diversity of our Membership to better reflect the profession, despite the

best efforts of the recruitment exercise. A thorough review of our Member recruitment process will be undertaken, reinforcing our commitment to diversity and inclusivity and ensuring that the SDT reflects the solicitors' profession as best it can.

Acknowledging changes in a post-pandemic era, a review of the listing strategy was undertaken following consultation with external stakeholders. The new strategy was implemented in June 2022, with all substantive hearings listed in-person by default (subject to application to convert to a remote hearing), while case management hearings would be conducted remotely. We continue to embrace this cost-efficient method of operation, with remote access to all hearings continuing as a means to facilitate public and press attendance.

In terms of cases determined in 2022, Agreed Outcomes applications received remained on a par with 2021. With the implementation of the SRA's increased fining powers, we will be monitoring the impact of this and are engaged in open dialogue with the SRA as to future projections. Cases determined by way of Substantive Hearing continue to present complex issues for Panels to deliberate upon. It is hoped that the detailed reasoning provided in our Judgments demonstrates the meticulous approach undertaken by Panels during deliberations.

Additionally, ensuring greater accessibility of Tribunal decisions for members of the public and improving our guidance for respondents was a highlight of 2022. We will continue to build upon this in 2023 with a review of our website, continuing our commitment to transparency and highlighting the important work

of the SDT.

In July, a collaborative meeting was held between the SDT and LSB Boards, during which the LSB encouraged us to assess our strategic vision. In line with this, the Board engaged an external facilitator and conducted an away-day in the Autumn to further explore the Tribunal's future objectives which we will take into 2023.

The year also brought changes to our accommodation, which is further detailed in the report. These were unforeseen and beyond the Tribunal's control, but we have taken this as a great opportunity to ensure that the Tribunal's new ways of working can be accommodated in the future. Accordingly, looking ahead, we are actively sourcing new premises with a focus on obtaining a space which will accommodate both in-person and remote/hybrid hearings, provide a reduced carbon footprint and an efficient use of space whilst continuing to explore how we can evolve technologically to ensure value for money to the profession and public.

My thanks go to the staff and my fellow Members of the Tribunal for their hard work and dedication. I hope you find this report interesting and informative.

Alison Kellett
President

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The Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal (SDT) is an independent statutory tribunal set up under the Solicitors Act 1974.

WHAT DOES THE TRIBUNAL DO?

It hears cases of alleged misconduct by solicitors, registered European Lawyers, registered foreign lawyers and employees of solicitors' firms.

It decides on applications for restoration to the roll and the ending of suspension from practice and also hears appeals in relation to certain internal decisions by the SRA.

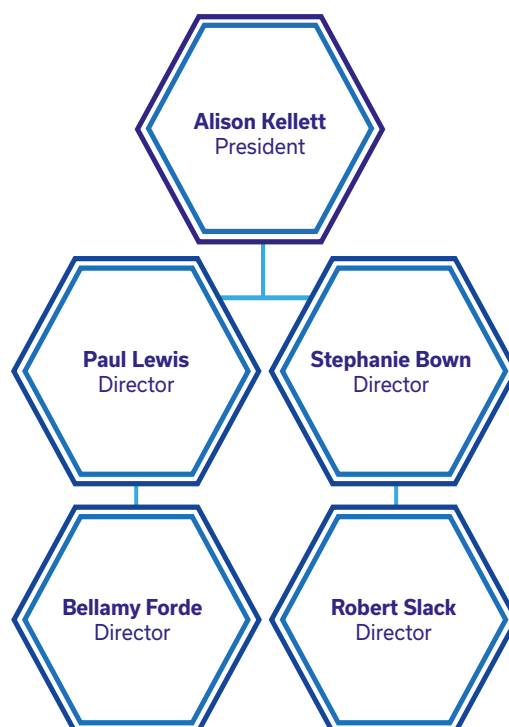
Its decisions are subject to a right of appeal to the High Court.

HOW DOES THE SDT/SDTAL OPERATE?

The SDT has a President (Alison Kellett) and two Vice-Presidents (Paul Lewis and Stephanie Bown) elected by its members (and collectively known as officers).

The Tribunal is supported by an administration company, Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal Administration Ltd (SDTAL), which employs a team of 12 staff who provide professional and administrative support for cases.

SDTAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS



The Board Members make up the SDT's Policy Committee, which is responsible for making and approving decisions about its policies and procedures.

As of November 2022, following the departure of Geraldine Newbold, the Tribunal's Administrative Team has been headed by Ray Dhanowa who is the Interim Clerk and Sonji Nurse, the Business Operations Manager. Both Ray and Sonji work with the SDTAL Board of Directors to lead and govern the Tribunal with Ray also acting as Company Secretary of SDTAL.

CHANGES TO THE TRIBUNAL MEMBERSHIP IN 2022

During 2022, we said goodbye to several Members of the Tribunal.

In May, Nalini Chavda, who had been a Lay member since 2006 retired.

Solicitor Members Simon Tinkler and former President of the Tribunal Andrew Spooner resigned in April and December respectively.

Solicitor Member Peter Davies, a member of the Tribunal for 21 years, sadly passed away in November.

Following the completion of the Member Recruitment campaign, we welcomed 21 new Members in June comprising of 11 Solicitor Members and 10 Lay Members.

Four of these members (2 Solicitor and 2 Lay) were appointed by the Master of the Rolls from 1 January 2023 and therefore are not included in the table opposite.

STAFF TEAM AS AT 31.12.22

Acting Clerk
Ray Dhanowa

Interim Business Operations Manager
Sonji Nurse

Clerking Team
Anne-Marie Roberts
Audrey Osborne
Deborah Baljit
Jonathan White
Matthew Waterworth

Case Management Team
Daveena Ogene
Joanne Thomas
Marta Bagusaite
Anita Etentuk

Office Services Team
Emma Tully
Tracey Homewood
Stuart De Boos

THE TRIBUNAL MEMBERSHIP AS AT 31.12.22

SOLICITOR MEMBERS

John Abramson
Heidi Appleby
Alison Banks
Lisa Boyce
Teresa Cullen
Holetta Dobson
William Ellerton
Carolyn Evans
Bellamy Forde
Ashok Ghosh
Dominic Green
Angela Horne
Paul Housego
James Johnston
Peter Jones
Alison Kellett
Frosoulla Kyriacou
Paul Lewis
Mark Millin
Lisa Murphy
Edward Nally
Richard Nicholas
Bhavna Patel
Usman Sheikh
Alyson Sprawson
Gerald Sydenham

LAY MEMBERS

Stephanie Bown
Colin Childs
Sarah Gordon
Gary Gracey
Linda Hawkins
Paul Hurley
Priya Iyer
Damian Kearney
Elaine Keen
Alan Lyon
Lesley McMahon-Hathway
Anthony Pygram
Adair Richards
Jenny Rowe
Robert Slack
Carol Valentine
Benjamin Walsh

OUR FINANCES

The SDT is funded under a Memorandum of Understanding with the Legal Services Board and the Law Society from a levy on solicitors and other regulated persons, included in their annual practising certificate fee.

A 3-year memorandum was signed on 6 September 2022.

Our audited annual accounts are filed at Companies House.

We recognise the importance of cost-effective and proportionate regulation and aim to minimise costs by maximising efficiency in working practices wherever we can.

We make an annual budget application which is the subject of scrutiny and challenge by the LSB, before being approved for payment by The Law Society.

In 2022, our budget was £3.156m. This represented an increase on the previous year of 0.2%. The actual cost per regulated person as at December 2022 increased by 0.4%.¹

2022	2021
£19.45	£19.44

based on 2022 and 2021 total expenditure divided by the number of regulated persons as at December 2022).

