

JAMES THOMAS

Year of call
1999

James Thomas is instructed to prosecute and defend in a wide range of serious and complex casework including as counsel alone in murder, manslaughter, modern slavery, human trafficking, rape, kidnapping, proceeds of crime, money laundering, Fraud, causing death by driving and serious physical and sexual assaults on adults and children.

Since 2005 he has been consistently instructed as leading counsel and Junior alone in serious and complex multi-defendant organised crime casework for specialist organised crime and complex case units (CCU) involving investigations conducted by the NCA, EMSOU and specialist crime units, where his case preparation, analytical and client handling skills are most frequently demonstrated.

Advice work is regularly undertaken on instruction from the East Midlands CCU for offences of gross negligent manslaughter committed in a variety of circumstances, including care home deaths.

James has a Regulatory practise experience in the areas of police discipline and sport and uses his experience and expertise in criminal law practise to compliment his skill in these areas.

LEGAL EXPERTISE

Crime

James has considerable experience prosecuting and defending in the most serious and complex criminal cases.

Instructed to advise and represent as sole counsel in cases of murder, manslaughter, including gross negligent manslaughter, modern slavery and human trafficking offences and kidnapping.

He has extensive experience as leading junior counsel in cases involving offences committed by organized crime groups and associated serious crime prevention orders. He is an approved advocate on the specialist

serious and organized crime group panel at the highest grade 4 and receives instructions from the CPS organised crime and complex case units in addition to solicitors to prosecute and defend complex cases. The conduct of these cases often involves the deployment of undercover police officers, Covert Human Intelligence Sources, intrusive and directed surveillance and consideration of associated sensitive material. Jim is particularly experienced in this area of case and disclosure management. Jim has received judicial commendation for his conduct of such cases.

James has years of experience dealing with cases involving the commission of the most serious sexual offences often involving historic offences committed against children and is trained to deal with young and vulnerable witnesses.

Selected Cases

R v Talbot

Murder – instructed as counsel alone to prosecute the defendant for the murder of his father killed in his own home. The Defendant had seriously assaulted his father 15 years before he subsequently murdered him in his own home.

R v Stellato

CPS Serious Crime group instruction as counsel alone – The defendant attempted to possess hand grenades with intent to endanger life. A NCA investigation involving US FBI witness evidence. The defendant attempted to purchase grenades over the Dark net using Bitcoins. Stellato was sentenced to life imprisonment following his conviction after trial.

Operation Duchess

Instructed as leading junior by the CCU to prosecute conspiracies to import synthetic cannabinoid receptor agonists (SCRA – Mamba) and conspiracies to supply SCRA's, Class A heroin and cocaine. The operation, the first SCRA operation prosecuted in the East Midlands, concerned the prosecution of over 80 defendants involved individually and as part of several different conspiracy groups.

R v Skingsley

Murder – Instructed as counsel alone to prosecute the defendant for the alleged murder of her partner. The defendant was convicted after trial of manslaughter for the unlawful death inflicted with the use of her car.

R v Purvis

CCU Instruction as counsel alone. The defendant was accused of gross negligent man-slaughter following the death of her chronically ill husband in their home.

R v Bailey

Manslaughter – Instructed as counsel alone to prosecute the defendant for a death caused following a road rage incident. The defendant was convicted after trial. The conviction was upheld in the Court of Appeal.

R v Fevrier

Manslaughter – Instructed as counsel alone to prosecute a 15 year old for the unprovoked single punch death of an adult male stranger. The defendant was convicted after trial.

Operation Brevity

Leading Junior – Attempted murder and possession of firearms – The prosecution of 5 defendants for the shooting of a complainant in his own home

Operation Victory

Leading Junior CCU prosecution of 10 defendants – conspiracy to supply class A drugs and firearms

Operation Malaten

R v Hobson and others – Leading Junior CCU prosecution – Class A and B drug conspiracies.

R v Charles and others

Leading Junior CCU Prosecution of multiple defendants for conspiracies to commit armed robberies and high value vehicle thefts for export to South Africa.

Operation Leonini

CPS Serious Crime Group instruction following a SOCA investigation of multiple defendants from London and Columbia for an £80 million cocaine importation.

