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News Release

Website addresses change underlines judicial independence

The Supreme Court of the United Kingdom will change its web address in the New Year, reflecting the Court's constitutional position as independent of other branches of government. The web address for the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council (JCPC), which shares its administration with the Supreme Court, will change similarly.

From 6 January 2014, the domain addresses will be 'www.supremecourt.uk' and 'www.jcpc.uk' respectively.

The move follows a drive for most public bodies to publish their online material under the single 'gov.uk' portal. The Supreme Court was concerned that such a move could risk undermining perceptions of its independence, especially when as many of half of the Supreme Court's caseload involves the government as a party. The new arrangement reflects that of the UK Parliament, which is not suffixed with a ".gov." address.

The overall content and design of the two websites will not change. Users searching for the current 'top level' domains – i.e. homepages – will be automatically redirected to the new addresses from January, though web users who have bookmarked or published 'deep links' to pages or resources on the Supreme Court and JCPC websites will need to amend these to reach the new address.

Legal professionals and other court users are also being informed of a corresponding change to the email addresses of Supreme Court staff and Justices, also effective from 6 January 2014.

These changes coincide with a review of the information technology needs of the Court, ahead of existing agreements as part of wider Ministry of Justice contracts expiring at the end of 2013. The Supreme Court is working with a small number of suppliers who will now provide a tailored service through contracts agreed directly with the Court, resulting in ongoing cost savings.

Ends

Notes to editors

The estimated cost of the domain name changes totals less than £500, including a small one-off cost for registering the domain name and a separate cost for transferring the web files to new servers.

Ends

UKSC contacts:

Ben Wilson

Tel: 020 7960 1887

ben.wilson@supremecourt.gsi.gov.uk

Anthony Myers

Tel: 020 7960 1886

anthony.myers@supremecourt.gsi.gov.uk