WHAT WE SPENT IN 2022

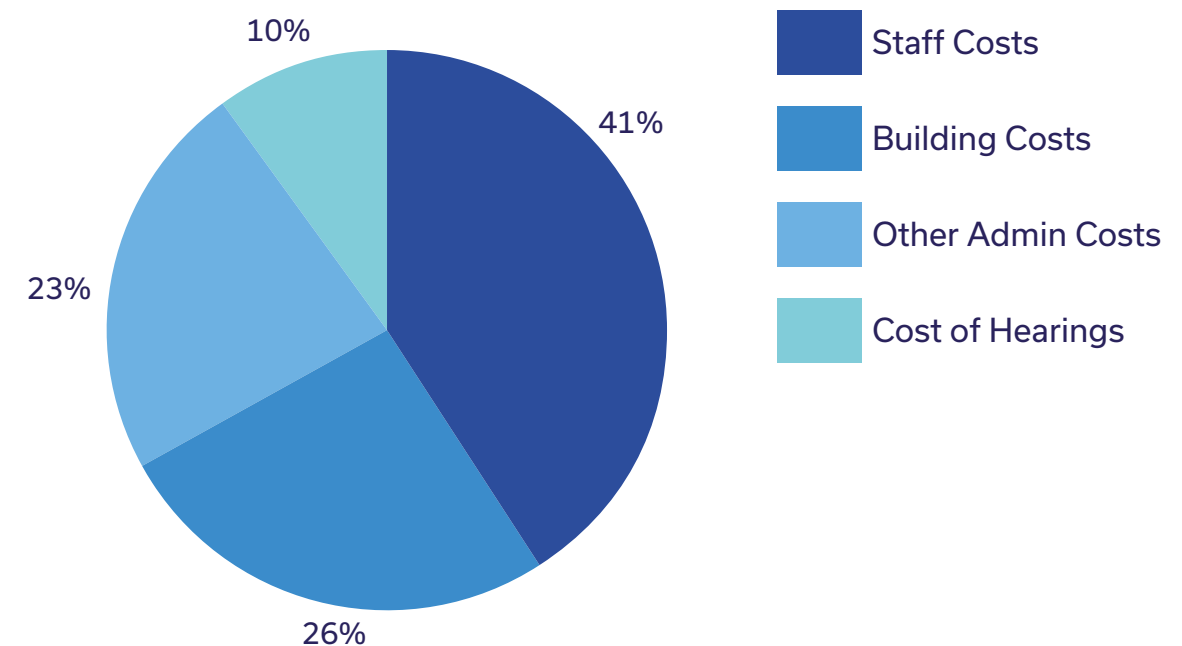
The factors relating to a net increase in expenditure related to a 10% reduction in the number of sitting days and an increase in legal and IT development costs.

Additionally, expenditure for building costs relating to relinquishing the 5th floor and the re-purposing of the 4th floor at Gate House to provide additional staff accommodation was incurred. This aligned with our intention to reduce our floor space. The re-purposing of the 4th floor was kept a minimum in order to minimise expenditure.

However, in November 2022, we received notice that Gate House was to be marketed for sale. Whilst this was a decision beyond our control, it provided opportunity for us relocate to more modern smaller premises and future proof the organisation, while remaining within the same area of London.

We therefore submitted a request for additional funding for our 2023 budget in relation to new premises and dilapidations based on best estimates available at the time - this additional funding was approved and a search for a new premises is underway.

HOW WE SPENT OUR MONEY IN 2022



2022	£
Admin Costs	1,300,328
Building Costs	822,345
Other Admin Costs	705,423
Cost of Hearings	325,914
Total	3,154,010

¹ Regulated persons, used in the calculations above, are made up of practising solicitors, registered European lawyers and registered foreign lawyers. Source: SRA Data for Population of Practising Solicitors.

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

2022 presented many changes for the SDT. In person presence at Gate House, in respect of staff and parties to hearings, steadily increased.

The Tribunal remains committed to innovative and cost-efficient ways of operating such that remote/hybrid hearings remain and allows for more of the public and/or press to observe independent, impartial and transparent justice first hand.

MEMBER RECRUITMENT

This campaign resulted in a better gender balance, an increase in Members who have a disability as well as greater representation of other protected characteristics.

However, in terms of ethnicity, whilst the overall diversity of the Members broadly reflects the general population the appointments, regrettably, did not significantly increase the ethnic diversity of the SDT's membership.

A review of the Member recruitment process is being undertaken to identify learning points to help increase diversity in its Membership.

ACCOMMODATION REVIEW/GATE HOUSE

As previously detailed, following the exploration of several options, including re-location of the administrative offices and the use of external hearing rooms, the decision as made to remain at Gate House and relinquish the 5th floor.

Following the receipt of notice that Gate House was for sale, the Tribunal entered into a two year lease in December 2022 with a six month rolling break.

When the SDT secures future accommodation in 2023, the savings will increase with the aim of the new premises accommodating in person hearings, remote/hybrid hearings as well as creating more flexible working arrangements for staff.

The outcome will be a reduced carbon footprint, more efficient use of space and reduced cost to the profession in circumstances where independent, impartial and transparent justice will continue to be delivered in a manner that takes full advantage of technology and innovation.

CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY STRATEGY (CSR) & EQUALITY & DIVERSITY STRATEGY (EDI)

Whilst the SDT deployed a number of corporate social responsibility initiatives, they are not currently incorporated in a formal Strategy. The EDI Strategy in operation was considered to be outdated and unreflective of best practice.

The Policy Committee decided in March 2022 that a working party be set up to devise and implement a Responsibility Strategy for the SDT which combines a CSR strategy and a new EDI strategy.

The CSR and EDI strategy recommendations are in the process of being finalised and presented to the Board.

One of the goals of our new CSR strategy is to play our part in combatting the effects of climate change; one of the ways we achieve this is ensuring our office operations are as environmentally friendly as possible.

The SDT received a Gold Award for recycling in 2022. We recycled 86% of our waste and in doing so saved 1.14 tonnes of CO2 thanks to the installation of colour coded recycling bins in Gate House in

2019.

We have also been working to reduce single use packaging for some time which will continue and expand at the new office premises.

INFORMATION GATHERING & DEVELOPING REPORTING CAPACITY

The SDT's Case Management System (CMS) remains a key element of our IT infrastructure and is fundamental to our ability to manage cases smoothly and efficiently within existing staff resources and in line with performance targets.

Since CMS went live, we have seen the benefit of the workflows and single source of information that it provides. This in turn has resulted in more efficient and effective and transparent case management system.

During 2022 we have developed our reporting capacity to help us monitor and improve in key performance target areas.

This has resulted in significant benefits in the level of detailed information available which in turn has enabled us to present accurate and transparent data to stakeholders, the profession and the public.

LIAISON WITH KEY STAKEHOLDERS

Following the increase in its fining powers, work is being undertaken with the SRA to develop a shared understanding of the cases that the SRA intends to refer to the Tribunal.

Whilst ultimately it is a matter for the SRA which cases they refer to the Tribunal, this is an important dialogue. It provides a level of reassurance to the public and the profession that allegations of serious misconduct will continue to be determined by an independent, impartial and fair Tribunal.

GUIDANCE FOR RESPONDENTS

The Tribunal started to review how we could improve upon the way we provide guidance for individuals. We recognised that for those who are not familiar with our processes and terminology it can be harder to ensure that all requirements of our Standard Directions are met.

Working with key stakeholders we revised our Standard Directions and on 11 October 2022 these were introduced in place of our existing standard directions.

We also launched our new Explanatory Note to Standard Directions and Glossary together with a template Answer and Statement of Means to assist all parties but particularly those who are unrepresented.

TRIBUNAL JUDGMENTS

The complexity of the allegations and length of hearing has a significant impact on the time required to produce the Judgment. However the Tribunal recognises that it is critically important for the parties and the public to understand the reasons for its decisions without undue delay and we endeavour to issue Judgments as soon as possible after the hearing.

We accept that some of our judgments are long and contain references to technical terms of law. Therefore, we took on the challenge of reducing 'legalese' and jargon in our Judgments whilst still ensuring they retained the requirement to give clear reasons. We made the Judgments easier to read and more readily understandable by a range of audiences, both lay and professional.

To this end, we produced a judgment structure containing an executive summary of key points and also bookmarks and 'hyperlinks' enabling the reader to navigate more easily around the Judgment as well as choose the order in which they wished to consider the material.

