

Media Release

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Long history of misconduct over a short career sees lawyer struck off

A lawyer who had been found guilty of misconduct on multiple occasions over a period of seven years has been struck off by the Supreme Court of Victoria.

Supreme Court Justice Ferguson ordered that the name of former Gippsland solicitor **Mr Nicholas Telehus** be removed from the roll of legal practitioners after the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal earlier found he was not a fit and proper person to work as a lawyer.

VCAT had found Mr Telehus guilty of 27 professional misconduct charges which had been brought against him by the Legal Services Commissioner; the fifth such time Mr Telehus had been prosecuted for misconduct since 2007.

The Commissioner charged Mr Telehus with a string of offences including misappropriation of client money, providing false statutory declarations, failing to lodge income tax and GST returns and failing to comply with an order of the Magistrates' Court.

Acting Legal Services Commissioner, Russell Daily, said the strike off would protect consumers from a dishonest person.

'Mr Telehus committed acts that were fundamentally at odds with his responsibilities as a lawyer', Mr Daily said.

'Lawyers who steal from their clients will be brought to account.'

Mr Telehus commenced practising law in 2003. His practising certificate was cancelled in 2008 by VCAT order. Mr Telehus applied to renew his practising certificate in 2009 and 2011 but his application was refused on both occasions over concerns about his conduct.

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