



## Andrew O'Connor QC

Year of Call: 1996

Year of Silk: 2015

### Practice Areas

- Inquests
- Inquiries
- Personal Injury
- Public Law

### Email:

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### Awards



### Experience

Andrew O'Connor has extensive experience of public law and general common law litigation. In recent years, he has also appeared in a series of high profile inquests and inquiries, including the 7/7 inquests, the Hillsborough inquests and the Litvinenko Inquiry. He is currently instructed as one of the Counsel to the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse. He is also acting for the National Crime Agency in the Undercover Policing Inquiry and for the Manchester Arena at the inquests into the deaths of those killed in the May 2017 terrorist attack.

Prior to taking silk in 2015, he was a member of the Attorney General's civil litigation panels for 14 years, latterly the A Panel from 2011. Much of his work for government clients has been in the field of national security. He is listed as a Band 1 Silk for Inquests and Public Inquiries in the 2019 edition of Chambers UK. He is also listed as a Band 4 Silk for Administrative & Public Law.

### Directories

"A very calm, authoritative figure who has the respect of everyone in the field. He's a very strategic thinker who provides excellent advice and is a natural leader."  
*Chambers UK 2019 Inquests & Public Inquiries*

"Incredibly clever, he's an advocate who is good at cutting through the dross and getting the stuff done." "Extremely

talented.”

*Chambers UK 2019 Administrative & Public Law*

“A go-to barrister for high-profile, sensitive cases. A wonderful mix of brains, wit and charm.”

*Legal 500 2018 Inquests & Inquiries*

“Extremely nice to work with, he has a very detailed knowledge of inquiries, is good with clients and has excellent judgement.” “He provides very practical advice in a non-patronising way.”

*Chambers UK 2018 Inquests & Public Inquiries*

“He’s very good at getting to the nub of a case and identifying the issues that will be of concern to judges. A very realistic advocate and also very thorough.” “A class act. He puts arguments across very smoothly. It is very difficult for judges not to believe and like him. A very, very nice manner in court.” “Bright and sharp. His submissions are so clearly written and effective.”

*Chambers UK 2018 Administrative & Public Law*

“Unflappable and easy to work with, he spots the strategic points that make the difference.”

*Legal 500 2017 Inquests & Inquiries*

“He’s excellent – his judgement is sound, he works hard and he is incredibly easy to deal with.” “He is extremely bright and a very tough litigator with real authority in front of the court.”

*Chambers UK 2016 Administrative & Public Law*

“Incredibly hard-working, he doesn’t let anything overwhelm him. He has great panache and is a confident advocate who can take on the most senior silks.” “His drafting is particularly notable, and he’s also extremely switched on and nice to deal with.”

*Chambers UK 2016 Inquests & Public Inquiries*

## **Memberships**

Administrative Law Bar Association

## **Cases**

### **Tunisia Inquests**

03/03/2016

Barristers involved: Andrew O’Connor QC

Andrew O’Connor QC is instructed to act for HMG in the inquests into the deaths of the 30 British nationals who died in the terrorist

attack at Sousse, Tunisia in June 2015.

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## **The Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse**

03/03/2016

Barristers involved: Andrew O'Connor QC Cathryn McGahey QC

Andrew O'Connor QC is instructed by the Inquiry to act in the investigation into child sex abuse in Westminster.

Cathryn McGahey QC is Leading Counsel for The Department for Education

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## **Youssef v Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs**

**[2013] EWCA Civ 1302; [2014] 1QB 728 [2016] UKSC 3**

2016

Barristers involved: Andrew O'Connor QC Louise Jones

Instructed to act for the Foreign Secretary in judicial review proceedings relating to UN Al Qaida sanctions regime.

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## **Bredenkamp v Foreign Secretary**

17/02/2016

Barristers involved: Andrew O'Connor QC

Andrew O'Connor QC was instructed to act for the Foreign Secretary in judicial review proceedings arising from EU sanctions regime relating to Zimbabwe.

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## **The Litvinenko Inquiry**

17/02/2016

Barristers involved: Robin Tam QC Andrew O'Connor QC

Inquiry into the death of Alexander Litvinenko, who died from Polonium poisoning in 2006.

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## **Undercover Policing Inquiry**

22/06/2015 to date

Barristers involved: David Barr QC Andrew O'Connor QC

Major statutory public inquiry into undercover policing chaired by Sir John Mitting, retired High Court Judge. David Barr QC has been appointed Counsel to the Inquiry. Andrew O'Connor QC is instructed to act for National Crime Agency.

