

Criminal Law Solicitors' Association
Press Release
Issued 24th January 2013
CLSA welcomes Bar opposition to QASA

CLSA Chair Bill Waddington today welcomed the Bar's opposition to the QASA scheme, aimed at regulating Criminal Advocates. The CLSA has responded to every consultation on QASA questioning the need for the scheme. There is ample provision within the existing regulatory framework for Solicitors and Barristers to deal with issues that arise with Crown Court Advocacy standards. The proposed scheme would be bureaucratic and expensive to administer for advocates, the judiciary and the Courts Service. At a time of unprecedented spending cuts it is time for the professional regulators to take a step back and listen to both sides of the profession who are now united in calling for a halt to this unnecessary scheme."

Notes to Editors:

1. QASA is the Quality Assurance Scheme for Advocates, a scheme designed to assess advocates (Solicitors and Barristers) abilities in Criminal Cases. It is a hugely controversial scheme, consistently objected to by Solicitors' representative groups as well as some senior Judges. Until recently barristers' representatives groups (but not all barristers) supported the scheme but more recently the Criminal Bar Association has voiced its opposition to the scheme.
2. The CBA opposition is set out at <https://www.criminalbar.com/latest-updates/news/q/date/2013/01/18/weekly-round-up-18-01-13/>
3. For an example of concern of senior Judges see the Ebsworth lecture given by Lord Justice Moses in Feb 2012 at <http://www.lawsociety.org.uk/news/stories/society-backs-senior-judges-qasa-concerns/>

The CLSA is an independent organisation representing over 900 lawyers in England and Wales. Its members specialise, often exclusively, in criminal defence litigation. Its members are defenders in the large majority, but it has prosecutors and court clerks in its membership.