



Costs Lawyer Standards Board

ANNUAL RISK OUTLOOK

A tool to help Costs Lawyers recognise and
mitigate emerging market risks that could
impact their business

May 2024



ABOUT THIS REPORT

This report takes a high-level look at some of the drivers of change in the world today that could present risks – and opportunities – for organisations and individuals working in legal costs. Not all of these drivers will have equal significance for you or your business, but our aim is to help you think critically about what’s coming down the track and plan strategically for the future.

The sources of risk identified in this report have been grouped into three broad categories: political, economic, and social. For the most part, these sources of risk mould and shape the costs law market from the outside. Sometimes referred to as “system risks”, these sorts of market drivers are unlikely to be curtailed or otherwise materially impacted by any one firm, practitioner or regulator. Rather, businesses, individuals and regulators all need to consider the likely impact of these drivers on their activities, and put measures in place to mitigate any negative impacts that might arise.

It is for this reason that the sources of risk highlighted in this report do not fall within the types of regulatory risk that the CLSB attempts to mitigate on behalf of the profession. Such risks are explored in our own internal risk register with a focus on addressing public detriment, such as poor client outcomes, unmet legal need or the stifling of innovation. This outlook report does not focus on regulatory risks of that kind.

Rather, this report is about drivers of change that are outside the CLSB’s control, but which may impact on Costs Lawyers’ ability to deliver services to clients in a way that meets their needs. These are risks for you to take into account, being mindful of your own practising arrangements, specialist areas and existing competencies. There will no doubt be other factors and risks that could impact your specific practice; we hope this report gets you thinking about what those might be.

This is the second annual risk outlook published by the CLSB, updating the 2023 version. We would welcome feedback from readers to help us refine our approach in future years. Please send any comments to us at enquiries@clsb.info.

Kate Wellington
CEO, CLSB

POLITICAL DRIVERS OF RISK

The political and regulatory issues facing the costs law market operate at many levels and interact closely with the economics of the sector.



Geopolitical risk

Last year we highlighted how deteriorating geopolitical relationships could impact on the demand for high value costs work in the future, whilst also potentially creating new threads of work relating to anti-money laundering, the international sanctions regime and strategic litigation against public participation (SLAPPs).

What has changed?

Last year, the focus was mainly on the war between Russia and Ukraine, including the wider impact of this conflict on litigation business in London. In 2024, risk areas have spread to include the Middle East and crucial international trade routes such as the Suez canal. These conditions are undermining confidence and holding back international cooperation on vital issues such as climate change and global trade deals.

2024 will also see an unprecedented number of important elections taking place around the world and these are widely expected to return increasingly authoritarian and nationalistic governments.¹

What could this mean for Costs Lawyers?

Political uncertainty and the global shift to nationalism may not adversely affect (and may even contribute to) the stream of international litigation into London in the short run, but the longer term outlook suggests that London's role as the world's premier centre for international disputes will be in relative decline. This is encouraging the Commercial Court and bar to focus on the development of new areas of litigation demand, such as environmental and AI/technology disputes. Costs Lawyers wishing to serve this end of the market will benefit from a more specialist understanding of these sectors.

POLITICAL DRIVERS OF RISK



Reform of the Legal Services Act 2007

There are well known difficulties with the regulatory framework for the legal sector in England and Wales, as established by the Legal Services Act 2007 (LSA).² Last year we noted that there was little likelihood of wholesale change to this regulatory framework in the short term, given lack of political appetite and other pressing issues within the Ministry of Justice's portfolio.

What has changed?

Although there is still no imminent amendment expected to the LSA, in a recent letter to the Lord Chancellor the Chair of the Justice Select Committee noted that the Act “*does not appear to provide a stable long-term framework for the regulation of the legal professions*” and that “*it is undeniable that the case for re-examination of the legislative framework underpinning regulation is growing stronger and stronger*”.³

Although the Committee fell short of recommending an immediate review of the LSA, it did recommend a review of the role of the Legal Services Board and floated the idea of a rethink of lawyer titles in any future legislation, prompted by the proposed change of title of Chartered Legal Executive to Chartered or CILEX Lawyer.

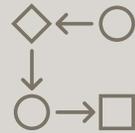
Meanwhile, the proposed redelegation by CILEX of its regulatory powers from its bespoke regulator, CILEX Regulation, to the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA) continues to move ahead, albeit slowly. In late March 2024, the SRA launched a consultation on the extension of its regulation to cover non-authorized individuals.⁴ Although the SRA has previously regulated students undertaking their professional qualification (and ceased to do so not long ago), the move to regulate CILEX paralegals is a significant extension of its regulatory reach outside of owners and managers of SRA regulated firms.

