

James practices predominantly in criminal law: acting for defendants in the Crown Court. He has experience across the full spectrum of criminal offences; including murder, manslaughter, serious sexual offences, drugs conspiracies and fraud.

He also defends in regulatory cases: including fire safety breaches, health and safety offences and breaches of commercial trading regulations.

James also puts his advocacy experience to good use representing interested parties at inquests in the Coroner's court.

Notable Cases

Criminal Law

R v King – Conspiracy to murder. Instructed to defend the principal defendant in a multi-handed conspiracy involving a planned shooting. Led by Paul Reid QC.

R v Mackie – Led by Peter Wright QC in a case dubbed "The Candlestick Killer" by the national press.

Manslaughter

R v Morton – Instructed to defend a father who caused the death of his 13 year old son by administering him a morphine tablet for a headache.

Drugs Conspiracy

R v Osman – Instructed to defend one the principal defendants in a serious Class A drugs and firearms importation. Prosecuted by the National Crime Agency in conjunction with police in Holland and elsewhere in Europe.

R v Leek – Defended in a multi-handed Class A and B drugs conspiracy involving 2 drugs squad investigations as part of "Operation Galant 2".

Sexual Offences

R v McAnaw – Successfully defended a man facing multiple counts of historic rape of his wife.

R v Kershaw – Defended in a multi-handed assault by penetration trial.

Football Related Offences

R v Hartley – Defended one of the principal defendants in a multi-handed violent disorder trial involving alleged members of the "Burnley Suicide Squad".

R v Spencer – Defended in a multi-handed football violent disorder case involving Burnley and Sheffield Wednesday fans.

Serious Violence

R v Houlgrave – Defended in a serious s18 stabbing trial and later represented the defendant in the Court of Appeal.

R v Casey – Defended a former soldier and Iraq veteran, who suffered from PTSD in a serious section 18 wounding case.

Fraud & Money Laundering

R v Wen – Defended a Chinese national in a multi-handed money laundering trial, involving the remittance of hundreds of thousands of pounds back to China.

R v Markey – Led in a multi-handed fraud which featured as part of the BBC "Rogue Traders" series.



CONTACT DETAILS

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PRACTICE AREAS

Criminal Law

Inquests

Regulatory

EDUCATION

2004-2006: GDipL (Commendation) and Bar Vocational Course (very competent), Manchester Metropolitan University.

1998-1999: Britannia Royal Naval College

1995-1998: BSc (Hons) Psychology, University of Leeds

WEBSITE

www.divinglawyer.co.uk

Regulatory Offences

R v McMullen – Instructed to defend a client facing a series of commercial trading breaches arising out of his celebrity vehicles sales company.

R v Britannia Corporation – Defended a company facing a series of fire safety breaches arising out of a serious fire in a house of multiple occupancy.

Outside of the criminal courts, James uses his advocacy and trial experience to assist clients in the Coroner's Court.

Inquests

Inquest touching upon the death of Richard Bufton:

Instructed to represent the family of Richard Bufton, who died following a closed-circuit rebreather "try-dive" at Capernwray Quarry in October 2010.

The inquest was held before a jury at the Coroner's Court in Preston and involved a number of complex issues of causation: it being in issue whether the diving accident was as the result of a previous medical condition or factors arising from the dive itself, which was conducted on a closed-circuit rebreather.

Able to use my own experience of diving, and in particular diving closed-circuit rebreathers, to assist the court and my client with identifying a number of significant issues with the use of such breathing apparatus.

Following a significant amount of expert evidence the jury returned a narrative verdict which confirmed that this was a diving accident and not the result of any medical condition.

See www.divinglawyer.co.uk for more details.

Private Client Work

R v Glen Doherty – Secured the acquittal of a commercial saturation diver facing assault charges in the Magistrates' court.

R v McCally – Defended a former supermarket manager in respect of indecent image offences.

Court Martial & Forces Clients:

R v Butterworth – Instructed to defend a former Army recruit facing serious sexual allegations before the Court Martial at Catterick Garrison.

R v Whalley – Defended a Royal Engineer diver and Afghanistan veteran facing weapon and public order offences.

R v Braithewaite – Defended a Royal Navy submariner for violent offences.

Personal

Served as an officer in the Royal Navy 1998-2004.

Front line operational experience in Northern Ireland and Sierra Leone with deployments at sea in the Far East, South Atlantic, West Africa and Mediterranean. Also completed an exchange with the Brazilian Navy in 1999.

Qualified Officer of the Watch and ship's diver and supervisor.

Selected to attend the Mine Clearance Diving Officers' course: trained to dive and supervise mixed gas and surface supplied diving operations. Qualified as a bomb and mine disposal officer with live Explosive Ordnance Disposal experience with Southern Diving Unit 1.

Ran the Royal Navy's boarding operations school 2003-2004.

Outside of court James is a keen swimmer and diver (PADI Divemaster), and is currently fulfilling a life-long ambition: learning to fly.



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