KEY PERFORMANCE

To ensure we continue to carry out our role efficiently and in the public interest the Legal Services Board ('LSB'), the oversight regulator for legal services in England and Wales, set the Tribunal 10 key performance measurements against which we are judged.

The following pages present the facts and figures relating to our work and the progress we have made in attaining the 10 KPI's with comprehensive descriptions and the targets pertaining to each individual measure outlined.

It presents an analysis of applications received, adjournments, judgment production and appeals against decisions made by our panels to provide insight into our processes and to help monitor and improve efficiency.

KPM OVERVIEW



KPM 1

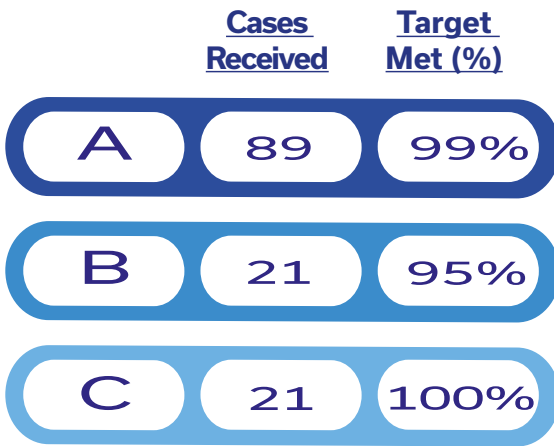
Proceedings to be issued or notification of non-certification sent to the Applicant within a set number of calendar days of date of receipt of Originating Application:

(A) Solicitors, Former Solicitors, Registered Foreign Lawyers, Registered European Lawyers, Clerks & Recognised Bodies
Target: 85% within 5 working days

(B) Other applications (e.g. Restoration to the Roll, Revoke a s.43 Order)
Target: 85% within 5 working days

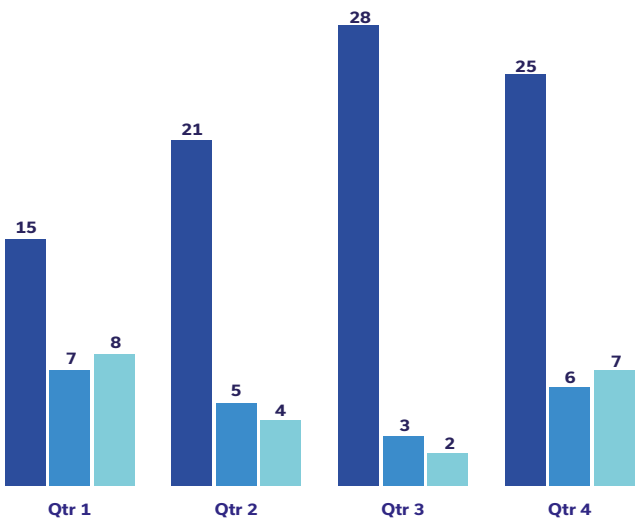
(C) Lay Applications
Target: 90% to be considered by a Member/Panel of the Tribunal within 8 working days

136
sets of proceedings received



Yearly Total of Applications Received

Applications Received by Quarter



A In 2022, the Tribunal received 8% fewer cases than in 2021.

B The time interval between the SRA's decision to refer a matter to the Tribunal and receive of the proceedings was circa 20 weeks in most cases.

C

Of the 89 Cases received from the SRA in 2022, data has been collated on 86* cases in relation to four general themes of allegations:

Solicitors Accounts Rules
Misuse of Client Account
Dishonesty
Lack of Integrity

Additionally, of the 89 cases:

8 related to criminal convictions
3 related to sexual misconduct
1 related to sexual misconduct resulting in a criminal conviction

Accounts Rules Breaches	Misuse of Client Account	Dishonesty	Lack of Integrity	No of cases containing theme
	✓			1
✓	✓	✓	✓	3
✓		✓	✓	4
✓	✓			4
✓			✓	7
		✓	✓	12
			✓	29
✓				29

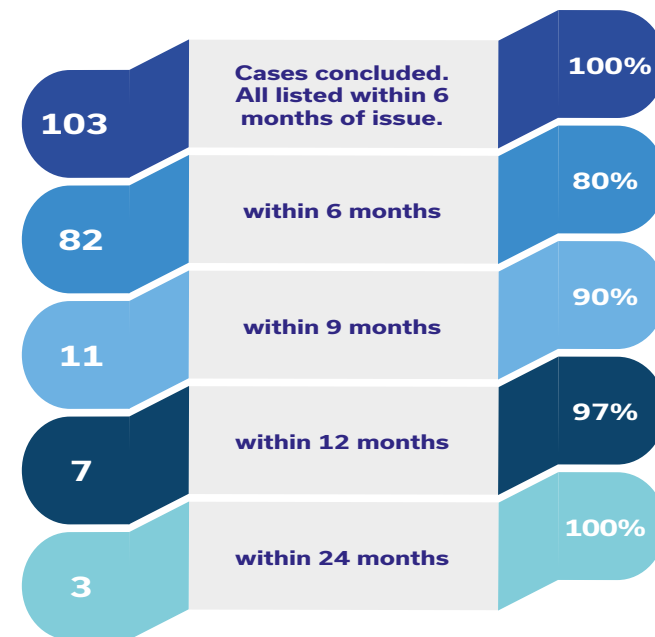
* Data in relation to the remaining three cases did not relate to the general themes and is therefore not included.

KPM 2

A: 75% of cases listed for Substantive Hearing within 6 months of issue

B: Determination of application, from the date of issue of proceedings to take place within:

- 60% - 6 months
- 80% 6-9 months
- 95% - 9-12 months
- 100% 12-24 months



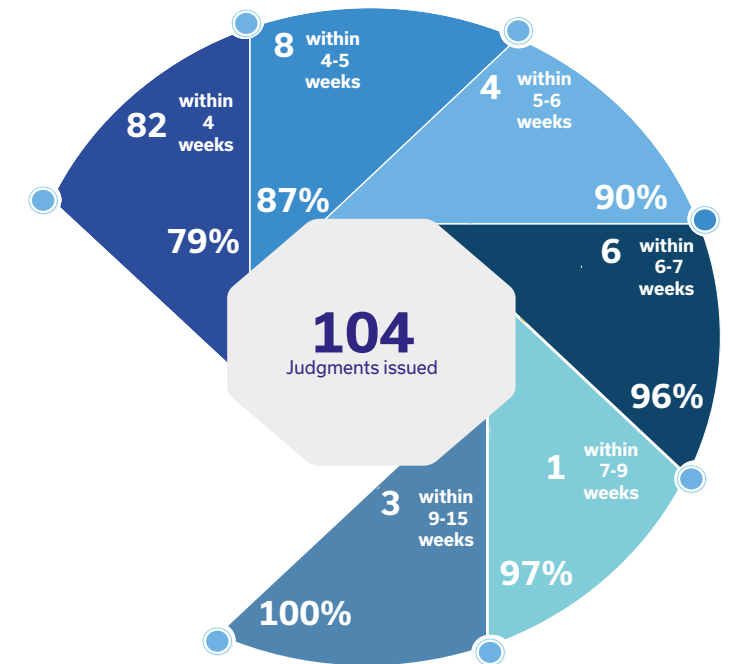
Delay is harmful to the judicial process and the Tribunal works hard to ensure that the time it takes for a case to be concluded is reduced.

In 2022, the majority of the Tribunal's cases were concluded within 6 months of the first listing and well within target.