What could this mean for Costs Lawyers?

The redelegation of CILEX's regulatory powers to the SRA is likely to have far reaching consequences and may accelerate any review of LSA.

As Costs Lawyers are relatively few in number, there is a risk that the profession is treated as an afterthought in developing the future shape of legal regulation, including how this might impact on titles and reserved activities of Costs Lawyers. It is important for the CLSB, ACL and the wider profession of Costs Lawyers to be ready to articulate what an improved regulatory regime in England and Wales might look like from the costs perspective.

POLITICAL DRIVERS OF RISK



Wider legislative change

Last year we referenced various pieces of legislation that were in the pipeline and that could impact the work of Costs Lawyers.

What has changed?

This year, the UK legislative cycle is likely to be dominated by the general election, which must be held by January 2025.⁵ Current odds suggest an October election which would require an election to be called in early September 2024, soon after MPs return from the summer recess. This leaves very little remaining legislative time in 2024 and means that some current and planned legislative proposals may be lost. Political attention will also increasingly be focused on the drawing up of party manifestos.

What could this mean for Costs Lawyers?

The election poses risks to legislation going through the parliamentary pipeline; some important proposals such as the Leasehold and Freehold Reform Bill⁶ may need to be rushed through their final stages in order for them to pass during this parliament, creating the potential for poor legislation that is uncertain or open to challenge. This may open up new avenues for litigation in the future.

On the other hand, the Litigation Funding Agreements (Enforceability) Bill, which was introduced into the House of Lords in March,⁷ intends to create certainty by restoring the legislative interpretation of litigation funding agreements to the position prior to the Supreme Court's so-called PACCAR decision.⁸ This Bill is being fast-tracked and should become law before the summer recess.

Difficulties in securing parliamentary time could also impact the CLSB's efforts to make Costs Lawyers eligible for judicial appointment. While the Ministry of Justice is supportive of the proposals and will assist with tabling the necessary statutory instrument, a debate and vote in parliament will be required, and this is unlikely to happen in the short-term after a general election.

POLITICAL DRIVERS OF RISK



The legal aid budget

In 2023 we noted the ongoing decline in the number of solicitors undertaking legal aid work, but observed that the need for Costs Lawyers to assist solicitors in maximising their recovery from the legal aid budget should persist regardless.

What has changed?

The deteriorating conditions around the provision of legal aid have persisted, despite the findings of the Bellamy Criminal Legal Aid Independent Review.⁹ The failure of the Lord Chancellor to implement the minimum increases recommended by the review led the Law Society to initiate a judicial review. The court found in favour of the Law Society and issued a declaration to the effect that the Lord Chancellor had failed in his duty by making unreasonable and insufficiently researched policy proposals in relation to criminal legal aid.¹⁰

What could this mean for Costs Lawyers?

Despite the publicity around the Law Society's judicial review and government announcements of increased investment in court infrastructure and budgetary allocations to legal aid, this area of legal work remains in rapid structural decline.

POLITICAL DRIVERS OF RISK



Other legal sector regulation

The regulation of the solicitor market in England and Wales has been driven in 2023 by a series of significant market events.

What has changed?

2023 was the year in which Axiom Ince finally imploded, leaving a large hole in the compensation fund and the prospect that the profession will need to re-provision it through significantly increased contributions in future.

The Post Office scandal (considered further on page 8) also shone a light on the regulation of in-house lawyers and of wider concerns about the ethical environment in which solicitors (both in-house and in private practice) are operating.

What could this mean for Costs Lawyers?

Developments in solicitor regulation in 2024 are likely to lead to increased compliance costs and may therefore create both risks and opportunities for Costs Lawyers.

The regulatory fallout from the Post Office scandal raises an important question around the ethical framework applying to Costs Lawyers and reinforces the need for further emphasis on the independence of Costs Lawyers and their wider duties to the end client and justice, as underlined by the CLSB in its recent amendments to the Costs Lawyer Code of Conduct.

POLITICAL DRIVERS OF RISK



New developments

Extension of the fixed recoverable costs regime

The introduction of the new fixed costs regime for claims up to £100,000 finally came into force in October 2023. This extends fixed costs across civil claims but the exceptions and caveats to these rules mean that costs considerations may drive litigation strategy at a much earlier stage than previously.

