

Jason Beer KC

Call 1992

Silk 2011



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Jason Beer KC is recognised as a leading silk, and is recommended as the Star Individual for both Police Law and Inquests and Public Inquiries by Chambers UK.

He won Barrister of the Year in The Lawyer Awards 2024 and Silk of the Year in the Inquests and Public Inquiries category at the Chambers UK Bar Awards 2023. He specialises in public inquiries, inquests, public law and police law – representing a range of clients, including central government, public authorities, police forces, coroners, and corporations.

Jason is the Head of Chambers of 5 Essex Chambers and sits as a Deputy High Court Judge (KBD and ChD) and as a Recorder of the Crown Court.

Jason often leads teams of counsel in complex, high-profile and sensitive investigations, inquiries and claims. His multi-disciplinary background (before taking silk, he was Junior Counsel to the Crown (A Panel)) allows him to provide a service across a range of jurisdictions and fields of law: clients appreciate his ability to take a case from the investigatory stage (including giving advice on issues of criminal law such as corporate manslaughter and health and safety), advising or acting in any inquest or inquiry, appearing in any misconduct, criminal or disciplinary proceedings, and then handling any civil proceedings (including appellate proceedings to the Supreme Court).

He has provided this end-to-end service in a number of the most prominent cases of the last two decades. His caseload has included: the **Stephen Lawrence Inquiry**, the **Hutton Inquiry**, the **Shipman Inquiry**, the **'Phone Hacking' Claims**, the **Baha Mousa Inquiry**, the **Al-Sweady Inquiry**, the **Hillsborough Inquests**, the **Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse**, **Sir Cliff Richard's claim for misuse of private information**, the **Grenfell Tower Inquiry**, the **Fishmongers Hall Inquests**, the **Facial Recognition judicial review**, the **Harry Dunn judicial review**, the **Shoreham Airshow Inquests**, the **Plymouth Shootings Inquests**, and the **EncroChat Claims**.

He is presently instructed in:

- **The Post Office Horizon IT Inquiry**, as Leading Counsel to the Inquiry
- **The Covid 19 Inquiry**, as Leading Counsel for NHS England
- **The Grenfell Tower Inquiry**, as Leading Counsel for the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
- **The Thirlwall Inquiry**, as Leading Counsel for NHS England
- **The Malkinson Inquiry**, as Leading Counsel for Greater Manchester Police
- **The Dawn Sturgess Inquiry**, as Leading Counsel for Counter Terrorism Policing South East
- **The Jalal Uddin Inquiry**, as Leading Counsel to the Inquiry
- **The Undercover Policing Inquiry**, as Leading Counsel for a group of undercover police officers

Expertise

Public Inquiries

Jason has appeared in most of the significant public inquiries of recent times. He ranked as the “Star Individual” silk in this field by Chambers UK and wrote the leading practitioner’s text, *Public Inquiries*, for the Oxford University Press.

He has now appeared in 20 public inquiries, acting for a full range of individuals and organisations: central government, non-ministerial government departments, the police service, other public authorities, civil servants, or individuals.

Jason also has experience of acting as counsel to the inquiry, having done so in 5 public inquiries.

He is ranked as a leader in this field by both of the major directories, sources noting that he is “The man who wrote the book on public inquiries. I think he is just unflappable; he knows inquiries inside out, commands the respect of the judiciary and invokes a lot of trust in clients”, “A true trailblazer in the field of public inquiries...he continues to pick up a plethora of key instructions in the most prominent inquiries undertaken”, and “He’s been through everything that can possibly come up in the course of an inquiry and has so much experience to draw upon” (Chambers UK).

