

Misappropriation of Trust Funds

RICHARD BRUCE WOOD

Vancouver, B.C.

Called to the Bar: September 25, 1987

In June, 1988, while working in his first position as a lawyer for Talstra & Company, in Terrace, British Columbia, the member received a \$300 retainer from a client, Mr. E, who was facing charges under the *Motor Vehicle Act*. Mr. Wood did not place the money in trust, but rather misappropriated it.

After the member left Talstra & Company in September, 1988, Mr. E retained a new lawyer who requested return of the \$300 retainer. The member misled the new lawyer by stating that he had billed out the \$300. He further misled the Law Society and his previous firm by stating that he had left the \$300 cash in the file and that it must have been misplaced.

Mr. Wood admitted that, because of financial difficulties and because of problems related to practising law far from home and away from his family, he had professionally misconducted himself by misappropriating money entrusted to him in his capacity as a member of the Law Society. The Standing Discipline Committee accepted his conditional admission of a discipline violation on April 5, 1990 and rescinded the citation upon his undertaking to:

1. cease the practice of law immediately;
2. not apply for reinstatement to the Law Society of British Columbia for two years;
3. notify the Law Society in writing before applying for membership in any other law society;
4. obtain the written consent of the Law Society of British Columbia before working for a lawyer or law firm in British Columbia; and
5. refrain from allowing his name to be used on the letterhead of any lawyer or law firm without the written consent of the Law Society of British Columbia.