The regime creates a growing need for Costs Lawyers to be strategic in the advice they are giving in relation to proceedings. This creates the possibility for Costs Lawyers to demonstrate greater value added to clients and to become involved in cases earlier on.

The Post Office inquiry

Although the Post Office inquiry has been ongoing since 2020, we have added this as a new risk in 2024 because of the heightened profile it has gained with the mainstream press and general public as a result of the ITV Drama, Mr Bates v The Post Office.

As the Post Office inquiry moves towards its final phase in autumn 2024, the high-profile nature of the remaining witnesses is likely to continue to shine a light on the Post Office's litigation against sub-postmasters. This in turn will raise questions about the costs of this litigation and the impact of these costs on victims' compensation. There is both a risk and opportunity in this for the costs world to consider.

ECONOMIC DRIVERS OF RISK

Economic forces create both pressures and opportunities in the costs law market, from the changing nature of supply and demand for Costs Lawyers' services to the emergence of substitutes along with new products and business models.



General economic outlook

In 2023, we highlighted the gloomy economic outlook with high rates of inflation and a tight job market, expected to impact on the supply and demand for Costs Lawyer services over the next few years.

What has changed?

Although UK economic performance is flatlining in 2024 and not expected to improve until 2026, inflationary pressures have come down significantly with Bank of England forecasts for inflation at around 2-3% by the autumn. This may permit the Bank to begin cutting interest rates although indications point to a cautious approach, given talk of government pre-election tax cuts.

What could this mean for Costs Lawyers?

The legal sector generally lags the overall economy, so a depressed economy will be felt in the legal sector slightly later than other areas of activity. This appears to be borne out by significant numbers of covid legacy disputes working through the courts.¹¹ Cost law firms may want to factor the prospect of a slower market for contentious services into their forward planning, as post-covid disputes are resolved, and consider developing counter-cyclical services (such as support for better management of legal spend by in-house legal departments or improved management of WIP by law firms).

ECONOMIC DRIVERS OF RISK



The international legal market

In 2023 we highlighted the impact that US law firms were having on the London litigation market and the possible implications for demand for Costs Lawyer services.

What has changed?

A major development in late 2023 was the announcement of a merger between Allen and Overy (A&O) and US law firm Shearman and Sterling.¹² Views are mixed on the extent to which this is likely to trigger copycat mergers by other large UK players and the expectation is that the A&O Shearman merger will have greater impact on A&O's operations in the US than on the UK market.¹³

What could this mean for Costs Lawyers?

Although the focus of the A&O Shearman merger is on the US market, this development is likely to keep the UK market high on the radar of a wider spectrum of US firms and not just those seeking major transatlantic mergers. This points to a continuing stream of work for Costs Lawyers from US law firms in London.

ECONOMIC DRIVERS OF RISK



The national legal market

In 2023 we noted that the tighter economic environment had created a greater focus on costs management and that this had encouraged new players into the market to support such developments (for example, providers of contract workflow and e-billing software).

What has changed?

The UK legal market is forecast to grow in 2024 but at a slowing rate, when compared to 2023.¹⁴ The market is also becoming more competitive for solicitor firms, with the growth of platform law firms and alternative legal service providers (ALSPs). These new players are having an impact on, amongst other things, how law firms charge for their services. Lexis Nexis, Bloomberg Law and others have reported regularly over the past year on the growth of alternative fee arrangements (AFAs) such as project fees, capped fees, phased fees and blended rates.¹⁵

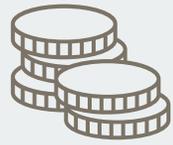
We also saw ongoing consolidation amongst national costs firms in 2023, with acquisitive organisations such as Frenkel Topping announcing further joint ventures with partner firms.

What could this mean for Costs Lawyers?

The growing influence of new players in the legal market will impact mid-tier corporate work in particular. Greater awareness of costs and planning of legal work are likely to become more commonplace within the legal market leading to a change in the nature of demand for the services of Costs Lawyers.

Market consolidation will have an impact on the nature of competition for costs law work while also creating economies of scale and potentially making room for increased innovation, generating both risks and opportunities for smaller players.

ECONOMIC DRIVERS OF RISK



The litigation market

What has changed?

