

LSLA

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# Future calling

2015 - we ask some of the country's top costs experts what the coming year holds for the profession

**T**here has been no let-up in the pace of change in recent times and there is every reason to think that 2015 will bring more of the same. Two years into the Jackson reforms and some of the deeper issues that have yet to surface may come to the fore, such as what happens when budgeting meets detailed assessment.

We asked a cross-section of specialists to give us their views on the big issues that will confront Costs Lawyers in the coming 12 months.



**John Bramhall,**  
president, London  
Solicitors Litigation  
Association

A new and revised  
understanding by  
solicitors of the term

'proportionality'; a greater willingness by CFOs of law firms to move away from hourly rates towards value billing; firms embracing the farming out of commoditised work to low cost centres; common sense applied to the guideline hourly rate debate and a return to its origins - the intention that they 'broadly reflect market rates'; insurers appreciating that forcing hourly rates down yet further and achieving satisfactory litigation outcomes are sometimes contradictory aims; an outbreak of cooperation and comity in the costs budgeting process; increased protests from a number of High Court judges, dismayed at their increased involvement in costs budgeting; e-disclosure brought under control for the modern age as robots begin to dominate the review process; amended damages-based agreement (DBA) regulations rushed through pre-election after all-party accord leads to parliamentary time being made available; a post-election re-think from the Ministry of Justice on hybrid DBAs and an outbreak of common sense; a Damascene conversion from those vested bank and insurer interests to their previous position on DBAs; consequential greater access to justice for SMEs and wider, to much political acclaim, a raft of happy clients achieved by lawyers cooperating...

Then I woke up. ■