



Tim Sharpe

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Described as a “tenacious and talented” barrister by Chambers & Partners, and as being “meticulous in his preparation and fiercely bright” by Legal 500, Tim Sharpe maintains a busy general common law practice.

He specialises in personal injury claims and insurance litigation (including credit hire litigation, motor fraud and civil contempt of court cases). He appears in court on a regular basis, and advises in writing with a short turn-around time. His recent work has included a high profile committal application.

In addition, he has extensive experience of inquests and of defending Health and Safety prosecutions. He is currently instructed in relation to the inquest into the death of Emiliano Sala, and is retained by South Yorkshire Police and West Midlands Police in relation to the Group Litigation arising out of the Hillsborough Stadium Disaster.

Expertise

Motor Insurance Fraud

Temple Garden Chambers has been ranked in Chambers & Partners as the only Band 1 set for motor insurance fraud. Tim was ranked as a leading junior in this area, with his strengths including being “tenacious, economical and full of ideas”. Contributing solicitors also/ said that he “inspires confidence”.

Tim’s work in this area includes drafting defences on behalf of insurers in fraud cases, as well as advising in conference and in writing. Tim is also regularly instructed by Claimants in cases where fraud / fundamental dishonesty has been alleged. He has a busy court practice and regularly secures findings of Fundamental Dishonesty in Fast and Multi-Track cases.

Tim also has particular experience of contempt of court proceedings in the context of motor insurance fraud cases, acting for applicants and respondents. His recent work includes a successful committal application against Alex Reid (a former MMA fighter and television personality) – *AXA Insurance Plc v Alexander Reid* (2021) EWHC 993 (QB), and a successful committal application against a Claimant who fabricated a substantial claim for loss of earnings – *CIS General Insurance Ltd v Johnson* (26/02/2019, Cutts JJ).



Notable Motor Insurance Fraud cases

Cases AXA v Reid

Represented AXA in these High Court committal proceedings. The claim started life in the County Court, where Tim provided advice and drafted an Amended Defence to plead Fundamental Dishonesty when material was located that demonstrated that Mr Reid was in fact known to the allegedly independent witness (contrary to his assertions in his witness statement, signed with a statement of truth). Tim later appeared at the application hearing to gain permission to rely on that Amended Defence and subsequently advised on and drafted the proceedings in the High Court committal case. Mr Reid admitted contempt and consented to permission being given to commence the committal proceedings. At the full committal hearing, Mr Reid was committed to prison for a period of 8 weeks, the court (Mrs Justice Eady) noting that “this is a case involving both a high level of culpability and significant harm” and observing: “I have taken account of the hardship that will be suffered by the defendant’s family in reducing the term to the degree that I have but I would be failing in my duty to do justice more generally if I did not impose an immediate custodial sentence in this case.”

Egner v Hastings Insurance

Tim Sharpe (instructed by Miles Cowan of Horwich Farrelly) represented Hastings Insurance on a committal application on 9th August 2017. In summary, Mr Egner’s van was damaged by a driver insured by Hastings, as a result of which that individual was prosecuted for criminal damage. Mr Egner later presented a claim to Hastings for back injuries allegedly sustained by him in that incident. His claim was set out in various documents bearing statements of truth. Hastings contended that the claim was dishonest and relied on statements that Mr Egner had provided to the police in connection with the prosecution of the insured driver, confirming he had witnessed the criminal damage take place from the pavement. The county court claim was later struck out. The Claimant admitted contempt and the court committed him to an immediate term of 8 weeks in prison, reduced from 12 weeks to reflect his admission. HHJ Moloney QC noted that dishonest but low value “whiplash” claims cost the insurance industry immense legal costs and that the public pays more in premiums. The court noted that the background to the claim (a cold call) was typical of the problem, and precisely the type of case to which the policy explained by *Moses LJ in South Wales Fire & Rescue v Smith* [2011] EWHC 1749 (Admin) applies, namely that those who make such false claims should expect to go to prison and that there is no other way to underline the gravity of such conduct, or to deter those tempted to make such claims.

Personal Injury

Tim undertakes a broad range of personal injury work, acting for Claimants and Defendants. He maintains a busy diary of applications, case management hearings and trials, as well as drafting and advisory work in relation to Multi Track matters. His work covers issues of liability as well as damages. Recent work includes the successful recovery of damages for a Claimant after a 3 day trial with multiple medical experts giving evidence, and securing a better result than the Claimant’s offer.

In addition, Tim is instructed by two police forces (South Yorkshire and West Midlands) in relation to a



Group Litigation known as “The Hillsborough Victims’ Misfeasance Litigation” in which 600 Claimants seek damages for personal injury (principally psychiatric injuries and consequential loss) arising out of allegations of police misfeasance after the disaster. Tim has been instructed in this matter for over 5 years and continues to advise regularly in relation to the resolution of these claims.