There have been several developments in the litigation market in 2023 that presage longer term impacts. The litigation funding market faced a temporary period of uncertainty following the Supreme Court's judgment in PACCAR.¹⁶ Although this created challenges, which the government has now moved to dispel (see page 5), it also created interesting reactions from funders who have, in some cases, moved to direct lending to law firms, with a £33 million facility agreed between Harbour Litigation Funding and Slater and Gordon¹⁷ as a leading example.

2023 also saw a rise to greater prominence of class actions, with cases in areas including environmental disasters, product liability, consumer protection, competition infringements and personal injury leading the charge. In December, the High Court took the decision to consolidate the case management of various group actions in relation to diesel emissions which will have an impact on the costs management of those claims.

There has also been evidence for some time, in both the UK and US, of a trend towards specialist litigation firms. In the UK, 2023 appears to have been a year in which these boutiques broke through into top tier disputes.¹⁸

Finally, the Court of Appeal determined at the end of November 2023 that the court could lawfully stay proceedings in order to allow for mandatory alternative dispute resolution (ADR), provided this does not undermine the claimant's right to return to a court-based proceeding and that the costs and time involved in engaging in ADR are proportionate.¹⁹ This opens the door to more frequent use of ADR in higher value claims.

What could this mean for Costs Lawyers?

Reactions to the PACCAR judgment from litigation funders was a strong indication that this would not divert them from continued expansion in the UK market. If anything, it may have increased the likelihood that the Association of Litigation Funders will seek to become a regulated body, in order to gain certainty for the sector. This underlines the importance of costs firms building relationships with litigation funders as well as law firms.

The growing success of boutique litigation firms is a positive development for independent costs law firms and brings new opportunities for Costs Lawyers outside employment in traditional or full-service solicitor firms.

There are also opportunities for Costs Lawyers in the field of ADR, notably in judging whether the costs associated with ADR would be "proportionate".

ECONOMIC DRIVERS OF RISK



Growth areas for litigation

In 2023 we highlighted areas of potential growth in disputes – including through expected litigation responses to legislative developments – and the opportunities and risks for Costs Lawyers in those areas.

What has changed?

In 2024, emerging trends in litigation are expected to revolve around insolvency, fraud and enforcement cases, with the latter two areas being driven by the Economic Crime and Corporate Transparency Act 2023 and the government’s fraud strategy.

Alongside ongoing product liability claims, legacy covid disputes and sanctions related work, new work could be driven by environmental and AI related claims (see pages 14 and 18), as well as legislation such as the Building Safety Act 2022 (the post-Grenfell legislation that significantly extends the limitation period for claims against homebuilders from 6 years to 30 years).

What could this mean for Costs Lawyers?

The range and complexity of litigation and the growth and scale of class actions now being handled by the courts should create opportunities for experienced and specialist Costs Lawyers.

However, growing complexity at the higher-value end and diminishing “bread and butter” costs work could change the nature of the profession and the knowledge and skills needed to succeed. Costs firms and large costs departments will need to address the issue of how best to build competence among new Costs Lawyers. The CLSB will need to support and encourage these efforts through the regulatory framework, including through the qualification requirements, Competency Statement and Ongoing Competency Framework.

ECONOMIC DRIVERS OF RISK



Environmental issues

Last year we highlighted the growing interest in ESG (environmental, social and governance) issues in the legal sector.

What has changed?

2023 was a year in which environmental litigation took off in a major way, with strategic claims progressing through the UK courts.

Although the High Court refused to grant ClientEarth Aarhus costs protection for its attempt to launch a judicial review of the Financial Conduct Authority's approval of Ithaca Energy's prospectus, this shows little sign of deterring ClientEarth from undertaking similar actions in future (see, for example, the ClientEarth reaction to the European Court of Human Rights judgment in *Verein Klimaseniorinnen Schweiz and Others v Switzerland*).^{20, 21}

What could this mean for Costs Lawyers?

Costs Lawyers should be aware of this rapidly expanding area of activity, ranging from ESG related litigation through to mass compensation claims for environmental disasters such as the Mariana dam disaster.

The costs dimensions of such actions are likely to become increasingly contentious and used as a mechanism to deter litigation. The growth of crowdfunding as a tool to support public interest litigation may reduce the chilling effect of such decisions. However, this generates new risks relating to how funds are sourced, and Costs Lawyers will need to be wary of facilitating money laundering or other types of economic crime when dealing with crowdfunded costs.