Notable Public Inquiries cases

The Post Office Horizon IT Inquiry

Leading Counsel to the Inquiry

The Dawn Sturgess Inquiry

Leading Counsel for Counter Terrorism Policing South East

The Malkinson Inquiry

Leading Counsel for Greater Manchester Police

The Covid 19 Inquiry

Leading Counsel for NHS England

The Thirlwall Inquiry

Leading Counsel for NHS England

The Jalal Uddin Inquiry

Leading Counsel to the Inquiry

Magnox Inquiry

Leading Counsel to the Inquiry

Grenfell Tower Inquiry

Leading Counsel for the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse

Leading Counsel for the Metropolitan Police, Devon & Cornwall Police, and Dorset Police

Undercover Policing Inquiry

Leading Counsel for a number of police forces, and for individual officers

Renewable Heat Incentive Inquiry

Leading Counsel for Ofgem

Anthony Grainger Inquiry

Leading Counsel to the Inquiry

Leveson Inquiry

Counsel for Metropolitan Police Director of Public Affairs.

Al-Sweady Inquiry

Second Counsel to the Inquiry

Baha Mousa Inquiry

Leading Counsel for 15 Soldiers

Rosemary Nelson Inquiry

Leading Counsel for the Northern Ireland Office

Billy Wright Inquiry

Leading Counsel for 92 serving and retired prison officers and governors

Inquests

As well as appearing in inquests themselves, Jason is often instructed in related proceedings in the Administrative Court. He is ranked as the “Star Individual” silk in this field by Chambers UK, sources noting that *“He is extremely hard-working, incredibly intelligent and completely unflappable under extreme pressure.” (Legal 500) and “He’s a consummate professional and leader for inquest work, who’s amazing on his feet...He has an exceptional legal mind and is very strategic about the way he approaches cases.”*

He acts on behalf of coroners whose decisions and actions are challenged (appearing in the Court of Appeal in **Maguire**, the leading case on the extent and scope of the Article 2 investigative obligations in the coronial context). He acted as Counsel to the **Inquest into the death of Jalal Uddin** (murdered in 2016), as Counsel for Devon & Cornwall Police in the **Plymouth Shootings Inquests**, and as Counsel for Humberside Police in the **Inquest into the death of Lewis Skelton** (shot by a police officer). He acted for the police service in the **Fishmongers Hall Inquests**. He appeared on behalf of the Ministry of Defence in the **Porton Down Inquest** into the death in 1953 of a serviceman who acted as a “human guinea pig” testing the Sarin nerve agent. He advised the Metropolitan Police Service on the public law aspects of the inquest into the 7/7 Bombings in London represented the Parole Board in the **Naomi Bryant Inquest**, and Surrey Police in the **Surrey Puppy Farm Murders Inquest**.

Jason also acts for individuals and corporations – he acted for the University of Manchester in three inquests into the deaths of academic staff who occupied the

Rutherford Rooms at the University; for G4S in an inquest into the death of an employee shot by a colleague in Iraq; for an academy in an inquest into the death of a pupil following allegations of bullying at school; for a leading prep school in an inquest concerning the death of a parent on the school's premises; for Sheffield Wednesday Football Club in the **Hillsborough Inquests**; and for the Air Accident Investigation Branch in the claims in the Divisional Court arising from the conduct of the **Shoreham Airshow Inquests**.

Notable Inquests cases

R (Maguire) v HM Senior Coroner for Blackpool & Fylde [2023] UKSC 20
R (Officer B50) v HM Assistant Coroner for the East Riding of Yorkshire and Kingston upon Hull [2023] EWHC 81 (Admin)
HM Senior Coroner for West Sussex v Chief Constable of Sussex Police & Ors [2022] EWHC 215 (QB)
Nguyen v HM Assistant Coroner for Inner West London [2021] EWHC 3354 (Admin)
R (Hicks) v Senior Coroner for Inner North London (2017) 181 JP 1
R (McLeish) v HM Coroner for the Northern District of Greater London [2010] All ER (D) 211
R (Independent Police Complaints Commission) v HM Coroner for Inner North London [2009] EWHC 2681 (Admin)
R (Sutovic) v HM Coroner for the Northern District of Greater London [2006] EWHC 1095 (Admin)
R (Ministry of Defence) v HM Coroner for Wiltshire and Swindon [2006] EWHC 309 (Admin)
Regina (Hurst) HM Coroner for Northern District London [2003] EWHC 1721 (Admin)
Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis v HM Coroner for Southwark [2003] 1 WLR 371
HM Coroner for Wiltshire & Swindon v Ministry of Defence [2002] EWHC 2567 (Admin)

