

email update

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I am pleased to report that our guide to the changes and additions made to the CPR Costs Provisions is now available in the free downloads section of our website. The 53rd update to the CPR, which came into force on 1 October 2010, introduces some important changes. In particular:

- **The amendments provide for fixed scale costs for proceedings in the Patents County Court. Our guide includes a table setting out the allowances.**
- **The Defamation Proceedings Costs Management Scheme has been extended to run until 31 March 2011.**
- **A new County Court Provisional Assessment Pilot Scheme has been introduced (to run in Leeds, York, and Scarborough County Courts) which will apply to detailed assessment of base costs claims of £25,000 or lower.**

In other news:

Hourly rates return to pre recession levels

A survey carried out by the Association of Law Costs Draftsmen reveals that solicitors' hourly rates of top London firms have returned to pre-recession levels.

Five years ago partner rates for Magic Circle firms stood at £425ph to £525ph. In 2009 there was a significant fall, in some cases to as low as £400ph. The survey reveals that this year partner rates have topped £700ph, and that senior associates are being charged out at £450ph to £550ph, with newly qualified solicitors at £250ph.

Partner rates at firms outside of the top tier show a greater variation with rates of £375ph to £640ph typical. Larger national firms are charging at between £325ph and £450ph.

Michael Heslin, October 2010

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