SOCIAL DRIVERS OF RISK

Risks arising from social trends and developments tend to be harder to pinpoint than economic or political/regulatory risks – often because they evolve slowly and the ultimate extent of their influence can be difficult to predict – but their impact can be transformative.



Consumers and legal services

Last year we noted that there was some evidence that the covid pandemic had encouraged consumers to engage with online legal services.

What has changed?

The cost of living crisis peaked in 2023 as energy prices, food prices, mortgage rates and rental costs all rose dramatically thanks to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, post-pandemic supply shortages and post-Brexit trade effects. The impact on consumer debt was significant and of a more serious nature than pre-pandemic, being focused on arrears in council tax, rent and utility bills rather than credit card spend.²² The publication of a letter in March 2024 by utilities and financial services regulators warning the debt sector about insufficient attention being paid to consumer vulnerabilities is a harbinger of a wider approach that is likely to increasingly characterise business and public sector interactions with consumers.²³

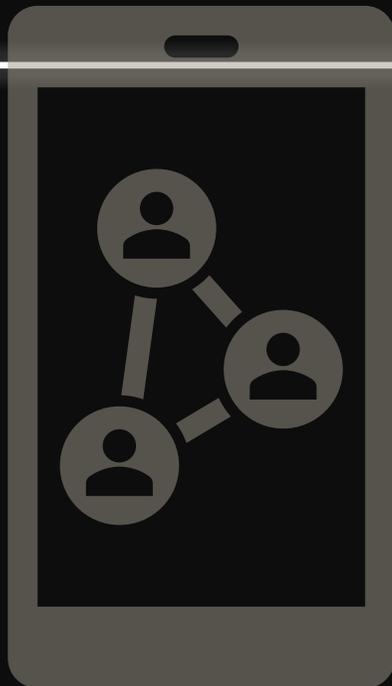
The Legal Services Board (the oversight regulator for the legal services sector) has also indicated in its 2024/25 business plan that it will be addressing similar issues in the legal market, looking at how consumer vulnerability is addressed in the sector and how consumers are dealt with throughout their engagement with legal advisers and the justice system.²⁴

What could this mean for Costs Lawyers?

Although many Costs Lawyers do not have direct engagement with consumers, those that do (or those that deal with consumers indirectly through their involvement in areas of law like personal injury) should be conscious of the increasing focus on:

- consumer vulnerabilities;
- transparency and certainty around the cost of legal action; and
- the potential impact of adverse costs awards on individuals.

SOCIAL DRIVERS OF RISK



Diversity and inclusion

Last year we highlighted the potential impact of the growth in solicitor apprenticeships on Costs Lawyer training.

What has changed?

The qualification regime for solicitors is still in a transitional phase from the Legal Practice Course (LPC) / training contract regime to the new Solicitors Qualifying Examination (SQE) regime. Although the introduction of the SQE was supposed to open up routes to qualification for a wider range of candidates, the SQE assessments are proving to be controversial and particularly challenging for those unpractised in high stakes examinations, with failure rates in the SQE 1 assessment of around 50%.

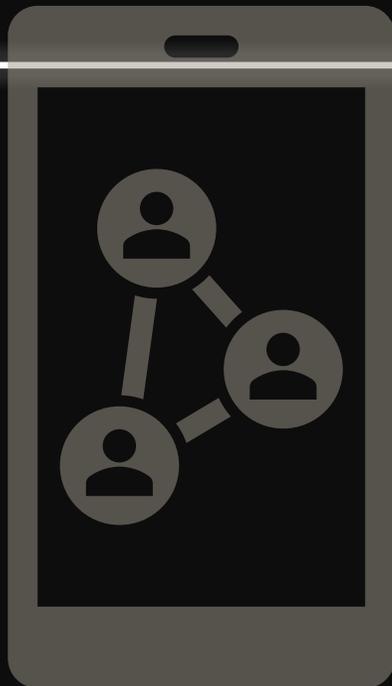
Meanwhile, interest in solicitor apprenticeships has been given further impetus by the launch of City Century,²⁵ an initiative by the City of London Law Society that sets a target for city law firms of appointing 100 partners who have come through the apprenticeship route by 2040.

What could this mean for Costs Lawyers?

The challenging nature of the SQE 1 assessment is encouraging candidates to look around at alternative legal careers, including costs law.

The CLSB and ACL Training are working with a Costs Lawyer Trailblazer Group of employer firms, under the auspices of the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education, to create an apprenticeship pathway into the Costs Lawyer profession in the near future. This will help the profession seize the opportunities for expansion that are being created by fallout from the SQE, and help aspiring Costs Lawyers from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds afford the training needed to qualify.

