



Murdo Macleod KC (Scot)

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Murdo Macleod KC specialises in inquiries, health & safety, business crime and other regulatory matters, where he is instructed for trials and in an advisory capacity.

He is ranked by Chambers & Partners as a “Star Individual” in Scotland for health & safety. He has acted for major clients in the oil & gas, construction, healthcare, rail and aviation sectors. He has also been instructed by numerous organisations, including: the NHS (in England and in Scotland) the Care Inspectorate and various police forces, local authorities and health boards.

Alongside his regulatory practice, he has appeared in many significant inquiries, such as: the Edinburgh Tram Inquiry, the Superpuma Inquiry, the Queensferry Crossing Inquiry, the Billy Wright Inquiry in Northern Ireland (as Counsel to the Inquiry between 2005 and 2010) and the ongoing Scottish Hospitals Inquiry.

Notable acquittals in criminal trials include Andy Coulson in his trial for perjury and Yousif Badri, a Doctor charged with terrorism offences. He has served as Crown Counsel and Senior Crown Counsel and, as junior counsel, represented the second accused, Lamin Fhimah, in the Lockerbie trial in the Netherlands. He also has chambers in Scotland (Compass Chambers).

Murdo also has a keen interest in advocacy training, in which he has a Diploma from the National Institute of Trial Advocacy (NITA) in the United States, He has trained HSE inspectors and others on giving evidence in court, and has taught court advocacy to pupils at the Faculty of Advocates and to students at Edinburgh University.

His expertise has been recognised by numerous appointments. He is joint UK delegate to the Council of the Bars of Europe (CCBE) criminal law committee. At the Faculty of Advocates, he is a Chair of the Faculty of Advocates Complaints Committee; sits on the Law Reform Committee and has been its representative on the Criminal Rules Council and other bodies. The Lord President appointed him Special Counsel, and Presenting Officer for the Fitness for Judicial Office tribunal.

Expertise

Inquests & Inquiries



Recognised as a “Public Inquires specialist” in Chambers & Partners, Murdo was counsel to the inquiry in the first inquiry to be held under the 2005 Act, the ‘Billy Wright’ Inquiry (2005-2010): a major public inquiry into alleged state collusion in the murder of a prominent Northern Irish paramilitary prisoner, and the management of the Maze prison. He was vetted to highest level (DV).

Since that time he has appeared for Core Participants in many important statutory, and other, inquiries acting either for commercial organisations or public authorities. He is currently writing a chapter on the law and practice of public inquiries for the Stair Memorial Encyclopaedia.

Notable Inquests & Inquiries cases

Scottish Covid Inquiry (2021)

Representing core participant in Inquiry into effects of Covid.

M9 Inquiry (2021)

Representing Police Scotland in Inquiry into failure to respond to fatal car accident car, following missed 999 call.

Scottish Hospitals Inquiry (2020)

Representing international architects firm in Public Inquiry into delay and design issues in two hospitals.

'Sheku' Bayo Inquiry (2020)

Representing Asst Chief Constable in Inquiry into circumstances of death and perceived or actual race.

AM Inquiry (2017-2018)

Represented Scottish Prison Service in Inquiry into death of prisoner while under restraint.

Edinburgh Tram Inquiry (2017)

Representing consortium partner in Inquiry into delay and overspend in major infrastructure project.

Superpuma Inquiry (2013-2014)

Represented leading helicopter manufacturer in Inquiry into death of 14 people in North Sea helicopter crash.



'Billy Wright' Inquiry (2005-2010)

Senior Counsel to the Inquiry in the first Inquiry under the 2005 Act into alleged state sponsored murder of leading paramilitary prisone. Vetted to highest level (DV).

Health & Safety

Murdo is recognised as a "Star Individual" for Health & Safety in Scotland in the Chambers Bar Guide 2022.

He also has considerable experience in environmental and other regulatory areas. Companies he has advised and represented include: BP, Premier Oil, Taqa Bratani, Exxon, Airbus, CHC Helicopters, Eurocopter, Dandara Homes, BAM Nuttall, J Murphy and sons, Forth Crossing Bridge Constructors, Collyer Bristow, IBI architects, Freshcatch, HC One, Kalyx, Klondyke, North British Distillery, Shetland Catch, Scottish Power, Siemens, Scotrail and Sodexo.

He has also been instructed by numerous organisations, including: the Crown Office, the Prison Service, the NHS, the Care Inspectorate and various police forces, local authorities and health boards.

Notable Health & Safety cases

HMA v Chief Constable

Representing Chief Constable in High Court prosecution arising from missed '999' call.

HMA v AG (2021)

Representing company director in High Court s.2/culpable homicide case.

HMA v BP (2021)

Representing oil company in fatal s.2 case.

HMA v B (2021)

Representing construction company in fatal s.2 case.

HMA v JMS (2020)

Represented construction company in s.2 case involving major gas leak.



HMA v H (2019)

Represented UK's largest care-home provider in s.3 prosecution following death of resident.

HMA v NBD (2017-2018)

Represented UK's largest distillery, charged with various s.2 and 3 legionella-related offences.

HMA v DMS Ltd (2017-2018)

Represented director of waste management company in environmental pollution case.

HMA v D (2017-2018)

Defended major building company in landmark property misdescription prosecution.

Geddes v Johnson (2017)

Defended health and safety advisers in commercial court action.

Appointments

- Crown Counsel
- Senior Crown Counsel
- Special Counsel (PII)

Memberships

- HSLA
- CBA

Recommendations

- "His easygoing, calm and practical approach wins clients over as much as his clear, concise advice and encyclopedic knowledge of the law." "Despite the fact that he is the leader, he is also a team player"



and puts everyone at ease." **Chambers & Partners 2022**

- "His court practice is exemplary." "An extremely capable advocate in the health and safety sphere." "His expertise in both health and safety and crime is a real asset." **Chambers & Partners 2021**
- "Murdo is a careful and thorough public inquiries specialist with good client skills." "His main strength is the way he acts with his clients." "He is very emphatic in tough situations and does not shy away from having to give difficult advice." "Very professional, diligent and dedicated." "A genuine expert in his area." **Chambers & Partners 2020**
- "He has a terrific intellect." "A gifted advocate whose advice is always careful and considered." "A fearless and tenacious cross-examiner, he is an impressive figure in court." **Legal 500 2020**