temple garden chambers

Tom Cockroft

Call 2010

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0207 583 1315

Tom Cockroft specialises in public law and extradition. He was appointed by the Attorney General as Junior Counsel to the Crown in 2022 and undertakes a range of high-profile work for government departments.

Much of Tom's current work is in large-scale national security litigation and public inquiries. Tom is also regularly instructed to appear in extradition proceedings, inquests arising from deaths in custody and judicial review proceedings relating to immigration and prison law.

Expertise

Inquiries

Current instructions include:
– the Omagh Bombing and Patrick Finucane inquiries (for Cabinet Office) led by Kate Grange KC and Cathryn McGahey KC respectively,
– the Manston Inquiry as Junior Counsel to the Inquiry led by Clair Dobbin KC,
– the Independent Inquiry relating to Afghanistan (for the Royal Military Police) led by Paul Greaney KC, and
– the Undercover Policing Inquiry (for the CPS), assisting the former National Co-ordinator for Domestic Extremism and the Chief Crown Prosecutor for North Yorkshire unled.

Recent instructions have included:

– the UK Covid-19 Inquiry as Junior Counsel to the Cabinet Office assisting (with two other junior counsel) a total of eighteen witnesses across five modules, including two former Prime Ministers and seven Cabinet ministers (2022-2024),

– the Grenfell Tower Inquiry as Junior Counsel to the Inquiry, led by Kate Grange KC, in relation to the smoke ventilation system (2019-2022).

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Public Law

Current instructions include:

– the BA149 flight litigation concerning allegations that the government used a BA flight to insert a Special Forces cell into Kuwait at the start of the Gulf War,
– *Al-Libi* and *Soliman* (civil claims relating to treatment in US and Libyan detention respectively), and

– *OST* in the Special Immigration Appeals Commission.

Recent instructions have included:

– frequently acting in cases at the intersection of public and criminal law, most recently for the National Probation Service in the Court of Appeal Criminal Division to address the court on its powers under the Criminal Procedure (Insanity) Act 1964 (*R v David Wood* [2026] EWCA Crim 480)

– appearing in judicial review proceedings relating to immigration and prison law unled, e.g., *R (Oxendale) v SSJ* [2024] EWHC 2407 (Admin)

Inquests

Recent instructions have included:

– frequently appearing at inquests in relation to deaths in custody, immigration detention or under probation supervision.

– acting for the DVLA in an inquest arising from a fatal RTA (driver had seizure at wheel while awaiting medical assessment – DVLA's Senior Doctor gave evidence).

Extradition & Interpol

Recent instructions have included:

– appearing for the Polish judicial authority in an extradition appeal raising a novel point on non-punishment of victims of trafficking (*SNT v Poland* [2024] EWHC 3349 (Admin)),

– defending in the extradition proceedings of a Romanian national who was acting as an informant against the mafia, his cellmate having revealed the location of 18 murdered prostitutes whose organs were being trafficked across Europe,

– appearing before the Administrative Court unled in the appeals of *Bochenek* [2024] EWHC 2121 (Admin), *Brindusa* [2023] EWHC 3372 (Admin), *Jagiellowicz* [2023] EWHC 2751 (Admin), *Dujka* [2023] EWHC 1842 (Admin), *Supinski* [2023] EWHC 1447, *Piekarski* [2022] EWHC 1088 (Admin), *Domagalski* [2022] EWHC 415 (Admin), *Siwak* [2020] EWHC 1776 (Admin), *Obermueller* [2019] EWHC 2254 (Admin) and *Tulej* [2019] EWHC 1755 (Admin),

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– resisting a renewed attempt to appeal against extradition before the Divisional Court (*Zibala* [2019] EWHC 816 (Admin)),

Tom was previously seconded to the CPS Extradition Unit where he assisted with extradition requests in politically significant cases including those of Julian Assange and Antonio Troitiño (ETA terrorist).

Health & Safety

With 16 years' experience in criminal and regulatory work at his previous Chambers, Tom is well placed to take on instructions in health and safety prosecutions.

Criminal and regulatory experience:

– Authored a report on US sanctions compliance and anti-money laundering checks for a Latin American bank reviewing thousands of emails in Spanish in response to an investigation by the US Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control into the $6.7bn fraud against Obama's Medicare.

– Instructed as led Counsel in international conspiracy to import £1m of cocaine from the Caribbean via New York.

– Successfully appealed against client's conviction for robbery on the basis of a misdirection on joint enterprise in judge's summing up: *R. v Brown & ors* [2017] EWCA Crim Div 167.

– Instructed as sole Counsel at the Central Criminal Court to resist an application by *The Daily Express* for disclosure of a reference from Jeremy Corbyn MP for lay client in trial of conspiracy to defraud.

– Drafted observations on behalf of the Government of the United Kingdom for the European Court of Human Rights on the issue of whether an increase in sentence on a reference in excess of a *Goodyear* indication violated Article 6 ECHR rights.

Appointments

Attorney General's Civil Panel of Counsel, B Panel (London) – 2026-31

Attorney General's Civil Panel of Counsel, C Panel (London) – 2022-26

Law Reform Committee, Bar Council of England & Wales – 2015-26

Awards

Pegasus Scholarship in Paris (2014)

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Astbury Scholarship (2008)

Education

B.A. (Hons), Jurisprudence, Magdalen College, Oxford

Languages

Spanish

Catalan

French

Memberships

British Spanish Lawyers' Association

Constitutional & Administrative Law Bar Association

Defence Extradition Lawyers' Forum

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