



# Legal Aid (Scotland) Act 1986

## 1986 CHAPTER 47

### PART I

#### SCOTTISH LEGAL AID BOARD

##### *The Board*

#### **1 The Scottish Legal Aid Board**

- (1) There shall be established a body to be known as the Scottish Legal Aid Board (in this Act referred to as "the Board").
- (2) The Board shall have the general functions—
  - (a) of securing that legal aid and advice and assistance are available in accordance with this Act; and
  - (b) of administering the Fund.
- (3) The Board shall consist of not less than 11 and not more than 15 members appointed by the Secretary of State; and the Secretary of State shall appoint one of the members to be chairman.
- (4) The Secretary of State shall appoint to membership of the Board—
  - (a) at least two members of the Faculty of Advocates;
  - (b) at least two members of the Law Society ; and
  - (c) at least one other person having experience of the procedure and practice of the courts.
- (5) Before appointing persons to be members of the Board in pursuance of either paragraph (a) or paragraph (b) of subsection (4) above, the Secretary of State shall consult with the professional body mentioned in that paragraph.
- (6) Schedule 1 to this Act shall have effect with respect to the Board.

## **2 Powers of the Board**

- (1) Subject to the provisions of this Act, the Board may do anything—
  - (a) which it considers necessary or expedient for securing the provision of legal aid and of advice and assistance in accordance with this Act; or
  - (b) which is calculated to facilitate or is incidental to or conducive to the discharge of its functions.
- (2) Without prejudice to the generality of subsection (1) above, the Board shall have power—
  - (a) to enter into any contract or agreement, including, subject to subsection (3) below, any contract or agreement to acquire or dispose of land ;
  - (b) to invest money ;
  - (c) to promote or assist in the promotion of publicity relating to the functions of the Board ;
  - (d) to undertake any inquiry or investigation which the Board considers necessary or expedient in relation to the discharge of its functions ; and
  - (e) to give to the Secretary of State such advice as it may consider appropriate in relation to the provision of legal aid and advice and assistance in accordance with this Act.
- (3) The power under subsection (2)(a) above to enter into any contract or agreement to acquire or dispose of land shall not be exercised without the approval in writing of the Secretary of State.

## **3 Duties of the Board**

- (1) The Board shall, from time to time, publish information as to the discharge of its functions in relation to legal aid and advice and assistance including the forms and procedures and other matters connected therewith.
- (2) The Board shall, from time to time, furnish to the Secretary of State such information as he may require relating to its property and to the discharge and proposed discharge of its functions.
- (3) It shall be the duty of the Board to provide to the Secretary of State, as soon as possible after 31st March in each year, a report on the exercise of its functions during the preceding 12 months.
- (4) The Board shall have regard, in the exercise of its functions, to such guidance as may from time to time be given by the Secretary of State.
- (5) Guidance under subsection (4) above shall not relate to the consideration or disposal (whether in general or in respect of individual applications) of—
  - (a) applications for legal aid or advice and assistance;
  - (b) supplementary or incidental applications or requests to the Board in connection with any case where legal aid or advice and assistance has been made available.
- (6) For the purposes of subsection (2) above, without prejudice to the requirements of section 5 of this Act, the Board shall permit any person authorised in that behalf by the Secretary of State to inspect and make copies of any accounts or documents of the Board and shall furnish such explanation of them as that person or the Secretary of State may require.

## *The Fund*

### **4 Scottish Legal Aid Fund**

- (1) The Board shall establish and maintain a fund to be known as the Scottish Legal Aid Fund (in this Act referred to as " the Fund ").
- (2) There shall be paid out of the Fund—
  - (a) such sums as are, by virtue of this Act or any regulations made thereunder, due to any solicitor or counsel in respect of fees and outlays properly incurred by him, in connection with the provision, in accordance with this Act, of legal aid or advice and assistance ;
  - (b) expenses awarded to any person under section 19 of this Act; and
  - (c) such other payments for the purposes of this Act as the Secretary of State may, with the concurrence of the Treasury, determine.
- (3) There shall be paid into the Fund—
  - (a) any contribution payable to the Fund by any person in pursuance of section 17 of this Act;
  - (b) any sum recovered under an award of a court or an agreement as to expenses in any proceedings in favour of any party who is in receipt of civil legal aid ;
  - (c) any sum which is to be paid in accordance with section 17 of this Act out of property recovered or preserved for any party to any proceedings who is in receipt of civil legal aid;
  - (d) the sums to be paid by the Secretary of State in pursuance of section 40(1) (a) of this Act; and
  - (e) such other receipts of the Board as the Secretary of State may, with the concurrence of the Treasury, determine.

### **5 Accounts and audit**

- (1) The Board shall keep separate accounts with respect to—
  - (a) the Fund ; and
  - (b) the receipts and expenditure of the Board which do not relate to the Fund, and shall prepare in respect of each financial year a statement of accounts.
- (2) The accounts shall be kept and the statement of accounts shall be prepared in such form as the Secretary of State may, with the approval of the Treasury, direct.
- (3) The accounts shall be audited by persons to be appointed in respect of each financial year by the Secretary of State in accordance with a scheme of audit approved by him, and the auditors shall be furnished by the Board with copies of the statement and shall prepare a report to the Secretary of State on the accounts and the statement.
- (4) No person shall be qualified to be appointed auditor under subsection (3) above unless he is a member of one of the following bodies;—
  - (a) the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland ;
  - (b) the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales;
  - (c) the Chartered Association of Certified Accountants;
  - (d) the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Ireland.

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*Status: This is the original version (as it was originally enacted).*

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- (5) Upon completion of the audit of the accounts, the auditors shall send to the Secretary of State a copy of the statement of accounts and of their report, and the Secretary of State shall send a copy of the statement and of the report to the Comptroller and Auditor General.
- (6) The Secretary of State and the Comptroller and Auditor General may inspect the accounts and any records relating thereto.
- (7) The Secretary of State shall lay before each House of Parliament a copy of every—
  - (a) annual report of the Board under section 3(3) of this Act;
  - (b) statement of accounts under subsection (1) above; and
  - (c) report of the auditors under subsection (3) above.
- (8) In this section " financial year " means the period beginning with the commencement of this section and ending with 31st March next following and each subsequent period of 12 months ending with 31st March in each year.