



LIBERTAS
CHAMBERS

James Walker

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clerks@libertaschambers.com

YEAR OF CALL: 1994

Experienced as both a Junior and Leader in his three principle practice areas:

- Organised crime
- Homicide and serious violence
- Fraud and financial crime.

"A very bright individual who is particularly good at any case involving huge reams of paperwork." – Chambers and Partners, 2023

"A safe pair of hands and a clever advocate who excels in making closing speeches to the jury." - Chambers & Partners, 2022

James has developed extensive experience as both leading and junior counsel.

Highly regarded criminal defence specialist: approachable, dependable and fearless in his desire to seek the best interests of his clients.

James is a specialist in criminal defence, including fraud and regulatory work. James is regularly instructed to act in heavyweight criminal cases with a busy and successful practice in all areas of criminal law, both publicly and privately funded, particularly murder and manslaughter, complex fraud, major drugs cases, and organised crime.

Having been instructed as sole junior or led junior for many years, he is now increasingly instructed as leading or sole junior counsel, often in multi-handed cases of complexity or sensitivity.

He is a modern advocate: effective in Court, concerned to deliver down-to-earth client care and attentive to crucial case management issues such as securing full disclosure and identifying the right experts ahead of trial.

He has been instructed as a leading junior in a wide range of serious crime, particularly in relation to young defendants. As a junior, his detailed analytical approach is considered invaluable. He has a calm relaxed disposition, which makes him good with difficult clients, and in particular he puts clients at ease and instils confidence.

Renowned for his engaging court style, both as an attractive and natural jury advocate, James has established a strong track record, both as a leading junior, a led junior and acting alone, in matters of great weight and complexity.



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He is highly committed to the defence of those he represents, combining an approachable, thorough and dependable style, which has resulted in a number of successful appearances at all levels including in the Criminal Court of Appeal.

ORGANISED CRIME

Operation Enola / Reconcile - R v Andrew Baker (Bristol CC): Two consecutive trials involving multi handed defendants and OCG related conspiracies.

Operation Dreadnought - R v Lewis Johnson (Liverpool Crown Court). OCG large scale drug conspiracy.

Operation Anvil - R v Carl Daniels (Liverpool Crown court). OCG large scale drug conspiracy.

Operation Major - R v Dennis Smith (Guildford Crown court). Large scale fraud.

Operation Appletree - R v Deividas Jankys (Southwark Crown court). Large scale cigarette importation.

Operation Unsafe - R v Stuart Davidson (Chelmsford Crown court). NCA 3 months as leading junior in large scale drug conspiracy.

Operation Emerald, R v McGarvey (Newcastle Crown Court)(2017): 6 week trial in respect of large scale drug conspiracies. This trial was linked to Operation Sanctuary, recently sentenced in respect of sex grooming gang. Defendant was partner of Jahingar Zaman who was sentenced to 29 years. 5 defendants faced trial in respect of drugs allegations. McGarvey only defendant acquitted. Instructed by Robin Ford.

Operation Alex, R v Beckwith (Central Criminal Court)(2016). Conspiracy to murder allegation transferred to CCC from Newcastle Crown Court re jury issues. Trial preceded Operation Scopus which was a 15 handed drug conspiracy. The murder allegation stemmed from a connected turf war. Instructed by Robin Ford of Hodgson Coulthard.

R v Iqbal (Manchester Minshull Street) 2016. 6 week trial involving allegations of modern slavery in respect of Slovakian nationals working at defendants factory. Defendant acquitted. Instructed by Ben Jones of Opus Law.

R v Oduro (Woolwich Crown Court) 2016. 3 week trial involving firearms. Trial included C4 documentary "gangland turf wars" and YouTube footage of defendants with firearms.



Operation Missouri, R v Issah (Maidstone Crown Court) 2017. 6 week trial involving armed robbery of a travellers site.

R v Cash (Birmingham Crown Court): Multi- agency operation regarding West Midlands drug trafficking.

R v Cash (Lincoln Crown Court): Multi-agency drug operation. **R v Mustafa (Reading Crown Court):** Eight handed conspiracy to distribute heroin in excess of £20million.

Homicide and serious violence

R v HH (Central Criminal Court) (2016): 6 week trial in respect of drug related turf war murder described as a “gangland execution”. Instructed by Alan McGrath of Ewings.

Operation Felco. R v HH (Central Criminal Court) April/May 2015: Trial involved the murder of a teenage carpentry student who had been dealing drugs in Greenwich. This was a revenge attack for moving onto a rival drugs gangs turf, the victim was shot in the head.

R v O’Callaghan (Central Criminal Court) (2011): Junior counsel in murder allegation related to gangland style shooting in Brixton.

R v Bell (Central Criminal Court) (2011): Junior Counsel in 4 handed murder trial on joint enterprise basis.

R v Williams and others – (Central Criminal Court) (2010): Junior counsel in six-handed murder trial put on a joint venture basis and involving further firearms offences.

R v Billa (Snaresbrook Crown Court) (2009): Albanian mafia style feud, leading to hitman style shooting at a public restaurant. Effectively a turf war over the rights to steal from London Parking meters.

R v Fantie and others (Central Criminal Court): Defendant acquitted after 4 month trial involving South London gangs.

