

QUARTERLY NEWS UPDATE

October to December Quarterly Information Returns

Quarterly Information Returns (QIRs) will be due in the normal way from 1 January 2017 with the closing date for submissions remaining 14 January. Registrants who are content that their QIRs are unlikely to change before the end of the month, may wish to submit their returns as soon as possible.

Registration Renewal and Payment for 2017

Registrants will be able to pay the £1,000 renewal fee from this week with payment due by the **27 January 2017**. If you have any queries regarding this, then please contact the Office as soon as possible.

In order to ensure the transaction is successfully processed by your bank, please have your three digit security code to hand. **Your payment will not be able to be processed without it.** .

Please note that all payments are subject to transaction charges from the payment mechanism providers as follows:

- Credit cards: 2% + £0.04p per transaction
- Debit cards: £0.16p per transaction
- BACS: £0.50 per transaction.

If you have received an invoice for your renewal fee along with a recoupment (for the period between attempted and actual registration), **please follow the instructions on the invoice** in order to complete payment.

Consultation on Codes of Conduct

The Registrar launched a consultation on Codes of Conduct, in order to establish the views of registrants and other stakeholders on the issue of “relevance”, on 7 November.

Past feedback, has indicated that some stakeholders feel codes should be specifically related to public affairs activity; that they should include enforcement, and that they should be independently arbitrated. The purpose of this consultation is to consider the views of registrants and stakeholders and potentially update the relevant guidance.

The consultation is due to close on 31 December 2016. Thank you to all those who have taken the time to feedback your views; there is still time to participate. The Registrar would like to hear from as many stakeholders as possible.

Please submit a response in writing to enquiries@orcl.gov.uk by the closing date of **31 December 2016**.

Use of Registrar's logo

The Registrar has noted that the ORCL logo has been used on some registrant websites, potentially implying that registration confers some kind of status or quality mark. Please note that the Registrar does not consider this to be appropriate, and so if the logo is shown on your organisation's website, the Registrar would be grateful for its immediate removal.

Stakeholder event 2017

Following the successful stakeholder event earlier this year, the registrar will be hosting an event on 8 February 2017. Preparations are still underway, however speakers will include the Lobbying Registrar for Scotland, Billy McLaren.

The event will be preceded by a forum for compliance officers to build expertise.

More information about these events will be communicated in the new year. We look forward to seeing as many of you there as possible!

Update on Quarterly Information Returns for July – September 2016

The July – September 2016 Quarterly Information Returns exercise was completed on time. Of the 129 organisations required to submit QIRs, 95 undertook consultant lobbying.

The Office recognises that registrants are working hard to ensure information declared is correct, with the majority of returns free of administrative errors. However, some errors still occurred. To improve the position still further, registrants are requested to check that:

1. All client names are entered consistently from quarter to quarter;
2. Acronyms have been entered in full where appropriate; and
3. Clients have been declared in accordance with the Act, to prevent any over-declarations.

The Registrar encourages registrant queries about any areas where registrants remain unclear. There is guidance on the website, but it is better to ask, rather than “err on the side of caution”.

Updates to the Register

The Office will be launching some technical improvements to the Register early in the New Year, largely based on feedback from stakeholders.

If you have any feedback on the technical operation of the Register which you would like to share with the Office then please email enquiries@orcl.gov.uk

The Festive Period

There will be a reduced staff presence in the Office during the festive period and so registrants are asked to please bear with us should queries take longer than usual to resolve.

Business as usual will resume on Wednesday 4 January.

The Registrar and the Office would like to thank registrants and stakeholders for their continued engagement in 2016 to ensure compliance with the legislation, and to send our best wishes for the festive season.