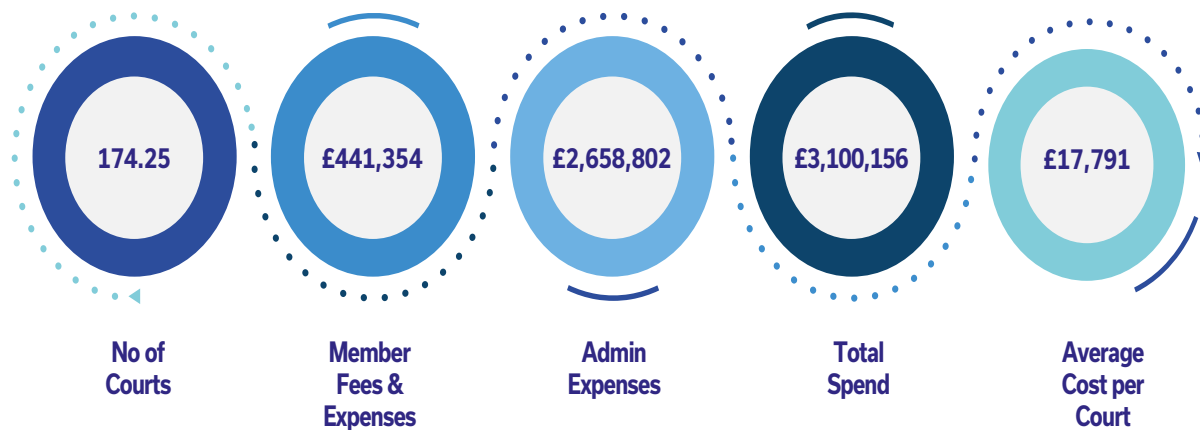
KPM 4

Following final determination of the application, Judgment to be served on the parties within:-

- 35% <4 weeks
- 50% 4-5 weeks
- 70% 5-6 weeks
- 85% 6-7 weeks
- 95% 7-9 weeks
- 100% 9-15 weeks



This target continued to be met and all Judgments were issued within 15 weeks or less. Efficiency of judgment production improved across the board in 2022, as compared to 2021, with 79% delivered in 4 weeks or less, representing an increase of 8% on 2021.



In 2022, the overall cost per court increased by £38% compared to the previous year. Administrative expenses, which are largely fixed costs, were spread over 64.75 (27%) fewer hearing days.

Member's fees and expenses fell by £59,550 in 2022. This reflected the decrease in hearing days between 2021 and 2022. Included in 2022, was a 12.07% increase in member's fees 'in lieu' of holiday entitlement from August, resulting from the outcome of the Somerville v NMC case.

Administrative Expenses rose by 3% due to the Member Recruitment exercise discussed earlier in the report and the premises costs also incurred.

KPM 3



It should be noted that there can be a considerable delay between an appeal being lodged and heard which is why a number of appeals lodged in 2022 have yet to be heard.

The Tribunal takes careful note of the guidance handed down in respect of appeals (both in relation to our own decisions and also to relevant appeal cases within other jurisdictions).

'Briefing Notes' in relation to key decisions are prepared by the clerking team and disseminated to all members and clerks.

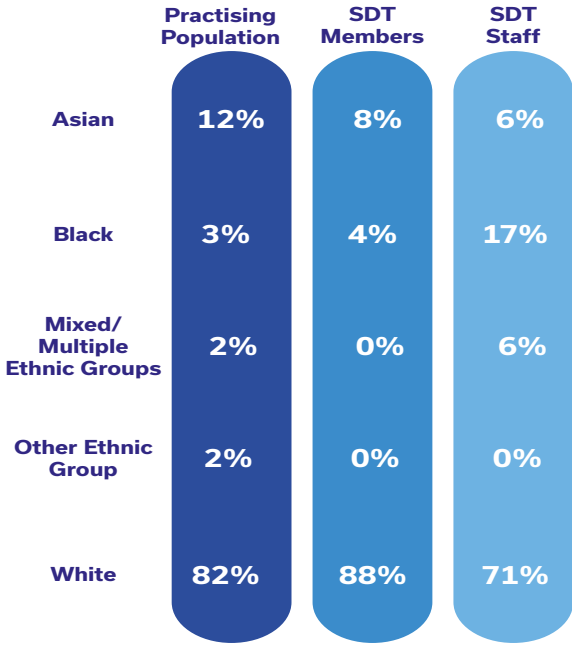
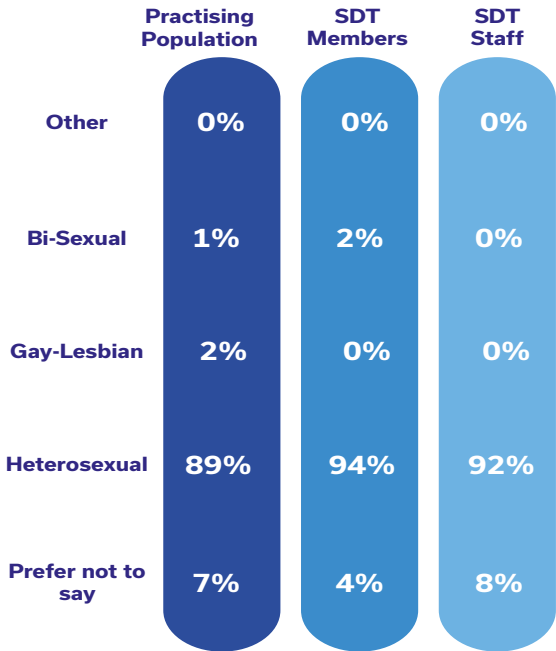
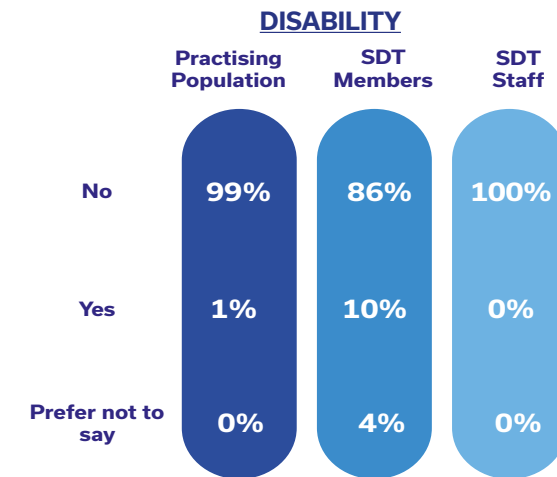
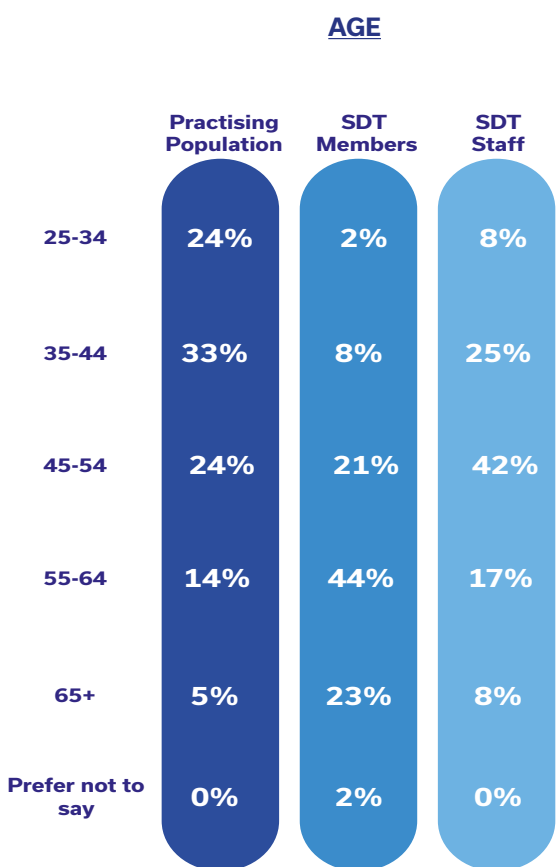
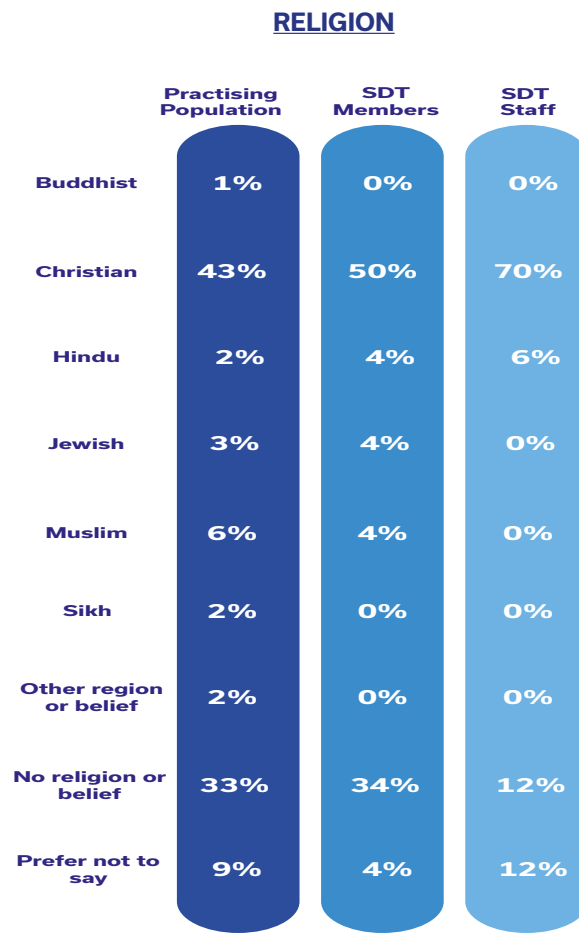
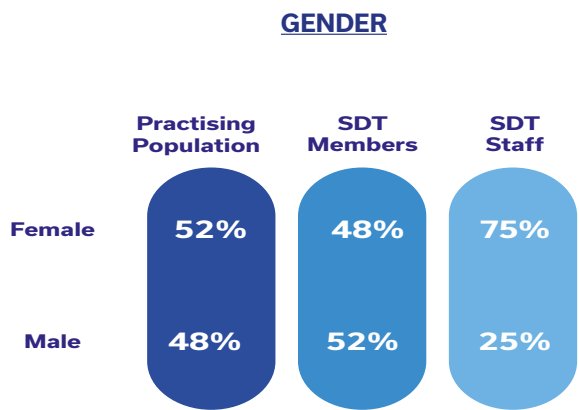
KPM 5

