



QC 2011

CBA Committee member

“never gives up” and is “extremely creative in coming up with new ideas” – Notable Practitioners section of Chambers UK 2010: A Client’s Guide to the UK Legal Profession.

Simon Csoka joined Lincoln House in 2010. He specialises in all aspects of criminal law, in particular organised crime, drugs and fraud. Prior to taking silk in 2011, he frequently appeared as a leading junior.

He exclusively defends in serious and complex crime. His practice encompasses substantial gang related turf war conspiracies, murder, complex multi-handed drugs cases, gun running, corruption, evasion of duty, MTIC and serious fraud.

Although based in Manchester, he receives instructions nationally. He has appeared in many high profile cases. As well as his skills as a jury advocate, he is well known for his ability to develop complex legal arguments. He is known for his mastery of detail even in cases with voluminous quantities of evidence. He has an advanced knowledge of computing which can assist with the management of large amounts of evidence.

He has commented on a number of issues on national radio.

CRIMINAL LAW

Since taking silk he has been instructed to lead for the defence in a number of high profile cases in his first year:

- (i) R v Arran Coghlan – A substantial drugs prosecution by QC and two juniors, together with two QC special counsel, of the businessman labelled the “Teflon Don” by the media. The case collapsed during a disclosure application. <http://tinyurl.com/6pjhwei>
- (ii) R v Rebecca Leighton – the Stepping Hill Hospital (Stockport) nurse arrested for the insulin deaths. <http://tinyurl.com/8574vyc>
- (iii) R v Ishaq Hussain , the Pakistani gang grooming murder in which his client, the alleged orchestrator, was acquitted: <http://tinyurl.com/7qtgrvw>
- (iv) R v Kieron Stapleton, the defendant accused of the murder of the Indian student, Anuj Bidve, in Salford who was shot in the head on Boxing Day. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-16437658>

NOTABLE CASES AS A JUNIOR

R v Wild – substantial missing trader fraud.

R v Power – racial murder of taxi driver in Bury, shortly before race riots.

R v Alam – Alleged leader of the Burnley Riots.

R v Butt – murders and attempted murders between two rival Manchester gangs.

R v Thorne – drug turf war involving three murders of rival gang members.

R v Erdman – conspiracy to murder, kidnapping and torture between two rival factions of gangsters in Salford.

R v Longden – the UK’s biggest ever drugs supply case at the time involving over £200 million worth of Class A drugs.

R v Kelly – Salford team of organised Post Office robbers.

R v McVay – substantial drugs supply case involving successful stay as a result of breach of promise.

R v Greaves – first successful application for special counsel to review PII material to enable English law to comply with Article 6. Appeal allowed in Court of Appeal owing to allegations of corruption against police officers in Lancashire Constabulary.

R v Chohan – Hundi/Hawala banking: international money laundering and fraud.

Operation Safe – called to the bar in the Isle of Man to defend in an undercover drugs supply case.

R v Azhar Mohammed – gangland conspiracy to murder.

R v Singh – kidnapping for a substantial ransom of a Burnley “businessman” This became the leading case upon implied assertions following the introduction of the CJA 2003, R. v. Sukadeve Singh [2006] 2 Cr.App.R. 12

R v Zalavari – a substantial heroin distribution case in which the defendant was acquitted by reason of the extremely difficult defence of duress.

R v Taberer – blackmail of international money launderer who was being pursued by the Serbian and Russian mafia.

R v Pearson – a substantial police corruption case involving the sale of sensitive material to active criminals.

R v Young – Multimillion VAT fraud on imported luxury cars.

R v K and K – Leading junior for the respondent in a Prosecution appeal against a terminating ruling. This followed the successful defence of an accountant for international money laundering. The Court of Appeal certified a point of law for the House of Lords but leave was refused.

R v Simon Chin – attempted murder by a former gang member of a woman who suffered multiple stab wounds. This was a difficult trial with anonymous witnesses.

R v Damian O’Connor – Defence of a man heading a major importation and supply chain whilst on the run in Belgium. This was a major international SOCA investigation with substantial intrusive surveillance.

R v Zeeshan Gani – conspiracy to murder involving a Manchester gang. The case included difficult bad character and anonymity issues.

R v Charles Wright – SOCA investigation of the planned importation of a huge quantity of cocaine from Trinidad.

R v Kaleem Akhtar – one of the biggest firearm distribution cases ever in the UK. The appeal against sentence is now the guideline case for firearms offences.

R v Paul Berry – Acting for the head of a conspiracy involving Liverpool and Milton Keynes criminals involved the large scale distribution of cocaine from Liverpool to the Home Counties.

R v Sun Ping Ng – defence of a man involved in a huge cannabis cultivation conspiracy involving at least 33 converted properties.

R v Jason Ferries – a young man who suffered from Asperger’s Syndrome and ADHD was charged with the murder of his stepmother. He was found guilty of diminished responsibility manslaughter after complex psychiatric evidence was presented to the jury.

R v Kayael Wint – a young man with learning difficulties charged with a Manchester Gooch gang conspiracy to murder. The trial lasted for nearly six months because the case encompassed a huge range of activities by the gang members.

R v Casey Miller – defence in a robbery trial which attracted national publicity because it involved the theft of nearly £2 million of Lowry paintings that have not been recovered.

R v Arshad Khan – defence of a man accused of a substantial and sophisticated heroin importation direct from Afghanistan. The case was dramatized for television.

R v Fletcher – organised crime conspiracy to murder in Bradford.

R v Peacock – a series of substantial mortgage frauds.

R v Hanif – a major drugs prosecution which involved complex issues relating to the interception of telephone calls.

R v Miah – A substantial drugs prosecution which collapsed at the retrial following my successful application to exclude all the telephone evidence in the case. The submission concerned the influencing of experts with sensitive material and the manner in which the prosecution liaised with the Attorney-General’s office over special counsel.

EDUCATION / PROFESSIONAL

University: Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge University

School of Law: Inns of Court School of Law

Qualifications: MA Law