



From: The President

The Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP
Minister for Immigration

17 May 2023

Dear Mr Jenrick

SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT

I read with alarm and incredulity a report published in The Times on 10 May 2023 entitled "*Illegal Migration Bill answers will of the people, ministers warn Lords*". In this article an anonymous Government source is quoted alleging lawyers are actively encouraging their clients to make deliberate errors in their "streamlined" asylum questionnaires.

Behaviour of this sort would of course represent serious misconduct by a solicitor and one would expect a representative of the Government, upon observing such behaviour to immediately report it to the relevant regulator rather than contacting a national newspaper. As the professional body for the solicitor profession in this jurisdiction, I am aware of no such allegations having been brought to The Law Society of Northern Ireland.

I would therefore ask you to respond to this letter to set the record straight and confirm if it is indeed the Government's position that solicitors are actively working against their clients' interests. Or if in fact, this is simply a baseless and disgraceful attack against dedicated lawyers in an attempt to deflect blame for a failing asylum system.

Yours sincerely

Brian Archer
President, Law Society of Northern Ireland