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Jason Beer QC
Call: 1992 Silk: 2011



Jason is recognised as a leading silk, specialising in public inquiries, inquests, public law and police law. He represents a range of clients, including central government, public authorities, police forces, coroners, and corporations, who are *“very impressed by his client care”* and note that he *“Produces very effective legal submissions, and cross-examines with the panache of a top-flight criminal silk”* (Chambers UK).

Jason often leads teams of counsel in complex, high-profile and sensitive investigations, inquiries and claims. His multi-disciplinary background (before taking silk, he was Junior Counsel to the Crown (A Panel); he currently sits as a Recorder on the South-Eastern Circuit) allows him to provide a service across a range of jurisdictions and fields of law: clients appreciate his ability to take a case from the investigatory stage (including giving advice on issues of criminal law such as corporate manslaughter and health and safety), advising or acting in any inquest or inquiry, appearing in any misconduct, criminal or disciplinary proceedings, and then handling any civil proceedings (including appellate proceedings to the Supreme Court).

He has provided this end-to-end service in a number of the most prominent cases of the last two decades. His caseload has included: the **Stephen Lawrence Inquiry**, the **Hutton Inquiry**, the **Shipman Inquiry**, the **'Phone Hacking' Claims**, the **Hillsborough Inquests**, the **Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse**, the **Grenfell Tower Inquiry**.

Jason is the Head of Chambers of 5 Essex Court.

Recommendations

Jason is consistently ranked by the major legal directories as a leading practitioner in four practice areas - 'police law for defendants', 'professional discipline', 'public inquiries' and 'administrative and public law'.
Chambers UK & Legal 500

"He is a leader in the field in relation to malicious prosecution." (Police Law)
Chambers UK 2019

"He is a fantastic advocate who is brilliantly articulate and effective in questioning witnesses." (Police Law)
Chambers UK 2019

"His knowledge of this area is phenomenal and his public inquiry experience is excellent." (Police Law)
Chambers UK 2019

"He's highly experienced, very practical and commercial, with superb cross-examination skills." (Inquests and Public Inquiries)
Chambers UK 2019

"He has excellent judgement and is a supremely good advocate. He very quickly earns the trust of his clients."
(Inquests and Public Inquiries)
Chambers UK 2019

"He uses his time very effectively, is very focused and is a very effective advocate." (Admin and Public Law)
Chambers UK 2019

"Produces very good written pleadings and excellent oral submissions." (Admin and Public Law)
Chambers UK 2019

"He has a wonderful, calm manner and an excellent style." (Admin and Public Law)
Chambers UK 2019

"A really good advocate." (Professional Discipline)
Chambers UK 2019

"Clear and very strong on detail." (Professional Discipline)
Chambers UK 2019

'Extremely hardworking, intelligent and completely unflappable under extreme pressure.' (Inquests and Inquiries)
Legal 500 2019

'A leading practitioner in the malicious prosecutions arena with tremendous work ethic.' (Police Law - Defendant)
Legal 500 2019

"He is massively knowledgeable about public inquiries." (Inquests and Inquiries)
Chambers UK 2018

"He's an incredibly gifted advocate and is immensely hard-working." (Inquests and Inquiries)
Chambers UK 2018

"He is simply excellent, his technical knowledge is outstanding and he is incredibly thorough and astute." (Police Law)
Chambers UK 2018

"He is incredibly hard-working, very impressive on paper and a great advocate." (Police Law)
Chambers UK 2018

"A superb barrister who excels in complex and technical claims." (Police Law)
Chambers UK 2018

"Incredibly thorough with detail." (Professional Discipline)
Chambers UK 2018

"Very diligent and very bright." (Professional Discipline)
Chambers UK 2018

"He is unflappable, he's practical, clients like and respect him, and his advocacy is second to none." (Police Law)
Chambers UK 2017

"His ability to review and take in the central features of a case is brilliant." (Police Law)
Chambers UK 2017

"He goes the extra mile when needed." (Police Law)
Chambers UK 2017

"Produces very effective legal submissions, and he cross-examines with the panache of a top-flight criminal silk. Just a great all-rounder." (Inquest and Inquiries)
Chambers UK 2017

"He has a fantastic capacity for hard work." (Inquest and Inquiries)
Chambers UK 2017

"He handles difficult briefs wonderfully and has an extremely effective manner of advocacy. He makes the best of every point and has a great deal of experience as counsel to the inquiry." (Inquest and Inquiries)
Chambers UK 2017

"He's very, very bright and has a nice manner with the court. He's an impressive advocate and his written work is very good. He's the real deal." (Professional Discipline)
Chambers UK 2017

"Very impressed by his client care. He involves himself deeply in cases and stays on top of everything." (Admin and Public Law)
Chambers UK 2017

"His technical abilities truly stand out. Easy to have confidence in him." (Admin and Public Law)
Chambers UK 2017

"Understated and takes a reasonable line. He gains the confidence of courts by being agreeable." (Admin and Public Law)
Chambers UK 2017

Public Inquiries

Jason has appeared in most of the significant public inquiries of recent times: he has now appeared in 16 public inquiries, mainly on behalf of central government or other public authorities, or as counsel to the inquiry. He is ranked as a leader in this field by both of the major directories, sources noting that "...Jason can do everything. He is a lateral thinker and tactician and will usually think of a solution however novel the situation" (Chambers UK). He wrote the leading practitioner's text, *Public Inquiries*, for the Oxford University Press.