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## **Mohamed & another v SSHD**

**[2014] 1 WLR 4240**

02/05/2014

Barristers involved: Louise Jones Andrew O'Connor QC

Control order / TPIM matter, where the CA decided that the reasons for rejecting the abuse of process case of suspected terrorists in control order / TPIM proceedings could not be confined to a closed judgment

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## **Inquest into the 96 deaths in the Hillsborough Stadium Disaster**

17/02/2014

Barristers involved: Dominic Adamson QC Andrew O'Connor QC Matthew Waszak Piers Taylor  
Inquest into the deaths of 96 football supporters at the Hillsborough Football Stadium in 1989. Acted for the Independent Police Complaints Commission.

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## **Mohammed & another v Secretary of State for the Home Department**

**[2014] EWCA Civ 559; [2014] 1 WLR 4240**

2014

Barristers involved: Andrew O'Connor QC  
Instructed to act for the Home Secretary in control order / TPIM proceedings involving allegations of UK government complicity in unlawful detention in Somaliland.

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## **The Gareth Williams Inquest**

2012

Barristers involved: Andrew O'Connor QC  
Instructed to act for MI6 and GCHQ in the inquest into the death of Gareth Williams, whose body was found inside a locked bag in the bath of his flat.

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## **OB v Director of the Serious Fraud Office**

**[2012] 1 WLR 3188, CA**

2012

Barristers involved: Andrew O'Connor QC  
Instructed by the Attorney General to act as Advocate to the Court in a case concerning statutory construction and rectification.

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## **The Tomlinson Inquest**

2011

Barristers involved: Andrew O'Connor QC  
Instructed to act for the IPCC in the inquest into the death of Ian Tomlinson, who died at the G7 protests in London.

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## **The 7/7 inquests**

2010-2011

Barristers involved: Andrew O'Connor QC  
Instructed as Junior Counsel to the Inquests into the deaths of the 52 victims of the 7/7 bombings.

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## **HM Treasury v Ahmed & others**

**[2010] UKSC 2; [2010] 2 WLR 378**

2009-2010

Barristers involved: Andrew O'Connor QC

Instructed to act for HM Treasury in judicial review proceedings heard by the Supreme Court concerning the legality of domestic secondary legislation implementing UN terrorist sanctions regimes.

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## News

### **3 Members of Chambers appear at preliminary hearing held by IICSA**

25/09/2019

Barristers involved: Andrew O'Connor QC Cathryn McGahey QC Sian Reeves

Three members of Temple Garden Chambers appeared at the preliminary hearing: Andrew O'Connor QC appeared as Counsel to the Inquiry; Cathryn McGahey QC represented the Secretary of State for Education; and Sian Reeves represented the Home Office.

You can view the publication at

<https://www.iicsa.org.uk/key-documents/14241/view/preliminary-hearing-transcript-24-september-2019.pdf>

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### **Inquests into the deaths of four young men murdered by Stephen Port**

09/07/2019

Barristers involved: Andrew O'Connor QC

The Coroner, Sarah Munro QC, held a pre-inquest hearing at the Old Bailey on Friday 5th July 2019. The substantive hearings will take place in 2020.

You can view the publication at

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2019/jul/05/stephen-port-victim-inquests-focus-potential-police-failings>

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### **Independent Inquiry on Child Sexual Abuse**

04/03/2019

Barristers involved: Andrew O'Connor QC

Three weeks of public hearings commence today. See link for further details.

You can view the publication at

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/westminster-child-sex-abuse-paedophile-ring-inquiry-cyril-smith-a8803936.html>

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### **UK government pays £1m to Cyprus 'torture victims'**

24/01/2019

Barristers involved: Andrew O'Connor QC Cathryn McGahey QC

The claims have now been settled, without admission of liability, for a sum of £1million, with costs to be assessed.

You can view the publication at <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-46978271>

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### **Manchester Bombing Inquests**

18/10/2018

Barristers involved: Andrew O'Connor QC Cathryn McGahey QC

Andrew O'Connor QC has been instructed to act for the SMG Europe Ltd, which operates the Arena, at the inquests. Cathy McGahey QC is acting for the Home Secretary and Louis Browne QC is acting for the University of Salford.