Notable Personal Injury cases

Group Litigation Order arising out of alleged misfeasance in public office following the Hillsborough Stadium disaster

Keith Morton QC, Tim Sharpe, Robert Riddell and Elizabeth Gallagher are instructed by the Head of Legal Services at South Yorkshire Police in connection with the Group Litigation Order (“GLO”) granted in November 2016. The GLO issues include consideration of whether officers of South Yorkshire Police and/or of the West Midlands Police sought to page 5 of 11 deliberately conceal the true circumstances of the Hillsborough tragedy in order to deflect blame, liability or censure away from the police, and/or whether they sought to establish what is alleged to be a false narrative of events leading up to the tragedy, and whether those actions amounted to the tort of misfeasance in public office.

Inquests

Inquest work has been a significant part of Tim’s practice for many years. In recent years he has been instructed in relation to inquests arising out of deaths in prisons, on building sites, in hospitals, in a nursery, as well as deaths relating to road traffic collisions. In recent years he has undertaken a number of inquests on behalf of travel companies arising out of the deaths of clients whilst abroad, including on adventure holidays. Recent cases include several cases relating to aquaplaning fatalities on highways, and an inquest relating to a suicide of a university student.

While his instructions tend to come from insurers, he also regularly appears on behalf of families, including on a [Public Access](#) basis.

Notable Inquests cases

Re: D

Acting on behalf of a university, the inquest touched the death of a student who was known to NHS mental health services and to the university’s own wellbeing services, but who took his own life whilst intoxicated.

Re: Pry

Inquest in relation to the death of a road user who lost control of their car when it hit standing water on a motorway. Tim represented a company involved in the maintenance of the motorway.



Re Sala

Inquest touching the death of Emiliano Sala – instructed on behalf of the Civil Aviation Authority and led by Keith Morton QC, Tim was instructed in this inquest arising out of the death in an aircraft incident of the footballer Emiliano Sala. Tim’s involvement considered in particular the issue of regulation of flying in the UK.

Re C

Acting for the American manufacturer of a heart monitoring machine in relation to the death of a patient on a cardiac unit in hospital who was attached to the said machine at the time that they suffered a fatal cardiac incident. This matter was heard over the course of 2 days before the Deputy Chief Coroner, Mr Derek Winter.

Re T

Acting for a school in relation to an inquest touching the death of a young sportsman who suffered a heart attack while using the school premises for a cricket club practice session. The issues included consideration of the arrangements made for provision of and awareness of a defibrillator within the school. Heard over 3 days by Assistant Coroner for West London.

Re W

Acting for Transport for London in relation to the inquest into the death of a young lady who fell onto the tracks of the central line before being struck by a train. The inquest returned a finding of accidental death contributed to by neglect.

Carlsberg brewery explosion

Acting for a company tasked with the removal of large industrial plant from the Carlsberg brewery in Northampton when there was a sudden release of gas in the area in which they were working. The subsequent explosion of that gas resulted in the death of a worker. Heard over the course of 8 days in Northampton.

Re M

Acting for the Port of Tilbury in relation to a fall through a roof in dock premises by a worker tasked with replacing skylight panels on a warehouse roof. Listed for 2 days before the Senior Coroner for Essex.

Re R

Acting for a drug rehabilitation service who operated within Chelmsford Prison in relation to the inquest into the death of a prisoner. Inquest heard for 2 days in front of the Senior Coroner for Essex.

Health & Safety

Tim has been involved in Health & Safety cases since the start of his career when he represented Balfour Beatty at trial in the manslaughter prosecutions arising out of the Hatfield train crash, and later on the successful appeal against sentence. He was listed by Chambers & Partners as a “rising star” of the set at that time. Since then, he has continued to be regularly.

involved in health and safety cases. Recent work includes drafting and advising in relation to an Improvement Notice, as well as representing companies of various sizes at sentencing hearings in relation to Health & Safety offences. His knowledge of coronial law, as well as personal injury, allows clients to ensure continuity of representation through coronial, criminal and civil court proceedings.

Credit Hire

Tim has many years of experience in dealing with credit hire cases. He is regularly instructed to deal with cases involving disputes as to rates, period of hire and issues of enforceability of the agreement. In addition, he has been instructed in claims where insurers suspect that fraudulent claims are being made, and where Claimants suspect that fraudulent rates evidence has been provided. He represented the successful Defendant at first instance in the case of *Chen Wei v Cambridge*, where the appeal decision became the leading case on the effect of failure to comply with the (then) Cancellation of Contracts etc Regulations.

Appointments

Deputy District Judge (2024 –

Education

- MA, Pembroke College, Cambridge

Languages

- French (Conversational)
- German (Conversational)



Memberships

- Personal Injuries Bar Association
- Health & Safety Lawyers Association

Recommendations

- “He’s commercially minded and gives sound advice. While being empathetic to a client, he also has the ability to interrogate them to ensure we are fighting the best possible case.” “He focuses on the minutiae of a case and has the precise detail down to a fine art.” “He is intelligent, affable and knows his bundles like the back of his hand. He quickly spots the real points of contention in matters.”

Chambers & Partners

- Chambers Ranked Tier 1. “An astute barrister with keen attention to detail.” “The chambers is also widely known for its expertise in cases where fraud is alleged; in a recent example of this, newly ranked Tim Sharpe represented the insurer AXA v Reid, in which former mixed martial artist and media personality Alexander Reid was imprisoned for eight weeks for contempt of court after falsely claiming a kickboxing champion he knew was a witness to a road traffic collision in which he was involved.” **Legal 500**