

IN THE MATTER of the Law Practitioners Act 1993-94

AND

IN THE MATTER of a complaint dated 29 May 2019  
against Norman George by the  
**COOK ISLANDS LAW SOCIETY**

AND

IN THE MATTER of a complaint dated 21 June 2019  
against the Cook Islands Law Society  
by **NORMAN GEORGE**

Counsel: Mr W Rasmussen, President of the Cook Islands Law Society  
Mr N George, in person

Date of Decision (No.1): 24 September 2019

Date of this Decision: 18 December 2019

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**DECISION (NO.2) OF HUGH WILLIAMS, CJ**

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[0721.dss]

**Introduction**

[1] Paragraph [49] of the Decision in this matter delivered on 24 September 2019 read as follows:

[49] Given the public is well aware of the facts surrounding the 30 September 2015 order, there is no public interest in publication of any of the matters discussed in this decision. There will, therefore, be no order under s 15(7) of the Act.<sup>1</sup>

[2] On 9 December 2019 the Council of the Cook Islands Law Society wrote to the Registrar saying that:

“A member of the public has requested a copy of this decision from the Law Society. The context of the query is whether the Law Society took any action/steps in response to Mr George’s public comments about his ban from the Land Court.”

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<sup>1</sup> The reference to s 15(7) of the Law Practitioners’ Act 1993-94 was in error. It should have read s 20(7).

and seeking clarification as to whether the effect of para [49] was that the Decision was not to be made public in the interest of Mr George's privacy.

[3] The Registrar was requested to refer the matter to Mr George who responded on 12 December 2019 saying that he wished his privacy preserved as per paragraph [49].

[4] For the reasons set out in the decision of 24 September 2019, the intention was that the matters discussed should remain private as between the Society and Mr George, privacy being the default position in relation to complaints under the Law Practitioners' Act 1993-94.

[5] For that reason, the parties to the Decision are to be advised that while, if the Society thinks it appropriate, it can respond to the member of the public by advising that it took what it saw as appropriate steps in response to Mr George's public comments discussed in the decision, the decision itself is to remain private to the point where the Society is not at liberty to advise the member of the public what steps it took in the matter nor the outcome, still less to provide a copy of the decision to the inquirer.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'H Williams', with a horizontal line underneath the signature.

**Hugh Williams, CJ**