

## SRA to Ough re Court Hearing re Branson

**From:** Janine Slimm <[Janine.Slimm@sra.org.uk](mailto:Janine.Slimm@sra.org.uk)>  
**Date:** 3 December 2020 at 8:10:34 am GMT  
**To:** Michael Ough <[michaelough1@gmail.com](mailto:michaelough1@gmail.com)>  
**Cc:** Michelle Young <[michelle7young@gmail.com](mailto:michelle7young@gmail.com)>, Stansfeld Anthony <[Anthony.Stansfeld@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk](mailto:Anthony.Stansfeld@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk)>  
**Subject:** RE: CDT/1271398-2019; POL-1258141-2019 - M D Young v C Branson (SRA ID: 124192)

### **STRICTLY PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL**

**To be opened by addressee only**

Mr M Ough

**Sent by email only:** [michaelough1@gmail.com](mailto:michaelough1@gmail.com)

**Copied to:** [michelle7young@gmail.com](mailto:michelle7young@gmail.com); [anthony.stansfeld@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk](mailto:anthony.stansfeld@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk)

03 December 2020

Dear Mr Ough

### **Mr Branson**

Thank you for your emails dated 02 November 2020 and 30 November 2020.

You will recall that our file regarding Mr Branson was closed and you were notified by email on 10 June 2020. I attach a copy of this email for ease of reference. We explained that we had considered High Rights of Audience and the allegation that Mr Branson misled the court. We also explained that we were unable to identify that Mr Branson had breached our Rules and the investigation was closed.

Following our email, we received an email from Intelligence UK raising concerns that the investigation had been closed. This email was passed to our Complaints team. Ms Pillinger, Head of Corporate Complaints responded to you on 26 June 2020. In this letter, Ms Pillinger commented on the issues you had raised which were related to Mr Branson misleading the Court and appearing before the High Court when he did not have higher rights of audience. Ms Pillinger advised that we found no evidence to show that Mr Branson had attempted to mislead the Court and nor that the Court was in fact misled. Ms Pillinger informed you that we would write to the court to see if it had recorded where the petition on 2015 was held as Intelligence UK had stated the hearing was in open court and not in chambers as asserted by Mr Branson.

We have over last few months made a number of enquiries with the Insolvency and Companies Court and Chief Insolvency and Companies Court Judge Briggs. From the

records the court holds, it has not been possible to establish if the hearing was in open court or in Chambers although we are informed that the hearing is likely to have been in open court. In addition Mr Branson may have been entitled to attend the hearing because of the Insolvency Rules 1986 and Schedule 2 and 3 of the Legal Services Act 2007. Our understanding is that references to hearings in chambers in the Insolvency rules do not necessarily equate to private hearings. In the circumstances we did not feel that we could establish that Mr Branson had breached our rules. We were also of the view that had there been a breach of the rules, the breach may not have been sufficiently serious to impose a formal sanction on Mr Branson in light of his belief that he was entitled to attend the hearing. This means our position remains as advised in our email of 10 June 2020 and the investigation remains closed.

Thank you for taking the time to contact us.

Yours sincerely

Janine Slimm (Mrs)

Investigation Officer

**Solicitors Regulation Authority**

As a result of the coronavirus situation, I am currently working 07.00 to 16.15 four days a week. I will reply to your email as soon as possible when I am back online.

[www.sra.org.uk](http://www.sra.org.uk)