Police Law

Jason appears in the full range of disciplines on behalf of the police service. He has been instructed by nearly all of the 43 forces in England and Wales, by many Police and Crime Commissioners and by the Independent Office for Police Conduct. He has been ranked in both of the main directories over the past 20 years, and is now recognised as a "Star Individual" in this field, sources noting that he is "An outstanding silk who is regularly instructed in high-profile civil claims concerning police shootings and a host of other issues" (Chambers UK) and "He is outstanding; arguably the leading malicious prosecution practitioner in the country" (Legal 500).

He has appeared in a significant number of civil jury trials for false imprisonment and malicious prosecution and non-jury actions for assault. These are often 'high profile' claims where serious allegations of racism and / or corruption have been made. He successfully defended Gwent Police against a claim seeking £9m in damages arising from the investigation of a prominent firm of solicitors specialising in the defence of those accused of road traffic law offences and successfully defended South Wales Police in a claim brought by a former solicitor for £2m in damages for malicious prosecution. He is presently defending Norfolk Police in a claim seeking over £30m in damages arising from the prosecution of two directors of a chain of private psychiatric hospitals for fraud and for the IOPC in a claim for substantial damages for misfeasance in public office and negligence arising from a series of disciplinary proceedings brought against police officers.

Jason has also appeared in non-misfeasance claims involving the police service. He acted on behalf of the Attorney-General in the application for disclosure of police documents in the **Madeline McCann** case; and represented the Counter-Terrorism Command in the **Omagh Bombing Trial** in the High Court in Northern Ireland. He acted on behalf of the Metropolitan Police in the **Phone Hacking claims** and on behalf of South Yorkshire Police in **Sir Cliff Richards'** claim for damages for misuse of his private information.

He is presently acting for Northamptonshire Police in the judicial review concerning diplomatic immunity in the **Harry Dunn** case, for South Wales Police in the Court of Appeal in relation to the use of **facial recognition** by the police service, for the Metropolitan Police Service in the Court of Appeal concerning the **disclosure of reprimand data on applications to the police service**, and for the Metropolitan Police Service in the Court of Appeal in relation to the **test for self-defence** to be applied in misconduct proceedings.

He has acted and advised in over 300 discipline and misconduct cases. These have often involved complex misconduct investigations and substantial, document intense, misconduct hearings.

Appearing in many difficult and sensitive inquests and public inquiries involving the police service, the New Cross Fire Inquest (a three month inquest into the deaths of 13 children at a birthday party in 1981), the Leveson Inquiry, the Undercover Policing Inquiry, the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse, the Grainger Inquiry, and the Hillsborough Inquests.

Jason's public law practice frequently sees him acting on behalf of the police service in the Administrative Court. Cases have involved challenges to a policy on police cautioning, to disclosures made to the Disclosure and Barring Service, to national policies on the retention of information for policing and other purposes, to challenges to the Notification Order regime under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, to the approach to be taken to the making of Forced Marriage Protection Orders under the Family Law Act 1996. Jason acted for the Metropolitan Police Service in the **David Miranda** judicial review, successfully defending the challenge in the Court of Appeal to the use

of powers under the Terrorism Act 2000; and for the Metropolitan Police Service in **Officer W80's** challenge to the approach taken by the IOPC to the law of self-defence in fatal use of force cases.

