

MINUTES

COMMITTEE: Ethics Committee

DATE: October 1, 1998

7. CHAPTER 14: WHETHER FIRM MAY TAKE ITS NAME FROM AN AREA OF LAW

The Committee considered whether a firm may take its name from an area of law. The Committee noted that there are currently lawyer referral offices, operated by lawyers, using the names "Impaired Driving Office" and "Criminal Defence Office." There has been interest expressed by other lawyers about calling their law firms after an area of law.

In the Committee's opinion it would be contrary to Rule 4(d) and Rule 4(e) of Chapter 14 of the *Professional Conduct Handbook* for a lawyer to operate a firm named after a particular area of law and bearing no other distinguishing features. The use of such names has the potential to mislead the public into believing that the office has some official accreditation not shared by other offices providing similar services. The Committee was of the view that it is not material whether such an office is operating as a traditional law firm or is only providing referrals to other lawyers.

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