Ensure that the diversity profile of the SDT’s staff team and its membership reflect the diversity of the population it serves, and the solicitors profession (of England and Wales) in particular.

The graphics below compare the Tribunal’s member and staff diversity profiles with those of the wider population of practising solicitors.

For the purposes of this measure, we have compared the percentage of the Tribunal’s staff and membership teams with the population of the profession for whom the SRA hold diversity information.

This information is extracted from the SRA’s Upholding Professional Standards 2019/20 and accompanying Diversity Monitoring Supporting Report together with the Law Firm Diversity Data Tool on the SRA’s website.



OUTLINE - KPM 7-10

Performance Measures 7-10 aim to monitor user satisfaction in 4 key areas:

- Response of the SDT Administrative Team;
- Access to hearings;
- Experience using the SDT website;
- Time and opportunity for parties and advocates to present their case.

Data in respect of these measures were gathered via a user feedback survey which was sent out 3 times, each covering a 4 month period.

Surveys were sent to 4 categories of participants in cases:

- Respondents
- Applicants
- Legal Representatives
- Witnesses

We work with a third party provider to maximise efficiency and ensure anonymity of data and to encourage participation by people who might

have been more reluctant to respond to contact directly from the SDT.

Recipients of the survey were asked 4 questions in relation to the 4 KPMs and also asked to tell us their gender and ethnic background in order to gather additional data about these protected characteristics, and in the longer term, help us to understand any possible link between people’s experiences of the Tribunal.

A total of 166 questionnaires were sent out of which 29 were returned, with an overall return rate of 17%, making it difficult to draw firm conclusions from these figures.

70% of those responding who contacted the Tribunal's administrative team felt that their needs were listened to and understood by the staff they contacted.

The table below shows how different feedback groups responded to the question: **'If you contacted the Tribunal's administrative team, did you feel they listened to and understood your needs?'**

Group	Answered 'Yes' (Target 70%)	Answered 'No'	Answered 'N/A' (not included in %)
Respondent (Non SRA)	7 (87%)	1 (13%)	4
Legal Representative (Non SRA)	5 (100%)	0 (0%)	0
Applicant (Non SRA)	3 (60%)	2 (40%)	0
Witness	3 (100%)	0 (%)	2
Legal Representative (SRA)	1 (100%)	0 (0%)	1
Total	19 (86%)	3 (14%)	7

90% of parties and advocates responding could access the hearing effectively (including those hearings held remotely).

The table below shows how different feedback groups responded to the question: **'Were you able to access/attend the hearing effectively?'**

Group	Answered 'Yes' (Target 70%)	Answered 'No'	Answered 'N/A' (not included in %)
Respondent (Non SRA)	5 (83%)	1 (17%)	4
Legal Representative (Non SRA)	5 (100%)	0 (0%)	0
Applicant (Non SRA)	4 (80%)	1 (20%)	0
Witness	3 (100%)	0 (%)	2
Legal Representative (SRA)	2 (100%)	0 (0%)	0
Total	19 (86%)	2 (14%)	6

70% of those responding who are a party or advocate in a case who referred to the Tribunal's website found the information on the website was useful/helped them prepare for their hearing/case.

The table below shows how different feedback groups responded to the question: **'If you visited our website, was it useful and/or did it help you prepare for your hearing/case?'**

Group	Answered 'Yes' (Target 70%)	Answered 'No'	Answered 'N/A' (not included in %)
Respondent (Non SRA)	7 (100%)	0 (0%)	5
Legal Representative (Non SRA)	5 (100%)	0 (0%)	0
Applicant (Non SRA)	1 (20%)	4 (80%)	0
Witness	3 (75%)	1 (25%)	1
Legal Representative (SRA)	1 (50%)	1 (50%)	0
Total	17 (74%)	6 (26%)	6

85% of parties and advocates responding felt that they had sufficient time and opportunity to present their case to the Tribunal during the hearing.

The table below shows how different feedback groups responded to the question: **'During the hearing did you have sufficient time and opportunity to present your case/evidence to the Tribunal?'**

Group	Answered 'Yes' (Target 70%)	Answered 'No'	Answered 'N/A' (not included in %)
Respondent (Non SRA)	7 (100%)	0 (0%)	5
Legal Representative (Non SRA)	5 (100%)	0 (0%)	0
Applicant (Non SRA)	1 (25%)	3 (75%)	1
Witness	4 (100%)	0 (0%)	1
Legal Representative (SRA)	2 (100%)	0 (0%)	0
Total	19 (86%)	3 (14%)	7

As detailed in KPM1, the Tribunal received 131 applications in total in 2022 and of the 89 sets of proceedings received from the SRA, these proceedings equated to 100 individual respondents, with some proceedings involving multiple respondents.