Notable inquiries include (over the past 10 years):

Grenfell Tower Inquiry – Leading Counsel for the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse – Leading Counsel for the Metropolitan Police, Devon & Cornwall Police, and Dorset Police

Undercover Policing Inquiry – Leading Counsel for a number of police forces, and for individual officers

Renewable Heat Incentive Inquiry – Leading Counsel for Ofgem

Anthony Grainger Inquiry – Leading Counsel to the Inquiry

Leveson Inquiry - Counsel for Metropolitan Police Director of Public Affairs.

AI-Sweady Inquiry - Second Counsel to the Inquiry

Baha Mousa Inquiry - Leading Counsel for 15 Soldiers

Rosemary Nelson Inquiry - Leading Counsel for the Northern Ireland Office

Billy Wright Inquiry - Leading Counsel for 92 serving and retired prison officers and governors

Inquests

As well as appearing in inquests themselves, Jason is often instructed in related proceedings in the Administrative Court. He is rated as a Band 1 silk for Inquests.

He acts on behalf of coroners whose decisions and actions are challenged. He appeared on behalf of the Ministry of Defence in the **Porton Down Inquest** into the death in 1953 of a serviceman who acted as a “human guinea pig” testing the Sarin nerve agent. He advised the Metropolitan Police Service on the public law aspects of the inquest into the **7/7 Bombings** in London and represented the Parole Board in the **Naomi Bryant Inquest**.

Jason also acts for individuals and corporation – he acted for the University of Manchester in three inquests into the deaths of academic staff who occupied the Rutherford Rooms at the University; for G4S in an inquest into the death of an employee shot by a colleague in Iraq; for an academy in an inquest into the death of a pupil following allegations of bullying at school; for a leading prep school in an inquest concerning the death of a parent on the school's premises; and for Sheffield Wednesday Football Club in the **Hillsborough Inquests**.

Notable cases include:

R (Hicks) v Senior Coroner for Inner North London (2017) 181 JP 1

R (McLeish) v HM Coroner for the Northern District of Greater London [2010] All ER (D) 211

R (Independent Police Complaints Commission) v HM Coroner for Inner North London [2009] EWHC 2681 (Admin)

R (Sutovic) v HM Coroner for the Northern District of Greater London [2006] EWHC 1095 (Admin)

R (Ministry of Defence) v HM Coroner for Wiltshire and Swindon [2006] EWHC 309 (Admin)

Regina (Hurst) HM Coroner for Northern District London [2003] EWHC 1721 (Admin)

Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis v HM Coroner for Southwark [2003] 1 WLR 371

HM Coroner for Wiltshire & Swindon v Ministry of Defence [2002] EWHC 2567 (Admin)

Police Law

Jason appears in the full range of disciplines on behalf of the police service. He has been instructed by nearly all of the 43 forces in England and Wales, by many Police and Crime Commissioners and by the Independent Office for Police Conduct.

He has appeared in a significant number of civil jury trials for false imprisonment and malicious prosecution and

non-jury actions for assault. These are often 'high profile' claims where serious allegations of racism and / or corruption have been made. He successfully defended Gwent Police against a claim seeking £9m in damages arising from the investigation of a prominent firm of solicitors specialising in the defence of those accused of road traffic law offences. He is presently defending Norfolk Police in a claim seeking over £30m in damages arising from the prosecution of two directors of a chain of private psychiatric hospitals for fraud; and South Yorkshire Police in a claim brought by Sir Cliff Richard following the disclosure of information to the BBC.

Jason has also appeared in non-malefeasance claims involving the police service. He acted on behalf of the Attorney-General in the application for disclosure of police documents in the **Madeleine McCann case**; and represented the Counter-Terrorism Command in the **Omagh Bombing Trial** in the High Court in Northern Ireland. He acted on behalf of the Metropolitan Police in the **Phone Hacking** claims.

He has acted and advised in over 300 discipline and misconduct cases. These have often involved complex misconduct investigations and substantial document intense, misconduct hearings.

Appearing in many difficult and sensitive inquests involving the police service, Jason acts in inquests involving the deliberate use of lethal force by police officers (firearms incidents), suicides and other deaths in police custody. These might involve allegations of lack of care and deaths in road traffic accidents following pursuits by police vehicles. Jason was counsel for the Metropolitan Police Service in the **New Cross Fire Inquest** - a three month inquest into the deaths of 13 children at a birthday party in 1981.

