

Tom Cockroft

Call 2010



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Tom Cockroft specialises in crime, extradition and public law.

Tom was appointed by the Attorney General as Junior Counsel to the Crown in 2022 (London C panel).

Alongside his practice in crime and extradition, he undertakes a range of high profile work for a variety of government departments and has a particular expertise in national security work, inquests following deaths in custody, public inquiries and judicial review proceedings.

He has acted in some of the most important public inquiries of recent years including the Grenfell Tower Inquiry as Junior Counsel to the Inquiry and the UK Covid 19 Inquiry as Junior Counsel to the Cabinet Office and No. 10 Downing Street.

He is currently instructed in the Omagh Bombing Inquiry on behalf of HM Government and the inquiry into extrajudicial killings by British special forces in Afghanistan for the Royal Military Police.

Expertise

Serious Crime

Tom prosecutes and defends in all areas of serious crime from homicide and terrorism to sexual offences and fraud.

Notable Serious Crime cases

Secured the acquittal of a defendant accused of inflicting grievous bodily harm by scalding a patient of hers in bathwater.

Secured the acquittal of a defendant positively identified as the single assailant in a frenzied knife attack which came within millimetres of severing the victim's femoral artery.

Instructed as led Counsel in international conspiracy to import £1m of cocaine from the Caribbean via New York: Kingston Crown Court, HHJ Kent.

Successfully appealed against client's conviction for robbery on the basis of a misdirection on joint enterprise in judge's summing up: Brown & ors [2017] EWCA Crim Div 167, Court of Appeal, Criminal Division, Davis LJ, Simler J, HHJ Munro.

Instructed as sole Counsel at the Central Criminal Court to resist an application by The Daily Express for disclosure of a reference from Jeremy Corbyn MP for lay client in trial of conspiracy to defraud. The Express unsuccessfully sought to demonstrate links between Corbyn's support network and Islamic State.

Other Experience

Awarded Pegasus Scholarship for a secondment to a set of chambers in Paris specialising in international criminal law. Shadowed prosecutors and judges for six weeks in the criminal courts in Argentina. Drafted note on the appeal of an Afghan warlord against conviction for conspiracy to torture hostages for Paul Walker J in the Court of Appeal, Criminal Division.

Extradition

Tom regularly appears for requested persons and requesting authorities under Parts 1 and 2 of the Extradition Act 2003.

Notable Extradition cases

Defended in the extradition proceedings of a Romanian national who was acting as an informant against the mafia, his cellmate having revealed the location of 18 murdered prostitutes whose organs were being trafficked across Europe.

Successfully resisted a renewed attempt to appeal against extradition before the Divisional Court: *Z v Lithuania* [2019] EWHC 816 (Admin), High Court of Justice, Queen's Bench Division, Administrative Court, Bean LJ and Farbey J.

Seconded to the Extradition Unit of the CPS Special Crime and Counter-Terrorism Division (SCCTD). Prosecuted cases at first instance and in the Queen's Bench Division of the High Court. Assisted with extradition requests made by foreign governments and judicial authorities in politically significant cases including that of Wikileaks founder, Julian Assange. Worked closely with high-level Extradition Unit personnel to brief press in the most sensitive cases. Prepared briefings for ministers of State, foreign ambassadors, overseas prosecutors and judges on counterterrorism and surveillance operations, investigations and prosecutions.

Inquiries & Public Law

Tom is regularly instructed in public inquiries and other public law proceedings on behalf of the Cabinet Office, Home Office, Treasury, HMRC and DWP.

Notable Inquiries & Public Law cases

Currently instructed as Junior Counsel to the Cabinet Office in the UK Covid-19 Inquiry.

Previously instructed as Junior Counsel to the Grenfell Tower Inquiry and acted for one of the Key Core Participants in the Undercover Policing Inquiry.

Drafted observations on behalf of the Government of the United Kingdom for the European Court of Human Rights on the issue of whether an increase in sentence on a reference in excess of a Goodyear indication violated Article 6 ECHR rights.

Drafted submissions on behalf of several bereaved families for the London bombings inquest: Royal Courts of Justice, Hallett LJ, Vice President of the Queen's Bench Division.

Drafted submissions on the judicial review of a coroner's decision to limit the scope of a Jamieson (non-State) inquest about a Russian national who was suspected of having poisoned her husband; submissions opposing a prisoner's claim that the deletion of his racist literary work violated his Article 10 ECHR rights; and submissions on the disclosure obligations of the Foreign & Commonwealth Office in coroners' inquests and immigration appeals, including cases

before the SIAC

Regulatory Law

Tom has experience of appearing for regulatory bodies and defendants in financial investigations and professional disciplinary hearings.

Notable Regulatory Law cases

Seconded to the Nursing Midwifery Council for 6 months in 2013.

Wrote a report on US sanctions compliance and anti-money laundering checks for a Latin American bank reviewing thousands of emails in Spanish in response to an investigation by the US Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control into the \$6.7bn fraud against Obama's Medicare.

Memberships

- Appointed Junior Counsel to the Crown (C Panel) (2022-7)
- Appointed to the Bar Council's Law Reform Committee (2015-)
- Executive Committee of the Criminal Bar Association (2018-20)
- Defence Extradition Lawyers' Forum
- British Spanish Lawyers' Association
- Inquest Lawyers' Group

Languages

- Spanish
- Catalan
- French