

The Victorian Legal Services Board and Commissioner
Level 5, 555 Bourke Street,
Melbourne, VIC
3000

27th/February/2019

Formal Complaint

Formal complaint against: Moustafa Awad (Matt), principal lawyer at M Joseph & Associates; located at: Swann House, Level 7, 22 William Street, Melbourne, VIC, 3000.

Background:

- On the 11th of February, I gave evidence at the Australian Senate on amendments to the Australian Citizenship Legislation.
- The upcoming segment of this complaint presents the public statements and reactions of Mr. Moustafa Awad (Matt) to my Senate hearing.
- Until today, I have never exchanged a word with Mr. Awad, and I have no intention of corresponding with him.
- I did not know of the existence of Mr. Awad before this incident, nor have I heard of his name or law firm.
- I have not, in any way shape or form, interacted with Mr. Awad in the past or visited his online profiles (Official Website, Twitter or Facebook).
- Mr. Awad and I have no mutual friends, family relations, past connections, nor have we seen or met each other in person.

Detailed Description of the Incident:

On the 11th of February 2019, at 10:30 PM, I was notified of the following Tweet issued by Moustafa Awad:



The same statement was made on his official Facebook account, with a link to my Senate hearing from the morning of that day:



For my own safety, and as I do with all matters and threats of such nature, I posted them on my public profiles to notify my followers of the situation. That way both the public and Australia Police can be informed if anything was to put my safety at risk. I also notified State Intelligence of the matter via E-mail.

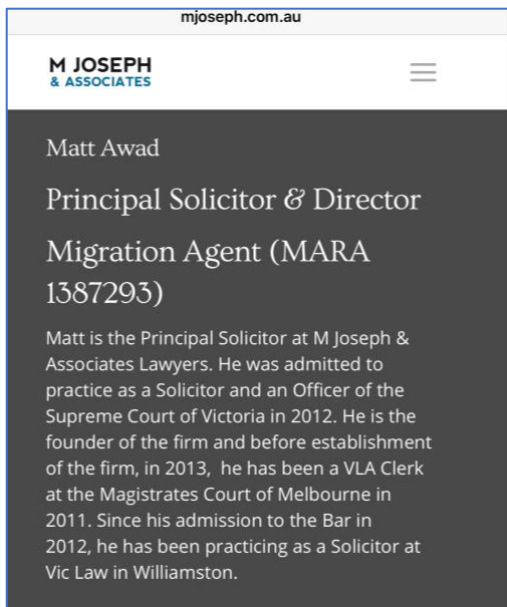
After the public reacted negatively to Mr. Awad's statements, he double-downed with the following Tweet and Facebook Post:



Once again, for my own personal safety, I made his statements public while questioning his suitability to practice law.

I began to collect information regarding Mr. Awad and his firm, and proceeded to contact *M. Joseph & Associates* to see what the firm's position was regarding Mr. Awad. A lady by the name: 'Jas' (Jasna) answered my call, and hung up the phone after I notified her of my name and purpose of the call. Journalists from the Daily Mail and other agencies have contacted Mr. Awad and experienced the same response.

On the 12th of February, the firm's website (www.MJoseph.com.au) was temporarily taken down, displaying the blank page below. It was restored a few hours later, with amendments being made to Mr. Awad's profile on the 'Our People' section which included his official registration and practice numbers. His Twitter account was also deactivated (www.Twitter.com/Mattawad5):



National Security Concerns:

A) I, and the Australian public who have been made aware of this incident, are concerned that a lawyer within Australia wishes to see ISIS kidnap and behead an Australian Citizen (me).

B) Intelligence agencies around the world have always been concerned about doctors, lawyers and others of similar professions who support terrorism and desire to see terrorists undertake/commit terrorist attacks.

C) As a lawyer, Mr. Awad is a man of the law. Such statements being issued from him can well be interpreted by vulnerable members of our Muslim community as an incitement to violence, and that such terrorism is legally accepted in Australia.

D) The statements issued by Mr. Awad raise questions about his suitability to be an officer in the Australian legal system.

Claims of Being Hacked:

Until today, there have been no claims by Mr. Awad or his firm that his official social media accounts have been hacked. In fact, the statements issued above seem consistent with the majority of his online posts and statements. His actions, as well as those of the firm's members, are not the actions of an account being hacked: Deactivating social media, taking down and amending the firm's website, doubling-down with more terror-supporting statements, avoiding journalists, and hanging up the phone on those inquiring about the situation.

However, in a case where Mr. Awad or his firm try to escape responsibility of his actions, the following matters should be taken into consideration:

1. The posts were made on both Facebook and Twitter. Which one was hacked? If his Facebook account was hacked, then why didn't he take suitable action on his Twitter account? If his Twitter was hacked, then why didn't he take suitable action on his Facebook page? Suitable action meaning: Releasing a statement denouncing the posts made on either of the accounts and providing clarifications of the matter.

2. Did he contact Facebook or Twitter to inform them of being hacked? Did he inform the police of posts supporting ISIS being issued in his name? If yes, then he should provide The Victorian Legal Services Board and Commissioner with the claim numbers from Twitter and/or Facebook, as well as police reports of the incident – for further investigation.

3. Shortly after his tweets had attracted public attention, Mr. Awad deactivated his Twitter account. Can he explain what benefit do hackers have in deactivating his account, but leaving his Facebook active? (since Mr. Awad's profiles are both connected to each other). Also, if he was hacked, how did Mr. Awad regain quick access of his Twitter account in order to deactivate it?

4. If all of his social media platforms were hacked, why did Mr. Awad make amendments to his legal profile on the firm's website, after taking it down temporarily?

5. If his social media platforms were hacked, why is he avoiding answering questions? Genuine victims usually explain themselves.

I contacted your department on the 11th of February to inform you of this serious matter. I was requested to forward my complaint in writing. Since then, I have been consulting with my legal advisors in order to prepare this formal complaint. I have also taken the appropriate steps with regards to informing the police and intelligence departments regarding this matter and the steps I wish to pursue in the foreseeable future. I, as well as a large number of the Australian public, await the response of your department regarding this serious situation.

I thank you in advance.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lalchi' or similar, with a stylized flourish at the end.

Imam Mohammad Tawhidi