Jason also carries out a significant amount of advisory work on non-contentious police business including for the NPCC, the Home Office, the IOPC and Police and Crime Commissioners. This is on operational and policy matters, including in relation to sensitive and terrorist related issues. Additionally, he has also provided advice on the operation of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Notable Police Law cases

R (Officer W80) v Director General of the Independent Office for Police Conduct [2023] UKSC 24
Prior & Ors v The Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis [2023] ICR 508
YZ v Chief Constable of South Wales Police [2022] EWCA Civ 683
Rees v Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis [2021] EWCA Civ 49
R (Bridges) v Chief Constable of South Wales Police [2020] EWCA Civ 1058
R (Halabi) v (1) Southwark Crown Court and (2) Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis [2020] EWHC 1053 (Admin)
Re K (Forced Marriage: Passport Order) [2020] 1 FLR 904
Rudall v (1) Crown Prosecution Service and (2) Chief Constable of South Wales [2019] Lloyd's Rep FC 115
Evans & Ashcroft v Chief Constable of South Wales [2019] ICR 583
Sir Cliff Richard v (1) BBC and (2) Chief Constable of South Yorkshire [2018] 3 WLR 1715
Breeze & Wilson v Chief Constable of Norfolk [2018] EWHC 485 (QB)
R (R) v National Police Chiefs' Council [2018] 1 WLR 1651
R (Miranda) v Secretary of State for the Home Department & Ors [2016] 1 WLR 1505
Rudall v (1) Crown Prosecution Service & (2) Chief Constable of South Wales [2016] EWHC 2884 (QB)
R (Commissioner of Police) v Independent Police Complaints Commission [2015] EWCA Civ 1248
Daniels v Chief Constable of South Wales Police [2015] EWCA Civ 680
Various Claimants v News Group Newspapers Ltd [2014] 2 WLR 756
A and B v Chief Constable of Hampshire [2012] EWHC 1517 (QB)
Various Claimants v News Group Newspapers Ltd [2012] 1 WLR 2545
Al-Hassan Daniel v Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs [2011] 2 WLR 488
Richardson v Chief Constable of West Midlands Police (2011) Cr.App.R.1
Hayes v Chief Constable of Merseyside Police (2011) 2 Cr App R 30
Howarth v Chief Constable of Gwent Police and Gwent Police Authority [2011] EWHC 2836 (QB)

Public & Administrative

Jason is instructed in all areas of public law work, sources noting that "He is an extremely experienced advocate who is very good on his feet and has an excellent style with the judge...A class act who has a very good reputation" (Chambers UK). He specialises in claims that arise from the operation of the criminal justice system. Jason has particular expertise in corporate manslaughter and health and safety investigations and prosecutions – where experience in inquests, the criminal courts and in civil claims is essential.

Jason appears on behalf of central government, other public authorities, including the police service, the Independent Office for Police Conduct, the prison service, coroners and for corporate clients.

Notable Public & Administrative cases

R (Charles & Dunn) v Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs and (2) Chief Constable of Northamptonshire Police [2020] EWHC 1620 (Admin)
R (Halabi) v (1) Southwark Crown Court and (2) Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis [2020] EWHC 1053 (Admin)
R (Officer W80) v Director General of the Independent Office for Police Conduct [2019] EWHC 2215 (Admin)
R (R) v National Police Chiefs' Council [2018] 1 WLR 1651
Competition and Markets Authority v Concordia International Rx (UK) Ltd

this involved a series of challenges, including:

- As to the procedure to be followed for the hearing of applications to vary or discharge warrants issued under the Competition Act 1998 s.28 giving the Competition and Markets Authority the power to enter business premises: **[2017] EWHC 2911 (Ch)**;
- The Court of Appeal's decision on that issue: **[2018] EWCA Civ 1881**;
- The ruling of the High Court that a special advocate should not be appointed in connection with the challenge: **[2018] EWHC 3158 (Ch)**;
- The ruling of the High Court that evidence relevant to the application to discharge the warrant was protected from disclosure by PII: **[2018] EWHC 3448 (Ch)**; and
- The ruling of the High Court dismissing the application to discharge the warrant: **[2019] EWHC 47 (Ch)**.