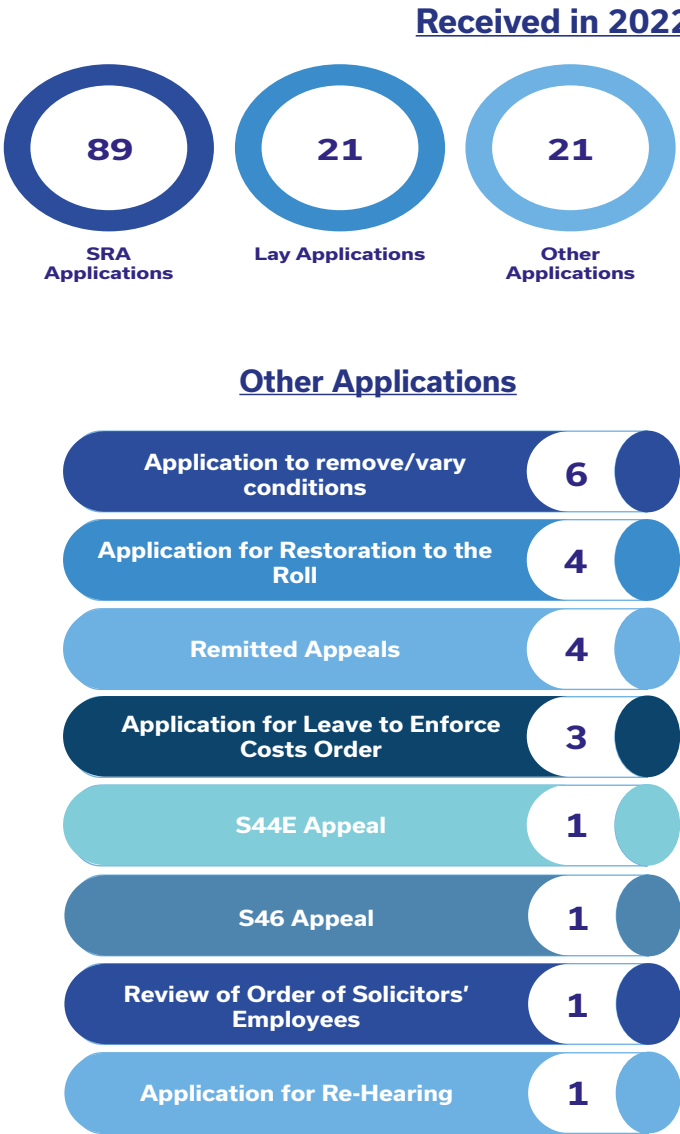
The categorisation of the 'Other' applications received in 2022 is shown by the graphic on the right. There was a reduction on 2021 however an increase in the number of Remitted Appeals received.

Type	No of Respondents
Solicitor	98
Registered Foreign Lawyer	1
Unadmitted Person	1

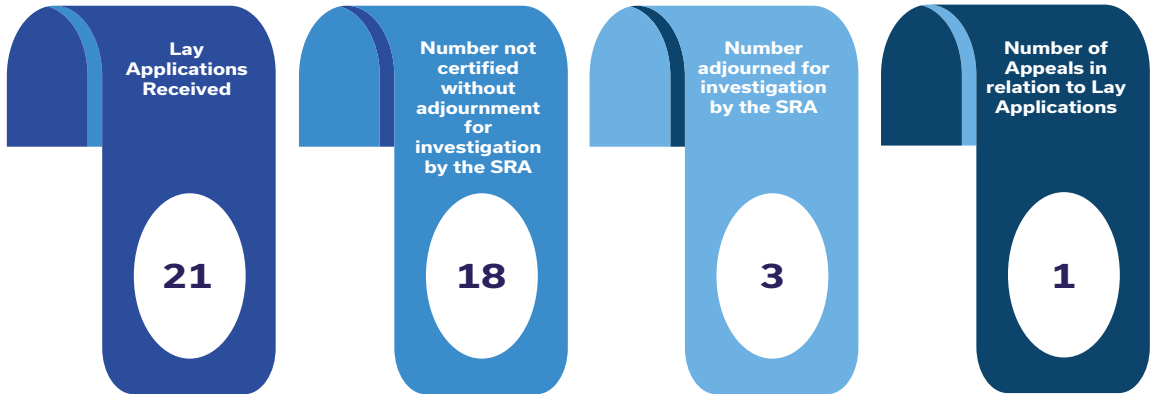
Position	No of Respondents
Associate	29
Consultant	3
Individual	17
Non-admitted	1
Other	1
Partner	35
Sole Practitioner	14

Since the introduction of the new case management system and the improved reporting function, we are now able to collate information in relation to Respondent type and position.

Therefore the information in relation to the 100 individual respondents from SRA proceedings is detailed here.



LAY APPLICATIONS



Since 2020 there has been a year upon year increase of lay applications. This may be indicative of more direct public engagement with the Tribunal and due also to heightened awareness of the Tribunal.

Given the difficulties faced by lay applicants, the Tribunal endeavours to provide personal guidance, tailored to their needs.

Deputy Clerks and administrative staff readily answer questions on procedural matters and offer assistance on using CaseLines, the

Tribunal's electronic document management system.

Although most lay applicants set out their concerns in depth, they do not provide sufficient evidence to demonstrate that there is a case to answer or arguable case of professional misconduct.

That said, if the applicant raises matters which causes the Tribunal to have concerns, it will request the SRA to carry out the necessary investigations and report back to the Tribunal before the Tribunal makes a definitive

decision on whether to certify.

As detailed at page 9, the purpose of the revision of our Standard Directions, the Explanatory Note and Glossary, the template Answer and Statement of Means was to improve the way we can assist parties, particularly those who are unrepresented.

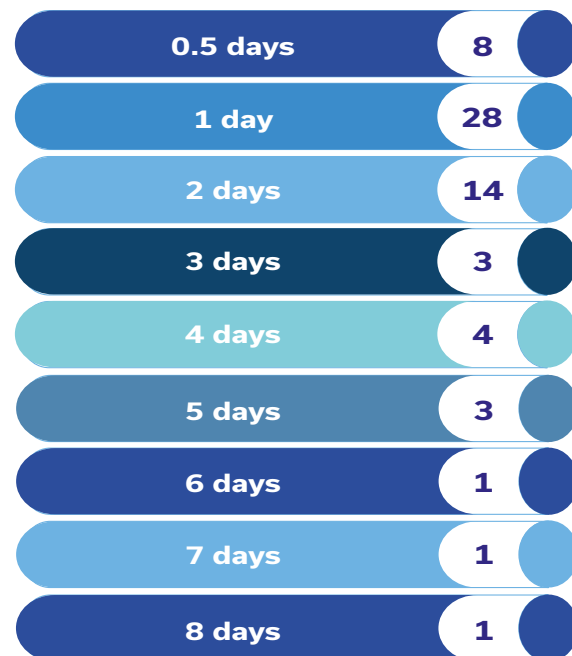
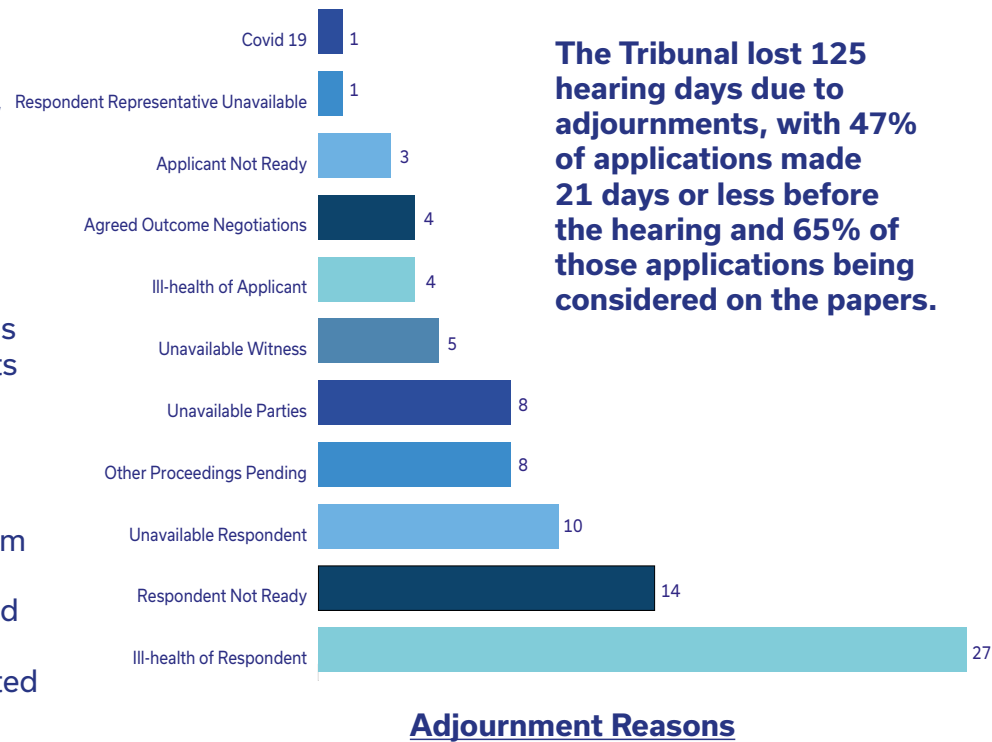
ADJOURNMENTS & HEARINGS

Adjournments are a crucial issue for the Tribunal as delay is always prejudicial to the interests of justice.

