

Anti-Money laundering supervisory regime: response to the consultation and call for further information

NAEA Propertymark

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Background

1. NAEA Propertymark (National Association of Estate Agents) is the UK's leading professional body for estate agency personnel; representing more than 10,000 offices from across the UK property sector. These include residential and commercial sales and lettings, property management, business transfer, auctioneering and land.
2. NAEA Propertymark is dedicated to the goal of professionalism and by appointing an NAEA Propertymark agent to represent them consumers will receive in return the highest level of integrity and service for all property matters. NAEA Propertymark agents are bound by a vigorously enforced Code of Practice and adhere to professional Rules of Conduct. Failure to do so can result in heavy financial penalties and possible expulsion from the organisation.

Questions

Q1. Are these powers to monitor supervisor's activities and penalise poor practice sufficient? If more powers should be added, which powers might be?

3. Yes, NAEA Propertymark believes that the powers to monitor supervisor's activities and penalise poor practice are sufficient. We do not have any comments on what further powers should be added.

Q2. Should the Office's powers to request information or attendance at interviews be extended to supervisor's members as well as supervisors themselves?

4. We recognise and accept the need for some monitoring and inspection of members from the Office, whilst not deterring from the importance and function of the supervisor to ensure that standards remain high and consistent across the estate agency sector.

Q3. Should the Office report annually on other issues, in addition to its performance against its objectives in that year, priorities for the coming year and expectations around emerging risks? If so, which issues should the Office report on?

5. NAEA Propertymark would like to see the Office facilitate and report on the exchange of information between supervisors within and across different industries. For instance, creating links with supervisors overseeing solicitors and accountants who are

also involved in the property purchasing process will help to ensure that knowledge is being shared and checks are being carried out.

Q4: The government envisages the Office having representation at the Money Laundering Advisory Committee, the Anti-Money Laundering Supervisors Forum and engaging with the Accountancy and Legal Affinity Groups. What role could the Office best fulfil in each forum, and are there other fora the Office should attend – if so, which?

6. NAEA Propertymark believes that the Office should focus on specific sectors and facilitate the exchange of ideas to counter money laundering. For instance, supervisors with an interest in a particular topic or process relating to money laundering and property could work together to share information; something which we believe could produce more productive outcomes for law enforcement.

Q5: How might the AML supervisory regime evolve over the next five to ten years, especially in the legal and accountancy services sectors? What are the advantages and disadvantages to the potential options – how might government help minimise the disadvantages?

7. We believe that one of the Government's main challenges will be to ensure that there is transparency between the representative function and regulatory function of self-regulatory bodies who are supervisors. To help minimise any issues the Government should standardise the fee for supervision across a sector to further improve consistency and drive up standards.

Q6: Are there other issues you would like government to take into account as it considers increasing the oversight of AML supervision in the accountancy and legal sectors?

8. NAEA Propertymark does not have any further comments to make.