



Statement

7 March 2011

Scottish Legal Aid Board response to the Law Society's press release dated 7 March 2010 in which it stated that the President had called on Lindsay Montgomery to confirm or deny a series of comments attributed to him in the Scotsman newspaper:

Iain A Robertson, Chairman of the Board, said: "The Board has several concerns about how Mr Dailly has produced a transcript of a private conversation which took place 5 months ago. It is a breach of trust which the Board has never experienced in its dealings with the Law Society's other office bearers. Lindsay Montgomery and I have written separately to the President of the Law Society today to explain the context of this private conversation. I know that Lindsay has the greatest respect for solicitors who provide legal aid services."

Lindsay Montgomery, Chief Executive of the Board said: "To suggest that I do not have high regard for the vast majority of solicitors who do legal aid work is wholly untrue. The discussion with Mr Dailly was over proposals he had announced which would have been disastrous for the taxpayer and probably unpopular with most solicitors. We had a robust conversation about his proposals. These proposals have since disappeared and do not feature in the Access to Justice Committee's latest discussion paper."

ENDS

The letters written by Iain A Robertson, Chairman and Lindsay Montgomery, Chief Executive are available in the 'News' section of the Board's website at www.slab.org.uk.

Ends

Journalists please contact:
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Notes for editors

Legal aid is help towards the costs of legal advice and representation, for those who qualify, paid for out of public funds. It is designed to help individuals on low and modest incomes gain access to the legal system. There are two main types of legal assistance: advice and assistance and legal aid. Together these are called legal assistance. Legal aid may be free, or someone may have to pay towards the cost of their case, for example through paying a contribution or from the money or property that they win or keep as a result of their legal action. Legal aid is accessed through a solicitor. Unlike most public expenditure, the legal aid fund is not cash limited. The Scottish Government will provide the Board with the funds required to meet the cost of cases which have been granted.