R v Sarasia and others

CCU prosecution – £10million heroin importation.

R v Chouhaib and others

Leading Junior CCU prosecution – Multi-kilo cocaine importation involving a light aircraft purchased by the conspirators for the purpose of importation.

Operation Stalingrad

Leading Junior CCU prosecution of multiple defendants for conspiracies to supply multi-kilos of class A drugs and the application of serious crime prevention and proceeds of crime confiscation orders on conviction.

R v Tomlinson

Representing the Defendant accused of conspiracy to supply controlled drugs of class A (CCU operation xylographer).

R v Jogee

Representing the defendant accused of conspiracy to supply class A heroin whilst on li-cence for the joint enterprise unlawful killing of another.

R v Burianski and 3 others

Modern slavery and Human Trafficking – A prosecution of 4 defendants bringing a male from Poland and putting him to work in circumstances amounting to modern slavery. Applications made for Slavery and Trafficking Prevention Orders (STPO)

R v O'Neill and Hay

Prosecution of Defendants for Rape, strangulation with intent to rape, threats to kill and conspiracy to pervert the course of justice.

R v Kamran and Khaleeq

S18 GBH on twin 11-month old children by their parents. The prosecution involved 9 expert medical witnesses addressing repeated and serious injuries inflicted over a number of months.

R v Powell

Prosecution of a defendant for the attempted kidnap of a 5-year girl from a city centre street during broad daylight. The defendant was unknown to the victim who was with her mother at the time of the attempted kidnap.

R v Clifford and others

Prosecution of defendants for the false imprisonment and s18 GBH torture of the vic-tim, the son of one of the defendants.

R v Harkin

Representing the defendant accused of nationwide country house burglaries where val-uable antiques were stolen.

Financial Crime

James has a wide range of experience conducting serious high value financial crime case, where he prosecutes

and defends, including Fraud, money laundering and associated proceeds of crime confiscation and serious crime prevention orders.

He is an approved advocate at the highest grade 4 on the CPS specialist Proceeds of Crime panel. His attention to detail and expertise in preparing and representing in voluminous and complex multi-defendant cases is a significant advantage in this area of criminal practise.

Selected Cases

R v Hollyoake and others

R v Hollyoake and others – The prosecution of defendants for money laundering of-fences following the commission of a large scale fraud against a London production company. Following convictions the conduct of confiscation proceedings involved the restraint and seizure of significant assets and the imprisonment of one of the defend-ants for several years in default

R v Bisgrove

Breach of Iran control order – representing a defendant accused of exporting non-destructive nuclear testing equipment to Iran capable of use in the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The defendant owned a company engaged in the distri-bution of equipment worldwide. Applications for proceeds of crime confiscation were challenged to significantly reduce the financial orders.

R v Persico and others

Leading junior in the prosecution for drug trafficking and money laundering offences involving the establishment of multiple companies registered overseas to launder proceeds.

Regulatory & Disciplinary In Sport

James is instructed to represent police officers in both criminal court police misconduct proceedings and has experience and expertise in this area, where officers face gross misconduct disciplinary.

He is a keen sportsman and participant in sport. He has represented and advised professionals in sport on a range of issues including professional discipline, employment negotiation and dispute and he has previously chaired a selection appeal panel for the Sochi winter Olympics on behalf of the British Ski and Snowboard Association.

Selected Cases

Leicestershire Police gross Misconduct - officer G

Represented at a 2 week misconduct hearing where witness evidence heard from multiple police officers alleging unauthorised use of CHIS, unauthorized surveillance and supervisory misconduct towards fellow

officers.

Leicestershire police gross misconduct – officer M

Represented the officer accused of gross misconduct relating to issues of honesty and integrity in recording information during the course of his duties.

Leicestershire police gross misconduct – officer R

Represented the officer accused of providing false reports following a police vehicle collision, issues of honesty and integrity alleged to constitute gross misconduct.

Appointments

- Serious and organized Crime group panel (grade 4)
- Proceeds of crime panel (grade 4)

Memberships

- Criminal Bar Association