R (Hicks) v Senior Coroner for Inner North London (2017) 181 JP 1
R (Miranda) v Secretary of State for the Home Department & Ors [2016] 1 WLR 1505
R (Commissioner of Police) v Independent Police Complaints Commission [2015] EWCA Civ 1248
R (Children's Rights Alliance for England) v Secretary of State for Justice [2013] 1 WLR 3667
R (FGP) v Serco PLC [2012] EWHC 1804 (Admin)
R (on the application of E1) v The Chairman of the Azelle Rodney Inquiry [2012] EWHC 563 (Admin)
Kennedy v Charity Commission (No 2) [2012] WLR 3524
R (GC & C) v Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis [2011] 1 WLR 1230
Kennedy v (1) Information Commissioner and (2) Charity Commission (No 1) [2011] EWCA Civ 367

Professional Discipline & Regulatory

Jason's regulatory practice extends far beyond the police service. He often advises and represents individuals, corporate officers, companies, and public authorities facing investigation and prosecution for safety based regulatory offences.

Previous clients have included Smurfit Kappa, Sheffield Wednesday Football Club, an academy school, a leading preparatory school, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government and the Chief Constables of Devon and Cornwall and South Wales Police.

A feature of his regulatory practice is where criminal investigations conducted by the police service and the HSE have been conducted concurrently with other investigations – he has been instructed in many high-profile inquests and public inquiries over the past two decades where such investigations overlap (see Public Inquiries and Inquests).

Jason additionally acts for other regulators in criminal and other investigations. He is presently acting for Ofgem in the **Renewable Heat Incentive Inquiry**. He has acted for the Financial Reporting Council in its investigation and supervisory inquiry into HBOs; and for the Competition and Markets Authority in its investigation into generic pharmaceuticals; in relation to a challenge to a search warrant issued under s28 of the Competition Act 1998; and in its investigation into secondary ticketing.

Information Law

Jason provides advice and representation to public and private organisations in relation to a wide range of issues concerning information law.

Notable Information Law cases

Appeared in the First-tier Tribunal (Information Rights Chamber), the Investigatory Powers Tribunal, the High Court and the Court of Appeal in relation to such issues, including in claims concerning the extent of Art.3 ECHR (**R (CRAE) v Secretary of State for Justice [2013] 1 WLR 3667**) and Art.10 ECHR (**Kennedy v Information Commissioner [2012] 1 WLR 3524**).

He has assisted police forces and central government in relation to the Data Protection Act 1998, the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 and the Investigatory Powers Act 2016.

He has advised and acted in claims relating to the operation of the Disclosure & Barring Service and (Enhanced) Criminal Records Certificates (including concerning the disclosure of reprimands – **R (R) v National Police Chief's Council [2017] EWHC 2586 (Admin)** and **R (RD) v National Police Chief's Council [2021] 1 WLR 262**, and the

retention of conviction data for 100 years – R (QSA) v National Police Chiefs’ Council [2021] 1 WLR 2962).

He has acted in claims concerning the misuse of private information (he acted in the claim brought by Sir **Cliff Richard against the BBC and South Yorkshire Police**, and previously represented the Metropolitan Police Service in the **Phone Hacking Claims**).

Health & Safety

Jason is recognised as a leading silk, specialising in public inquiries, inquests, public law and police law. He represents a range of clients, including central government, public authorities, police forces, coroners, and corporations, who are “very impressed by his client care” and note that he “Produces very effective legal submissions, and cross-examines with the panache of a top-flight criminal silk” (Chambers UK).

Jason often leads teams of counsel in complex, high-profile and sensitive investigations, inquiries and claims. His multi-disciplinary background (before taking silk, he was Junior Counsel to the Crown (A Panel); he currently sits as a Recorder on the South-Eastern Circuit) allows him to provide a service across a range of jurisdictions and fields of law: clients appreciate his ability to take a case from the investigatory stage (including giving advice on issues of criminal law such as corporate manslaughter and health and safety), advising or acting in any inquest or inquiry, appearing in any misconduct, criminal or disciplinary proceedings, and then handling any civil proceedings (including appellate proceedings to the Supreme Court).

