



Justice Committee  
The Scottish Parliament  
Edinburgh  
EH99 1SP

Date: 15 March 2016

Dear Members of the Justice Committee

**Sheriff Appeal Court – Criminal Legal Aid Arrangements**

In our response on the Legal Aid (Miscellaneous Amendments) (Scotland) Regulations 2015 (SSI 2015/337), we undertook to report back on the discussions with the Scottish Government regarding the final arrangements for legal aid in the new Sheriff Appeal Court.

This followed the commitment from the Scottish Government to engage with the professions during the six month review period.

We are conscious that parliament will soon be dissolved for the election and we wanted to provide an update in advance of the committee's final meeting of the session.

Although the Scottish Government has yet to meet with the Legal Aid Committee to discuss this issue since the regulations were implemented, I am pleased to say a meeting has now been fixed for 29th March.

There remains significant concern amongst the profession about this issue and we will report back to the new Justice Committee in the next session of the Parliament. We look forward to engaging further as we seek to find a long term solution to the issues which we identified last year.

Yours sincerely

*Matthew FJ Thomas*

Ian Moir  
Convener  
Legal Aid Committee

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