

Association of Costs Lawyers  
Herringbone House  
Lion Road  
Palgrave  
Diss  
IP22 1AL

The logo for the Association of Costs Lawyers (ACL) consists of the lowercase letters 'acl' in a bold, green, serif font.

DX: 42520 Diss  
Tel: 01379 741404

email: [enquiries@costslawyer.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@costslawyer.co.uk)

Mr M Mackay  
By email only: [consultations@legalservicesboard.org.uk](mailto:consultations@legalservicesboard.org.uk)

4 March 2011

Dear Mr Mackay

### **Response to Increasing Diversity consultation paper**

Please find enclosed the ACL's response to the above consultation paper. In his letter dated 15 December 2010, Chris Kenny asked for a reply to three questions. Our replies are set out below.

1. Our current evidence base is inadequate because the ACL, as a recently-appointed authorised regulator, has not historically gathered more than very basic data about its members.
  - 1.1. We currently have no evidence base about the diversity of our regulated community beyond knowing the sex of our members and whether they work in-house or independently. We know members' ages when they apply to join the ACL's training course, but we have never collated that information.
  - 1.2. We have traditionally announced data about the ratio of men to women in the membership at our AGM as part of the Chairman's report, which is then published in the minutes of the AGM.
  - 1.3. Clearly, our existing data set is inadequate for the purpose of examining diversity among costs lawyers.
2. As a regulator of individuals only, the ACL has no proposal to promote transparency at entity level.
3. The ACL's diversity initiatives are based on a non-discrimination policy, which is communicated to all new members on induction, plus a clear message of encouragement to all members that they tell us about any special needs they have which may affect their participation in the training course, and in their membership of the ACL. As a small organisation, we have the luxury of being able to respond flexibly to members' needs.

- 3.1. We have not, to date, measured the impact of the steps we take to encourage diversity.
- 3.2. Our clear and stated objective is to encourage diversity and to ensure that all members adopt our non-discrimination policy.
- 3.3. As 3.1.
- 3.4. As 3.1.

We are keen to work with the LSB, in a reasonable and proportionate manner, to promote equality and diversity among costs lawyers.

Yours sincerely



Victoria Hopkins  
**Vice Chairman**  
**Association of Costs Lawyers**

enc