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### **Andrew O'Connor QC appeared at the first preliminary hearing of the IICSA Westminster investigation**

31/01/2018

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Barristers involved: Andrew O'Connor QC

Andrew O'Connor QC appeared at the first preliminary hearing of the IICSA Westminster investigation today. He is instructed as the Inquiry's lead counsel on the Westminster investigation. Substantive hearings for the Westminster Investigation are due to take place in March 2019.

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## **Andrew O'Connor QC acts for intelligence agencies in challenge to bulk data policies**

19/10/2017

Barristers involved: Andrew O'Connor QC

Andrew O'Connor QC is acting for MI5, MI6 and GCHQ in proceedings before the Investigatory Powers Tribunal. The case concerns the legality of the agencies' policies for acquiring and holding bulk datasets.

You can view the publication at

<https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2017/oct/17/uk-spy-agencies-intelligence-mi5-mi6-law-data-sharing-tribunal>

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## **Andrew O'Connor QC represented HMG at the Inquests into the deaths of 30 British nationals killed at Sousse, Tunisia in 2015**

02/03/2017

Barristers involved: Andrew O'Connor QC

On 28 February 2017 verdicts were returned of unlawful killing and the Coroner stated that he will be receiving further submissions on the content of any report on future deaths in the coming weeks.

You can view the publication at

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/02/28/tunisia-beach-massacre-judge-deliver-conclusions-inquest-deaths/>

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## **Andrew O'Connor QC appears before the IPT in the 'Bulk Data Judgment'**

01/11/2016

Barristers involved: Andrew O'Connor QC

The case concerns the acquisition and use of bulk data by the three Security and Intelligence Agencies (SIAs). The bulk data includes the "who, when, where and how" of both telephone and internet use - but not the content of the communications. In conjunction with other datasets, such as passport information, it provides the SIAs with an important and wide ranging capability, to discover details about persons of intelligence interest. Examples of its use include identifying foreign fighters and preventing access to firearms.

The IPT determined that:

- There is and has at all material times been a power to obtain bulk communications data by the issue of directions under section 94 of the Telecommunications Act 1984.
- The bulk personal datasets regime was not in accordance with the law under Article 8(2) ECHR until 11 March 2015, but has been in accordance with that law since that date.
- The bulk communications data regime was not in accordance with the law under Article 8(2) ECHR until 4 November 2015, but has been in accordance with that law since that date.

The IPT is due to consider issues of EU law and issues concerning the transfer of data at Article 8 at an adjourned hearing.

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## **Privacy International**

27/07/2016

Barristers involved: Andrew O'Connor QC

Andrew O'Connor QC is representing MI5, MI6 and GCHQ in a challenge brought by the campaign group Privacy International relating to the agencies' practices in acquiring and making use of bulk personal datasets and bulk communications data. The proceedings are taking place before the Investigatory Powers Tribunal.

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## **The inquests into the deaths resulting from the Hillsborough Stadium Disaster have concluded**

27/04/2016

Barristers involved: Andrew O'Connor QC Dominic Adamson QC William Irwin Anthony Lenanton Piers Taylor Matthew Waszak  
Andrew O'Connor QC, Dominic Adamson, William Irwin, Anthony Lenanton, Piers Taylor and Matthew Waszak represented the Independent Police Complaints Commission at the inquests. The IPCC's investigation continues.

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## **Preliminary hearing in Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse**

09/03/2016

Barristers involved: Andrew O'Connor QC Cathryn McGahey QC Fiona Canby  
Cathryn McGahey QC and Fiona Canby appeared in the first preliminary hearing held by the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA) on allegations of child sexual abuse involving Lord Greville Janner. The hearing took place at the RCJ. Hon Dame Lowell Goddard, Chair of the IICSA gave directions. A further preliminary hearing will be held before the summer recess. It is anticipated that the public hearing will run for eight weeks between September 2016 and March 2017. More details can be found at the IICSA's website: <https://www.iicsa.org.uk/>

Andrew O'Connor QC is instructed as Counsel to the Inquiry in the Westminster element of the Inquiry.

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## **Preliminary hearing in Tunisia Inquests**

02/03/2016

Barristers involved: Andrew O'Connor QC  
Andrew O'Connor QC appeared for HMG at a preliminary hearing of the inquests into the deaths of the 30 British nationals killed at Sousse, Tunisia in June 2015.

The hearing took place at the RCJ. The Coroner, HHJ Loraine-Smith, gave directions, including fixing the substantive hearings for January 2017. More details can be found at the inquests website:

<https://www.tunisiainquests.independent.gov.uk/>

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