THE CRIMINAL BAR ASSOCIATION

GOVERNANCE PAPER

Communications Policy

1. Purpose and Scope

1.1 This Policy governs the communications activity of the Criminal Bar Association ("the Association"), including:

(a) routine communications with members;

(b) public statements made in the name of the Association;

(c) media engagement and press communications;

(d) podcasts and digital communications;

(e) social media activity by the Association;

(f) crisis communications.

1.2 It gives effect to clause 1.4 of the Constitution and Section 11 of the Terms of Reference, and operates alongside the Code of Conduct.

2. Authority and Approval

2.1 The Officers approve all public statements, publications, podcasts, media engagement and external communications made or issued in the name of the Association, in accordance with the Terms of Reference and clause 5.10 of the Constitution.

2.2 Day-to-day communications activity is coordinated by the Director of Communications, in cooperation with the Administrator and the Officers. The Director of Communications reports to the Chair and Vice Chair, in accordance with clause 5.5 of the Constitution.

2.3 Subcommittees, Working Groups and individual members shall not issue public statements in the name of the Association without the approval of the Officers, save where this Policy or the Terms of Reference provide otherwise.

3. Routine Communications with Members

3.1 The Association communicates with its members through such channels as the Officers from time to time approve, including:

(a) a regular email newsletter;

(b) the Association's website;

(c) targeted communications relating to subscriptions, events, ballots and elections;

(d) social media announcements;

(e) such mobile applications and member platforms as the Association may from time to time provide.

3.2 The Administrator is responsible for the operational maintenance of mailing lists and member communications channels. Mailing lists shall not be shared, sold or used for any purpose other than the legitimate business of the Association.

4. Public Statements

4.1 A public statement made in the name of the Association includes (without limitation):

(a) press releases;

(b) consultation responses (the procedure for which is set out in the Subcommittee Operations Handbook);

(c) open letters;

(d) briefings to Government, the judiciary or other public bodies;

(e) public posts on the Association's social media accounts which express a position on policy.

4.2 A public statement shall be drafted and approved before publication. Approval shall be by the Officers, save that:

(a) where time does not permit collective Officer approval, the Chair (or in the Chair's absence the Vice Chair) may approve a statement, with notification to the other Officers as soon as practicable;

(b) a statement on a matter of significance to the criminal Bar may be referred to the Executive Committee for consideration before publication.

4.3 A public statement shall:

(a) be accurate and proportionate;

(b) be consistent with the objects of the Association;

(c) be measured in tone, befitting an organisation of the criminal Bar;

(d) avoid party-political alignment, in accordance with clause 1.5 of the Constitution.

5. Media Engagement and Press

5.1 Media engagement on behalf of the Association shall ordinarily be undertaken by the Chair, the Vice Chair or such other Officer or member as the Officers nominate for the matter in question. 5.2 Members of the Association shall not represent themselves as speaking for the Association without the authority of the Officers. Members may, of course, speak in their personal capacity, taking care to make plain that they do not speak for the Association.

5.3 Press inquiries received by the Association shall ordinarily be directed in the first instance to the Director of Communications, who shall consult the Officers as appropriate.

6. Podcasts and Digital Content

6.1 The Association shall ordinarily maintain a planned annual programme of professional podcasts and digital content, in accordance with the Terms of Reference.

6.2 The Director of Communications shall coordinate podcast scheduling, content planning and production.

6.3 The Young Bar Committee, the RASSO Committee and the Remuneration Committee may each contribute podcast content annually, in accordance with the Terms of Reference. Other Subcommittees may propose contributions to the Director of Communications.

6.4 No podcast or digital content shall be released in the name of the Association without prior approval through the communications approval structure.

6.5 Listening figures and engagement data shall be provided to the Officers and the Executive Committee not less frequently than every six months.

6.6 Guests on podcasts shall be briefed in advance on the standards expected and shall be asked to confirm their consent to the publication of the recording.

7. Social Media

7.1 The Association maintains accounts on such social media platforms as the Officers from time to time approve.

7.2 Posting on the Association's social media accounts is the responsibility of the Director of Communications, in consultation with the Officers.

7.3 Posts on the Association's social media accounts shall:

(a) remain consistent in tone with the standing of the Association;

(b) avoid contentious or party-political content;

(c) avoid commentary on individual cases, judgments or judicial appointments save where the Officers have approved a statement on a matter of professional significance;

(d) comply with the Code of Conduct, the Information Governance Policy and applicable law;

(e) never be used to promote any individual's candidacy in any election (governed by Section 11 of the Election Procedures).

8. Members' Use of CBA Identity

8.1 Members may speak publicly about their association with the Criminal Bar Association as members. They shall not represent themselves as speaking for the Association without authority.

8.2 The Association's name, logo, branding, mailing lists, communications channels and membership data shall be used only with proper authority and for proper purposes, in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

9. Crisis Communications

9.1 A crisis communication is a communication issued in response to:

(a) an event or development of urgent professional significance to the criminal Bar;

(b) a serious operational incident affecting the Association;

(c) a matter giving rise to immediate reputational risk;

(d) such other circumstances as the Officers consider require an urgent and coordinated response.

9.2 Crisis communications shall be coordinated by the Officers and the Director of Communications.

9.3 A crisis communication shall:

(a) be accurate;

(b) avoid speculation;

(c) protect the confidentiality of any persons affected, where appropriate;

(d) preserve public confidence in the Association.

9.4 Where time does not permit collective Officer approval, the Chair (or in the Chair's absence the Vice Chair) may approve a crisis communication, with notification to the other Officers and the Executive Committee as soon as practicable.

9.5 The Officers shall report on any crisis communication to the next meeting of the Executive Committee.

10. Approval Pathway Summary

10.1 The approval pathway for communications is as follows:

(a) routine member communications: Director of Communications, with reference to the Officers as appropriate;

(b) public statements and consultation responses: Officers (collective);

(c) urgent statements: Chair (or Vice Chair), with notification to the other Officers as soon as practicable;

(d) crisis communications: as for urgent statements;

(e) podcasts and digital content: Director of Communications, with Officer approval before release;

(f) social media: Director of Communications, in consultation with the Officers;

(g) matters of significance to the criminal Bar: referral to the Executive Committee.

11. Records

11.1 The Director of Communications shall maintain records of all approved public statements, podcast episodes, press communications and crisis communications, with retention in accordance with the Information Governance Policy.

12. Review

12.1 This Policy shall be reviewed by the Executive Committee not less frequently than every two years.

/