He has provided this end-to-end service in a number of the most prominent cases of the last two decades. His caseload has included: the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry, the Hutton Inquiry, the Shipman Inquiry, the ‘Phone Hacking’ Claims, the Hillsborough Inquests, the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse, the Grenfell Tower Inquiry.

Jason is the Head of Chambers of 5 Essex Chambers

Public Inquiries

Jason has appeared in most of the significant public inquiries of recent times: he has now appeared in 16 public inquiries, mainly on behalf of central government or other public authorities, or as counsel to the inquiry. He is ranked as a leader in this field by both of the major directories, sources noting that “...Jason can do everything. He is a lateral thinker and tactician and will usually think of a solution however novel the situation” (Chambers UK).

He wrote the leading practitioner’s text, Public Inquiries, for the Oxford University Press. Notable inquiries include (over the past 10 years):

Grenfell Tower Inquiry – Leading Counsel for the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse – Leading Counsel for the Metropolitan Police

Devon & Cornwall Police, and Dorset Police Undercover Policing Inquiry – Leading Counsel for a number of police forces, and for individual officers

Renewable Heat Incentive Inquiry- – Leading Counsel for Ofgen

Anthony Grainger Inquiry – Leading Counsel to the Inquiry

Leveson Inquiry – Counsel for Metropolitan Police Director of Public Affairs.

Al-Sweady Inquiry – Second Counsel to the Inquiry

Baha Mousa Inquiry – Leading Counsel for 15 Soldiers

Rosemary Nelson Inquiry – Leading Counsel for the Northern Ireland Office

Billy Wright Inquiry – Leading Counsel for 92 serving and retired prison officers and governors

Inquests

As well as appearing in inquests themselves, Jason is often instructed in related proceedings in the Administrative Court. He is rated as a Band 1 silk for Inquests. He acts on behalf of coroners whose decisions and actions are challenged.

He appeared on behalf of the Ministry of Defence in the Porton Down Inquest into the death in 1953 of a serviceman who acted as a “human guinea pig” testing the Sarin nerve agent. He advised the Metropolitan Police Service on the public law aspects of the inquest into the 7/7 Bombings in London and represented the Parole Board in

the Naomi Bryant Inquest.

Jason also acts for individuals and corporation – he acted for the University of Manchester in three inquests into the deaths of academic staff who occupied the Rutherford Rooms at the University; for G4S in an inquest into the death of an employee shot by a colleague in Iraq; for an academy in an inquest into the death of a pupil following allegations of bullying at school; for a leading prep school in an inquest concerning the death of a parent on the school's premises; and for Sheffield Wednesday Football Club in the Hillsborough Inquests.

Notable Health & Safety cases

R (Hicks) v Senior Coroner for Inner North London (2017) 181 JP 1
R (McLeish) v HM Coroner for the Northern District of Greater London [2010] All ER (D) 211
R (Independent Police Complaints Commission) v HM Coroner for Inner North London [2009] EWHC 2681 (Admin)
R (Sutovic) v HM Coroner for the Northern District of Greater London [2006] EWHC 1095 (Admin)
R (Ministry of Defence) v HM Coroner for Wiltshire and Swindon [2006] EWHC 309 (Admin)
Regina (Hurst) HM Coroner for Northern District London [2003] EWHC 1721(Admin)
Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis v HM Coroner for Southwark [2003] 1 WLR 371
HM Coroner for Wiltshire & Swindon v Ministry of Defence [2002] EWHC 2567 (Admin)

Education & Qualifications

- 2011 – Appointed Queen's Counsel
- 1992 – Called to the Bar by the Inner Temple
- 1992 – Bar Vocational Course, Inns of Court School of Law
- 1992 – Major Scholarship and Queen Mother's Scholarship, Inner Temple
- 1991 – University of Warwick, LLB

Memberships

- Administrative Law Bar Association (ALBA)
- Personal Injury Bar Association (PIBA)

Appointments

- 2017 – Head of Chambers, 5 Essex Chambers
- 2010 – Appointed Recorder on the South Eastern Circuit
- 2005 – Counsel to the Crown, Common Law (A Panel)

Awards

