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Duncan Rutter—Forum of Insurance Lawyers

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DAC Beachcroft partner elected as new president of FOIL

DAC Beachcroft partner [Duncan Rutter](#) has been appointed as the 20th President of the [Forum of Insurance Lawyers \(FOIL\)](#) with a mission during his year of office of working to maintain access to justice while at the same time improving the claims process, removing excessive costs from the system and tackling fraud.

Duncan who heads up DAC's Catastrophic Injury Group specialising, in particular, in advising on brain and spinal injury cases, succeeds Nick Parsons in the top honorary role at FOIL. His breadth of experience includes advising insurers in RTA, EL and PL claims, clinical negligence, disease and complex, high value claims.

In his presidential year, Duncan aims to work with stakeholders to improve the claims process and tackle fraud. He believes innovations such as the online dispute resolution service, for example, can improve and streamline the claims process, although FOIL is keen to ensure it is fit for purpose. At the same time, FOIL is at the forefront of those legal organisations strongly opposing Ministry of Justice proposals for a second hike in court fees which, they say, will hit small businesses and individuals hardest.

With ongoing changes in professional development, Duncan intends to use his year in office to advance FOIL's education and training agenda for members, with the introduction of a statement of competence and specialist statements of legal knowledge designed to enhance the skills of insurance lawyers.

Duncan says: "I intend to carry on the fight against further rises in court fees which Nick Parsons has championed so effectively in the past year. These planned rises hit at the heart of access to justice and come at time when court users are experiencing delays and poor service because of cost-saving cuts.

"We support initiatives to contain costs and continue positive reforms of the claims process which help to combat fraud effectively and keep insurance premiums in check. We're in the process of surveying FOIL's full membership on these issues aiming to use their feedback from the coalface to give us the strongest possible platform from which to advise and lobby Government."

CEO of FOIL Laurence Besemer says: "Duncan's varied background in the legal and insurance sectors will be very important in our next steps at FOIL. FOIL continues to pursue its strategy of training up the next generation of leading defendant insurance lawyers, as well as collaborating with members of the claimant community to achieve success in our common interests. Nick has been hugely effective in promoting these aims in his Presidential year and I'm certain Duncan can bring further success."

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