



SECRETARY GENERAL'S REPORT

As always, our efforts in 2014 were dedicated to providing relevant and effective services to our members, as well as ensuring their compliance with relevant professional rules and regulations. *Excellence, transparency, empathy, and fairness* continued to be our guiding values in serving our members.

At a steady annual growth rate of 5%, our membership stood at 9,422 at the end of the year.

With the support and guidance of the Council and Committee Members, our team of 99 performed a wide range of tasks for our members. To highlight some of the statistically quantifiable ones, in 2014, we:

- (a) issued 31 submissions on public consultations and three press statements on issues relevant to the legal profession;
- (b) organised about 120 professional sharing, social and networking events for our members including Family Fun Day, Summer Party, Sports Night, Christmas Party, Cooking Competition, Annual Cocktail, Spring Reception, luncheon talks, and many others;
- (c) coordinated 46 community projects including Law Week, Teen Talk, Community Fun Day, the Legal Pioneer Mentorship Programme and the Helpline on free legal advice, community talks, elderly visits and school talks;
- (d) received 46 delegations from the Greater China region and other overseas jurisdictions;
- (e) coordinated 17 outbound visits to nine cities in the Greater China region and 19 delegations to international conferences and meetings to other overseas jurisdictions;
- (f) arranged the signing of two memoranda of understanding/cooperation agreements with overseas professional bodies including the Osaka Bar Association and the Milan Bar Association;
- (g) organised the selection and sponsorship of 14 young lawyers as well as their participation, together with other Law Society representatives, at seven international conferences hosted by the American Bar Association, International Bar Association, LawAsia, Commonwealth Law Association, Inter-Pacific Bar Association, International Association of Young Lawyers (“AIJA”) and the Union Internationale des Avocats;
- (h) organised 510 training courses totaling 18,703 attendances, and accredited 4,766 courses under the Continuing Professional Development (“CPD”) Scheme and the Risk Management Education (“RME”) Programme;
- (i) administered the annual Overseas Lawyers Qualification Examination for a total of 216 candidates;
- (j) coordinated the activities of 14 Law Society sports teams and 8 recreational teams;
- (k) processed applications for the subscription of 9,422 members, 960 associate members and 240 student members, registration of 634 trainee solicitor contracts, admission of 601 solicitors, issue of 8,279 practising certificates in English and 3,603 in Chinese, registration of 1,640 foreign lawyers and 89 foreign firms, as well as issue of 532 certificates of standing;
- (l) conducted CPD audit on 489 practitioners;

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- (m) handled 860 complaints on practitioners and employees of law firms and submitted four matters to the Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal Convenor;
- (n) visited 44 law firms on 64 occasions to provide assistance on their accounting procedures and to inspect documents to ensure compliance with the Solicitors' Accounts Rules; and
- (o) administered the intervention into the practice of one law firm for the protection of public interest.

Much of our work, however, is less quantifiable. Thus, more descriptive details on the work that we did in 2014 are set out in the respective reports of each Standing Committee that follows.

Our financial position remained sound and healthy. The fee rates of membership subscription, application for practising certificate, and registration as a foreign lawyer and a foreign firm were unchanged for the year. Student membership fee continued to be free to encourage more law students to join The Law Society. Further, the RME Programme has been offered free of charge to those subject to the statutory RME obligations since November to commemorate the Programme's 10th anniversary.



On personnel movement, with the retirement of Teresa Yeung, Director of Finance and Administration, after 19 years of service at the Law Society, Esther Cheng and May Lo took over respectively as Assistant Director, Accounts and Assistant Director, Administration and Human Resources in August. Other new colleagues joining the managerial team during the year included Kally Lam and Ivy Chow, both Assistant Directors in the Practitioners Affairs Department, Rachel So, Silvia Tsui and Kelly Chan, Assistant Directors in the Communications and External Affairs Department and Cynthia Yen, In House Prosecutor in the Compliance Department.

It has been my privilege to serve the profession as the Secretary General of The Law Society.

I look forward to continue serving our members this year, and improving on the efficiency and efficacy of our services so as to further benefit the legal profession as a whole. I wish our departing personnel the best of luck in their future endeavors, and I welcome the opportunity to work with fresh talent — all of whom will undoubtedly perform their roles admirably.

Heidi Chu
Secretary General