

Statement

In March 2016, the attention of the Council of the Law Society of Hong Kong (“the Society”) was drawn to the irregularities in the practice of Alan Ho & Co. (“the Firm”).

As a result of the investigations, the Society resolved to intervene in the practice of the Firm under Section 26A of the Legal Practitioners Ordinance Cap.159. Hastings & Co. was engaged as the Intervention Agent (“the Intervention Agent”).

The intervention took place on 14 April 2016. The purposes of the intervention include making arrangements for clients of the Firm to engage alternative solicitors and taking control of the Firm’s office and clients’ money.

Since its appointment, the Intervention Agent has contacted clients appearing on the records of the Firm informing them of the situation and that they should engage alternative solicitors. A number of such clients have already done so. The Society has also contacted the bankers of the Firm and informed them that under Schedule 2 of the Legal Practitioners Ordinance the funds of the Firm are vested in the Society.

Some clients of the Firm had paid money into the Firm’s bank accounts and have lodged claims for the return of such money.

The records of the Firm do not appear to be complete. The Intervention Agent has engaged forensic accountants to assist in ascertaining the actual position in relation to the clients’ money alleged to have been paid to the Firm’s bank accounts. This is necessary because, according to the information available at present, there may be a potential shortfall in the Firm’s clients’ money. Claims for return of money have to be dealt with on an individual case-by-case basis. Appropriate action will be taken as soon as possible.

The Law Society of Hong Kong
20 May 2016