SOCIAL DRIVERS OF RISK



Technological change – Digital courts

Last year we highlighted HMCTS’s agenda to digitalise the courts and the potential impact this could have over time on the demand for Costs Lawyer services.

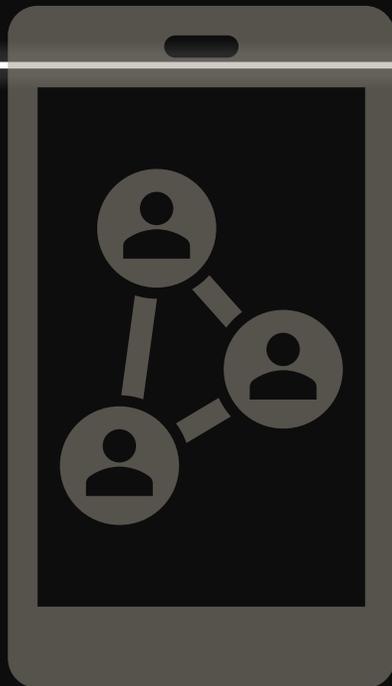
What has changed?

In June 2023 the Public Accounts Committee published a critical report of the reform programme for the digitisation of the courts and the way in which this has been managed by HMCTS and the Ministry of Justice following on from a National Audit Office report.^{26,27}

What could this mean for Costs Lawyers?

Although the vaunted benefits of digitisation of the courts have not been realised to the extent originally expected, non-professional users of HMCTS systems are reportedly more satisfied with the access and engagement with court processes than legal professionals. Despite mixed views on the success and value for money of the HMCTS reform programme, the direction of travel appears set and Costs Lawyers will need to become increasingly familiar with using different digital platforms as well as preparing for a world in which a growing proportion of more straightforward disputes are managed entirely online.

SOCIAL DRIVERS OF RISK



Technological change – Artificial intelligence

Last year we highlighted technology developments in general, but 2023 was dominated by an explosion of interest in AI, driven by the launch of ChatGPT and breakthroughs in the capability and availability of large language models (LLMs).

What has changed?

The AI revolution is just beginning and it is important to distinguish between the different strands of AI and their different uses. 2023 was characterised by a focus on LLMs and the ChatGPT platform provided by OpenAI. This sparked a debate about hallucination when early adopters found that the technology was capable of making up citations and conflating legislation and judgments with commentary. This led some commentators to dismiss AI or call for tighter regulation.²⁸

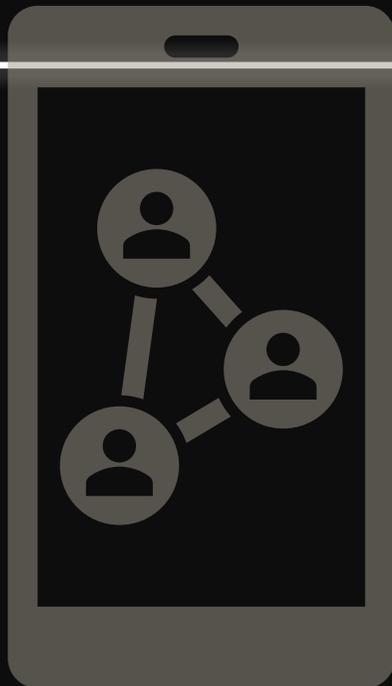
It is clear however that the journey towards greater adoption of AI is still nascent, and whether or not firms make a conscious effort to engage with it, they will find that it plays an increasing role as a result of its growing incorporation into the day-to-day software tools used by lawyers.

What could this mean for Costs Lawyers?

The rise of AI and legal tech presents a transformative opportunity for Costs Lawyers, and a corresponding risk for those who choose to ignore it.

AI technologies will certainly influence the costs of litigation in future. AI could also help to improve billing processes and time recording²⁹ as well as the accuracy of costs predictions and budgeting based on indicative data. These developments set the stage for Costs Lawyers to focus on the provision of expert advice. All Costs Lawyers should be including an understanding of AI in their ongoing competence efforts.

SOCIAL DRIVERS OF RISK



Technological change – Cyber crime

Last year we highlighted the risks around growing cyber threats.

What has changed?