There were 85 applications made to adjourn either the substantive hearing or case management hearing in 2022, compared to 57 in 2021.

We carried out a review of the principles causes for adjournments with a view to finding ways we could be more proactive in dealing with them to ensure that Tribunal time and costs would not be lost and wasted unnecessarily.

Adjournment Applications - Yearly Figures			
Application By	No of Applications	Granted	Refused
Respondent	43	23	20
Applicant	30	26	4
Joint	5	4	1
Tribunal	4	4	0
Appellant	3	2	0
Total	85	59	26



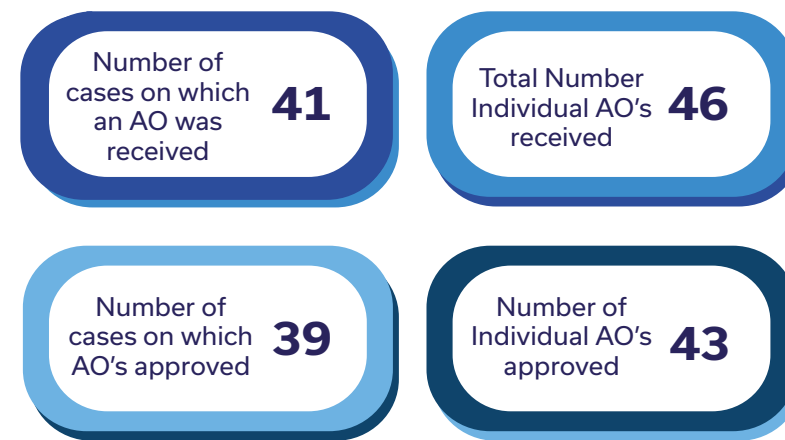
Length of Hearings

In 2022, the Tribunal sat for 174.5 days compared to 239 days in 2021.

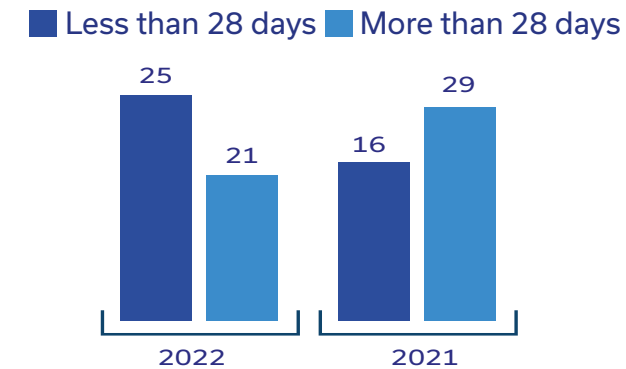
This graphic shows a breakdown of the length of substantive hearings and applications e.g. for restoration to the roll or to end an indefinite suspension.

Case Management Hearings and Agreed Outcomes are not included.

AGREED OUTCOMES



Agreed Outcome Applications received within:



The number of cases in which an Agreed Outcome (AO) was received in 2022 was consistent with the previous year.

Agreed Outcomes were approved in 39 cases which equated to 43 individual respondents - these figures differ as cases can feature multiple Respondents. There was a reduction in the number of AO's rejected, with 3 being rejected in 2022 compared to 8 in the previous year.

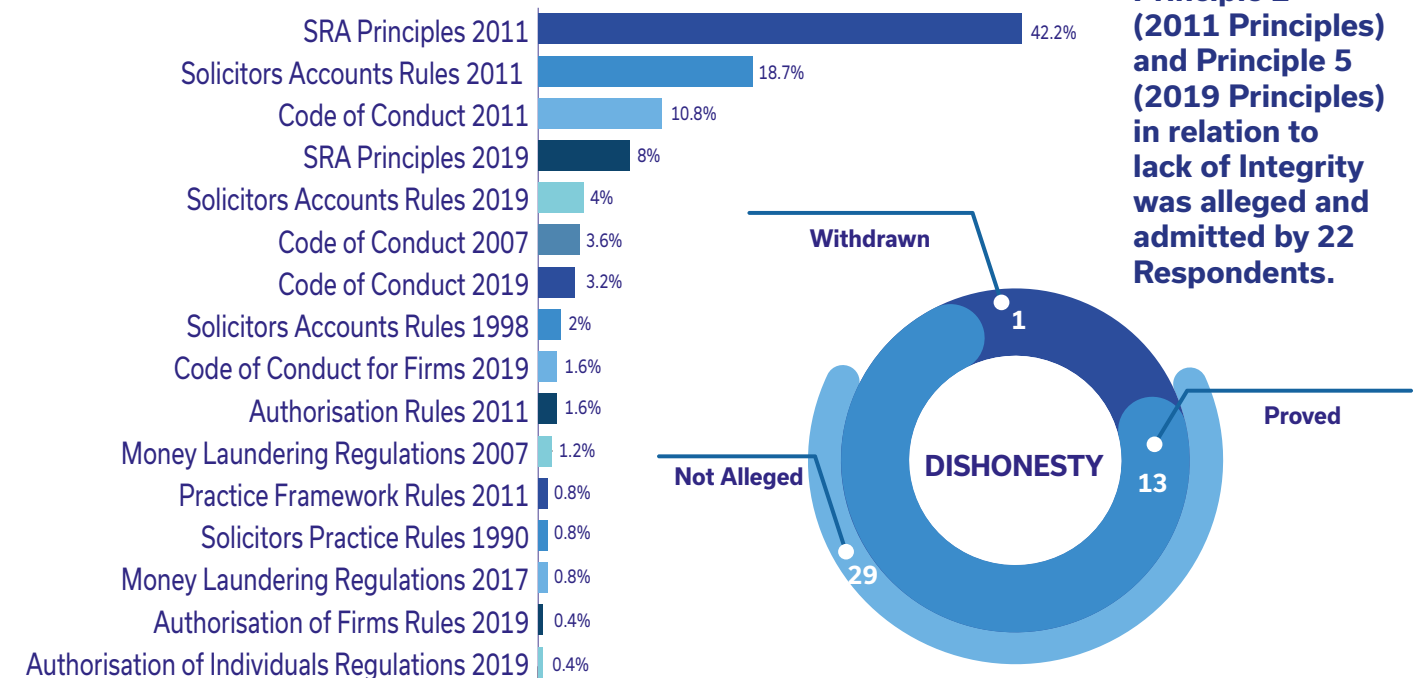
Days of Court Time Affected:

2022	2021
86	74.5

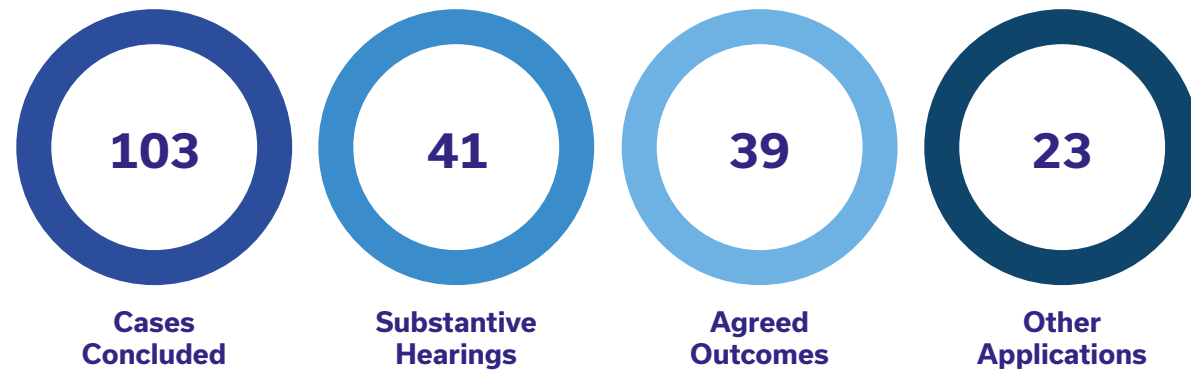
The graphics below provide information relating to Dishonesty and the relevant rules in relation to allegations brought in Agreed Outcome cases against individual respondents.