R v Maitland (Central Criminal Court): Jamaican feud leading to execution of drug gang rival. Defendant acquitted.

R v Ketchen (Central Criminal Court): Junior counsel in murder and torture case.



FRAUD AND FINANCIAL CRIME

Recent instructions include:

Operation Starling, R v Stanton (Bristol Crown Court) (2015): 3 month trial in relation to multi million £ fraud in respect of BT. Defendant acquitted after half time submission. Instructed by Scott Ewing of Ewing Law.

R v Mahey (Harrow Crown Court)(2016). 8 week trial in respect of multi-million pound banking fraud. Instructed by Eric Williams of Cobleys.

Operation Walrus, R v Jama (Swindon Crown Court)(2017). Large scale money laundering connected to massive drug dealing enterprise. 15 defendants. Jama was the only defendant acquitted. Instructed by David Caplin of Cunninghams.

Operation Janitor (September / October 2014): Leading counsel representing the first defendant who was an accountant and considered to be the controlling mind in a massive HMRC prosecution which was effectively a VAT repayment fraud.

R v Chopra (Basildon CC) May 2014: This was a trading standards prosecution which involved a large scale conspiracy in respect go counterfeit clothing.

Operation Bamburgh: A large scale and complex mortgage fraud in the north east of England. Dropped by CPS after defence representations.

R v Edeigba: Large scale international advance fee fraud. This followed the traditional route of the 'Nigerian 419 scam which is now predominantly internet based.

R v McKenzie: Operation Nacho is the largest criminal fraud ever prosecuted with over 80 defendants. Trial F is the trial involving the alleged organisers. It is expected to last three months.

R v Hayes: Financial crime perpetrated against high profile north east businessman.

R v B and others (2011): Leading Counsel in £6million 'boiler room' fraud.

R v Flynn and others (Central Criminal Court) (2011/12): Junior counsel in multi million pound mortgage fraud. Due for retrial in 2012.

R v Aheer and others (Southwark Crown Court) (2012): Instructed in multi handed i-tunes fraud.



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R v Page and others (Southwark Crown Court): Junior counsel in large scale high profile fraud where husband of defendant was a royal protection police officer. Defendant acquitted after submissions.

R v Molseed and others (Sheffield Crown Court): Defendant played pivotal role in 'advance fee' fraud.

R v Sagar and others (Leeds Crown Court): VAT fraud involving loophole for disabled drivers. Case involved several para-olympians, plus numerous supercars.

R v Ogunbiyi and others (Southwark Crown Court): NHS trust fraud. Co defendant on Metropolitan police's 10 most wanted.

GENERAL CRIME

Operation Peshurst (Manchester CC) June / July 2015: A large scale class A drug importation involving 9 defendants which involved multiple cut throats.

R v Clarke (Liverpool CC) December 2013: A burglary involving the theft of £300,000 jewellery where the householders were tied up and tortured. The raiders utilised counter surveillance equipment such as mobile signal jammers and vehicle trackers.

R v Bushell (Liverpool CC) June 2014: This was the first case of its type on the UK mainland where the raiders used gases to effect explosions attacking ATMs. They then utilised high performance vehicles to effect their escape. The conspiracy lasted 14 months with losses in excess of £1 million.

R v White: Large scale drug conspiracy with both drugs and street suppliers being transported from the north-west to the south-west.

R v Aiken: Attempted murder where complainant shot in face from point blank range and blinded. Dispute was a long standing feud involving Jamaican gangs. [reported]

R v Clarke (Croydon CC) (2010): Leading counsel in attempted murder and conspiracy to rob relating to the robbery of a Costco store where £70,000 worth of jewellery was stolen and the security guard was shot.

R v Ndugwa (2010): Leading counsel in multi-handed conspiracy to rob betting shops in South London.

R v Frezgi and others (Central Criminal Court): Leading junior in eight handed gang related attempted murder. Defendant acquitted.



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R v Henry (Central Criminal Court): Leading junior in nightclub shooting where allegation involved use of 'James Bond' style key fob firearm. Defendant acquitted of attempted murder.

R v Oliver (Isleworth Crown Court): Large scale conspiracy involving baggage handlers, where one of principal losers was Victoria Beckham.

R v Harris, R v Palma (Inner London Crown Court): Possession of firearms. Young defendants in gang related circumstances in possession of Mach 10 type weapons.

R v Walczak (Kingston Crown Court): Large scale bootlegging operation - £25million.

MILITARY LAW

Instructed in several court martials, both in the UK and abroad.

REGULATORY AND DISCIPLINARY PROCEEDINGS

R v Pirouznia: Dentist accused of fraud by anonymous whistleblower.

PUBLIC AND PRISON LAW

Instructed to advise on various prison law matters including parole, categorisation and licence conditions.

APPEALS AND CCRC

Instructed to advise and review numerous 'old' cases.

R v Jason Charles [2006] 1 Cr.App R. (S) 48

CONFISCATION, CIVIL RECOVERY AND ASSET FORFEITURE

Regularly instructed in confiscation proceedings arising out of various serious and complex offences.



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EXTRADITION AND MUTUAL ASSISTANCE

R v Billa: Involving the extradition of Albanian national in respect allegations of murder. Issues involved whether mutual assistance lawful.