The risk of cyber threats continues, exacerbated by the shift towards remote working and the growing reliance on digital platforms. The increasing digitisation of legal services and the storage of sensitive client information in the cloud naturally elevates the risk of failures in cybersecurity. Legal practices, including those of Costs Lawyers, are prime targets for cyberattacks due to the valuable data they hold.

According to a World Economic Forum report prepared by Accenture, 41% of organizations that suffered a material incident in the past year say it was caused by a third party. A further 54% of organisations responding to Accenture's survey stated that they had an insufficient understanding of cyber vulnerabilities in their supply chains.³⁰ The growing concerns around this issue are likely to lead to greater client demand for external verification of supplier systems against cyber threats.

What could this mean for Costs Lawyers?

All Costs Lawyers need to be aware of and conscious of how to protect against cyber threats. Costs law firms should have some external cyber assurance certification in place and Costs Lawyers will need to consider whether their professional indemnity insurance extends to cyber related risks.

COMPETENCY RISK



Emerging gaps in competency

This report demonstrates that a variety of political, economic and social developments are driving changes in the costs law market, from the type of services Costs Lawyers provide to the type of clients they act for, and the ways in which they work and organise themselves. Costs Lawyers should consider – when setting their annual CPD objectives or otherwise – what knowledge and skills they need to respond to the changing landscape to ensure they remain competent to do the job.

Examples of possible competency gaps that could arise from the drivers set out in this report include:

- Understanding how to use new technologies and systems, and the risks associated with them
- Appreciating the changing needs of clients and how to address them
- Adapting organisational management to changing workplace expectations
- Grasping how new regulatory and ethical obligations apply to specific practising arrangements
- Having sufficient technical knowledge of emerging work areas to spot issues, give sound advice and build a relevant specialism

The CLSB's [Ongoing Competency Framework](#) highlights other skills that Costs Lawyers will need to build throughout their career.

REFERENCE LINKS

1. [Why 2024 is a record year for elections around the world | World Economic Forum](#)
2. See for example [Reforming legal services: Regulation beyond the echo chambers | Professor Stephen Mayson](#) (final report of the Independent Review of Legal Services Regulation)
3. <https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/44017/documents/218057/default/>
4. [Arrangements for regulating non-authorised CILEX members | Solicitors Regulation Authority](#)
5. [General election: When is the next one and who decides? | BBC News](#)
6. [Leasehold and Freehold Reform Bill: Where are we now? | Charles Russell Speechlys](#)
7. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/litigation-funding-agreements-enforceability-bill-2024>
8. <https://www.supremecourt.uk/cases/uksc-2021-0078.html>
9. <https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/independent-review-of-criminal-legal-aid>
10. <https://www.bailii.org/ew/cases/EWHC/Admin/2018/2094.html>
11. [The Commercial Court Report 2022–2023 | HMCTS](#)
12. [A&O Shearman merger approved | Allen and Overy](#)
13. [A&O Shearman merger would be a blockbuster, but maybe not a harbinger | Reuters](#)
14. [LexisNexis Gross Legal Product \(GLP\) Index 2024](#)
15. [Firms moving away from billable hours | Law Gazette](#)

REFERENCE LINKS

16. [PACCAR and litigation funding | Linklaters](#)
17. [Slater and Gordon agree £33m committed facility with Harbour | Harbour Litigation Funding](#)
18. [Dispute resolution: Five litigation trends to look out for in 2024 | Law Gazette](#)
19. [Courts can compel parties to engage in ADR: Court of Appeal finds comments to the contrary in Halsey not binding | Herbert Smith Freehills ADR Notes](#)
20. [Verein Klimaseniorinnen Schweiz and Others v Switzerland](#)
21. [Media reaction: Court ruling 'a European first for climate litigation' | ClientEarth](#)
22. [Consumer debt in the UK is down 10%. The bad news? Utility bill arrears are up | The Guardian](#)
23. [Joint Debt Collection Statement | UKRN](#)
24. [Business Plan 2024-25 | Legal Services Board](#)
25. [citycentury.co.uk](#)
26. [Progress on the courts and tribunals reform programme | National Audit Office](#)
27. <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm5803/cmselect/cmpubacc/1002/summary.html>
28. [Law Society makes regulation recommendations ahead of AI Safety Summit | The Law Society](#)
29. [Analysis: AI to help in-house counsel manage spend, fees in 2024 | Bloomberg Law](#)
30. [Global Cybersecurity Outlook 2024 | World Economic Forum](#)