Breaches of the 2011 SRA Principles, specifically Principle 6 - 'you must behave in a way that maintains the trust the public places in you and in the provision of legal services' were brought before the Tribunal most frequently.

Allegations by Relevant Rule



SUBSTANTIVE HEARINGS



Of the 41 Substantive hearings heard by the Tribunal in 2022, these matters comprised of 47 individual respondents.

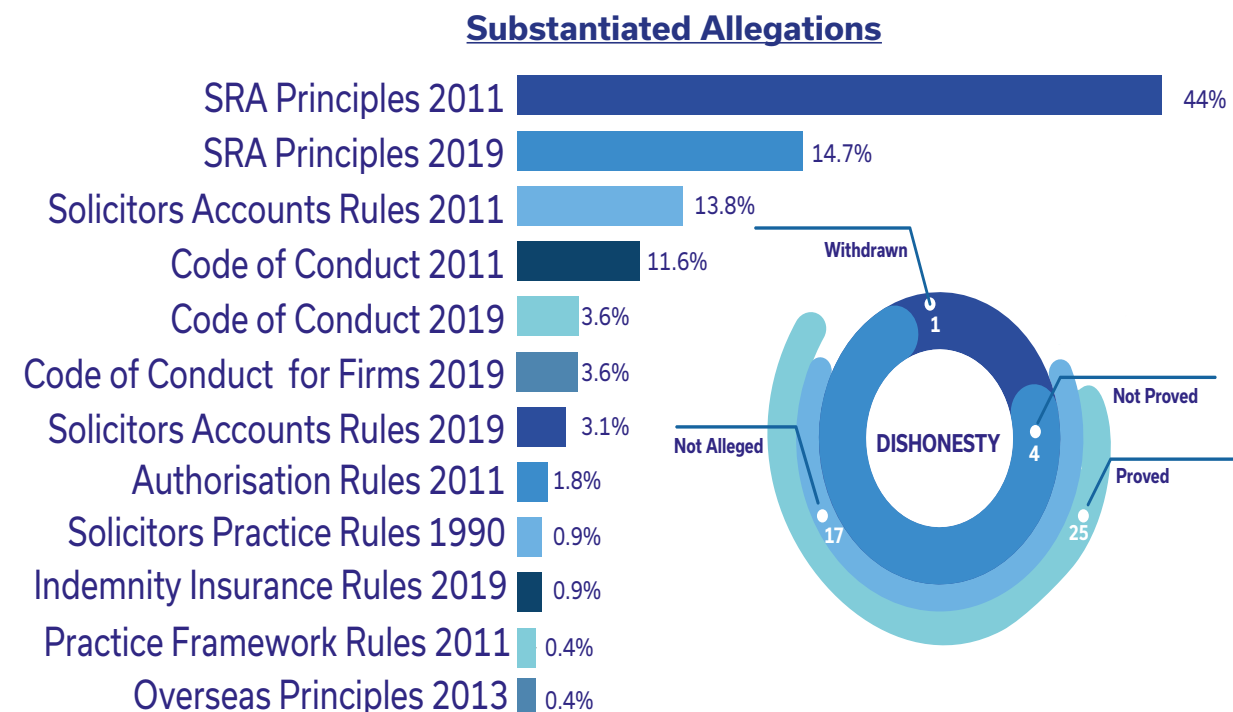
In relation to the allegations determined by the Tribunal, of those individuals there were:

- 36** Respondents where all allegations were found proved;
- 9** Respondents where allegations were partially found proved;
- 2** Respondents where allegations were found not proved.

There were also 3 hearings which were remitted to the Tribunal following Appeal. In two of the cases, the allegations were dismissed and in the third the Tribunal made No Order.

The graphics below show the percentage of allegations substantiated under the different rules together with the information regarding dishonesty by individual respondents following a substantive hearing.

As with Agreed Outcomes, Breaches of the 2011 SRA Principles, specifically Principle 6 were brought before the Tribunal most frequently. Principle 2 - SRA Principles 2011 & Principle 5 - SRA Principles 2019 in relation to lack of Integrity was found and proved in relation to 35 Respondents.



SANCTIONS & ORDERS

There is always a difference between the number of cases/hearings and the numbers of sanctions/orders handed down.

This is because sanctions/orders relate to individual respondents and cases often have multiple respondents - therefore there can be more than one sanction/order per respondent and per case.

The Tribunal made orders in relation to 113 individuals in 2022 who can be categorised as follows:-

Solicitors	102
Unadmitted Persons	6
Former Solicitors	2
Recognised Bodies	2
Registered Foreign Lawyer	1

The graphic on this page shows how many sanctions/orders were made in all hearings during 2022.

In relation to the most common sanctions, these have been broken down below to reflect the sanctions ordered following a substantive hearing or by way of Agreed Outcome:

Substantive Hearing	
Solicitors Struck off	28
Fines	14
Fixed Period Suspension	2
Restrictions	1
Reprimand	1

Agreed Outcome	
Fines	20
Solicitors Struck off	14
Restrictions	14
Fixed Period Suspension	7
S43 Order	2

In relation to the Fixed Period Suspensions, they are categorised as follows:

3 Months	1
6 Months	2
12 Months	4
18 Months	2



FINES

TOTAL FINES £381,004

The level of fines in 2022 represents a decrease of £52,598 compared to 2021.

HM Treasury is provided with a copy of the fine order and is responsible for collecting and enforcing the payment of fines.

The information below shows the apportionment of fines between a Substantive Hearing and Agreed Outcome.

FINE BANDS

Level 1 - £0-£2,000

Level 2 - £2,001-£7,500

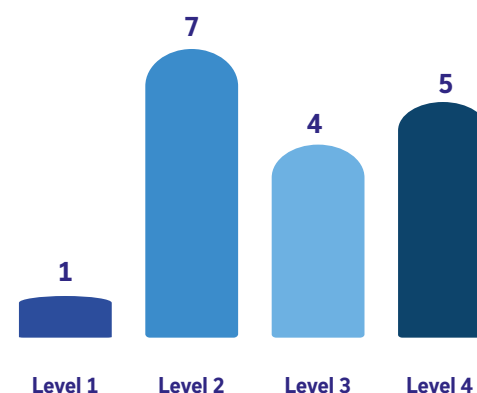
Level 3 - £7,501-£15,000

Level 4 - £15,001-£50,000

Level 5 - £50,001-Unlimited

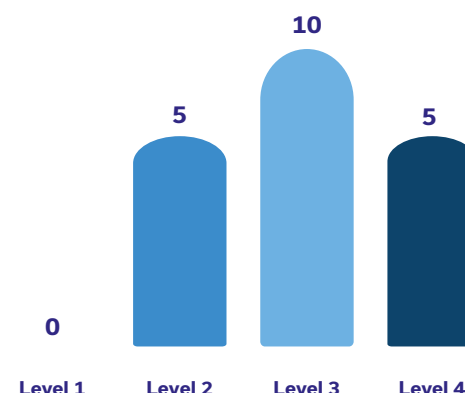
SUBSTANTIVE HEARINGS

FINES ORDERED:
£105,000



AGREED OUTCOMES

FINES ORDERED:
£276,004



COSTS

Of the amount of costs ordered in 2022, £538,282.95 was from cases concluded by Agreed Outcome and £291,000 from a lay application brought where the applicant was ordered to pay the costs of the Respondent.

There was a reduction of £105,323.10 from 2021.

TOTAL COSTS £1,832,533.75

Apportionment of Costs



Both the level of fines and the level of costs in any one year is dependent upon the specific cases before the Tribunal, any costs ordered are payable to the receiving party not the SDT.

In cases brought by the SRA where there has been a forensic investigation into the matters giving rise to the allegations, the costs of this investigation are usually included as part of the costs the SRA seeks in the proceedings.