Jason's public law practice frequently sees him acting on behalf of the police service in the Administrative Court. Cases have involved challenges to a policy on police cautioning, to disclosures made to the Disclosure and Barring Service, to national policies on the retention of information for policing and other purposes. Jason acted for the Metropolitan Police Service in the **David Miranda** judicial review, successfully defending the challenge in the Court of Appeal to the use of powers under the Terrorism Act 2000.

Jason also carries out a significant amount of advisory work on non-contentious police business. This is on operational and policy matters, in relation to sensitive and terrorist related issues. Additionally, he has also provided advice on the operation of the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Notable cases include:

***R (R) v National Police Chiefs Council* [2017] EWHC 2586 (Admin)**

***Miranda v Secretary of State for the Home Department & Ors* [2016] 1 WLR 1505**

***Rudall v (1) Crown Prosecution Service & (2) Chief Constable of South Wales* [2016] EWHC 2884 (QB)**

***R (Commissioner of Police) v Independent Police Complaints Commission* [2015] EWCA Civ 1248**

***Daniels v Chief Constable of South Wales Police* [2015] EWCA Civ 680**

***Various Claimants v News Group Newspapers Ltd* [2014] 2 WLR 756**

***A and B v Chief Constable of Hampshire* [2012] EWHC 1517 (QB)**

***Various Claimants v News Group Newspapers Ltd* [2012] 1 WLR 2545**

***Al-Hassan Daniel v Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs* [2011] 2 WLR 488**

Richardson v Chief Constable of West Midlands Police (2011) Cr.App.R.1

Hayes v Chief Constable of Merseyside Police (2011) 2 Cr App R 30

Howarth v Chief Constable of Gwent Police and Gwent Police Authority [2011] EWHC 2836 (QB)

Public / Administrative

Jason is instructed in all areas of public law work. He specialises in claims that arise from the operation of the criminal justice system. Jason has particular expertise in corporate manslaughter and health and safety investigations and prosecutions - where experience in inquests, the criminal courts and in civil claims is essential.

Jason appears on behalf of central government, other public authorities, including the police service, the Independent Office for Police Conduct, the prison service, coroners and for corporate clients.

Notable cases include:

Competition and Markets Authority v Concordia International Rx (UK) Ltd [2017] EWHC 2911 (Ch)

R (Children's Rights Alliance for England) v Secretary of State for Justice [2013] 1 WLR 3667

R (FGP) v Serco PLC [2012] EWHC 1804 (Admin)

R (on the application of E1) v The Chairman of the Azelle Rodney Inquiry [2012] EWHC 563 (Admin)

Kennedy v Charity Commission (No 2) [2012] WLR 3524

R (GC & C) v Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis [2011] 1 WLR 1230

Kennedy v (1) Information Commissioner and (2) Charity Commission (No 1) [2011] EWCA Civ 367

Regulatory

Jason's regulatory practice extends far beyond the police service. He often advises and represents individuals, corporate officers, companies, and public authorities facing investigation and prosecution for safety based regulatory offences.

Previous clients have included Smurfit Kappa, Sheffield Wednesday Football Club, a leading preparatory school, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government and the Chief Constable of Devon and Cornwall Police.

A feature of his regulatory practice is where criminal investigations conducted by the police service and the HSE have been conducted concurrently with other investigations – he has been instructed in many high-profile inquests and public inquiries over the past two decades where such investigations overlap (see Public Inquires and Inquests).

Jason additionally acts for other regulators in criminal and other investigations. He is presently acting for Ofgem in the **Renewable Heat Incentive Inquiry**. He has acted for the Financial Reporting Council in its investigation and supervisory inquiry into HBoS; and for the Competition and Markets Authority in its investigation into generic pharmaceuticals; in relation to a challenge to a search warrant issued under s28 of the Competition Act 1998; and

in its investigation into secondary ticketing.

Information Law

Jason provides advice and representation to public and private organisations in relation to a wide range of issues concerning information law.

Examples of his cases include:

Appeared in the First-tier Tribunal (Information Rights Chamber), the Investigatory Powers Tribunal, the High Court and the Court of Appeal in relation to such issues, including in claims concerning the extent of Art.3 ECHR (***R (CRAE) v Secretary of State for Justice [2013] 1 WLR 3667***) and Art.10 ECHR (***Kennedy v Information Commissioner [2012] 1 WLR 3524***).

Assisted police forces and central government in relation to the Data Protection Act 1998, the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 and the Investigatory Powers Act 2016.

Avised and acted in claims relating to the operation of the Disclosure & Barring Service and (Enhanced) Criminal Records Certificates (including concerning the disclosure of reprimands – ***R (R) v National Police Chief's Council [2017] EWHC 2586 (Admin)***).

Acted in claims concerning the misuse of private information (he is acting in the claim brought by **Sir Cliff Richard against the BBC and South Yorkshire Police**, and previously represented the Metropolitan Police Service in the **Phone Hacking Claims**).