

Neil Matthews

YEAR OF CALL 2012

Neil is an eloquent, persuasive and determined advocate practising in public, criminal, regulatory and civil law. He is a specialist in information governance and the assurance that information systems comply with relevant regulatory frameworks.

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Career Overview

Neil is an eloquent, persuasive and determined advocate practising in public, criminal regulatory and civil law. He has experience of defending and prosecuting in criminal, regulatory and extradition cases. He has acted for clients in the Crown Court, Courts Martial, County Court, Magistrates' Court, and Employment Tribunal.

Prior to coming to the Bar, Neil founded a successful consultancy business and was selected to work in the legal division of Goldman Sachs after a highly competitive recruitment procedure. He is often described as unflappable, and able to remain calm in exacting circumstances.

Neil has been described as "a rising star advocate".

Area of Practice

Neil is currently instructed as junior counsel to the Grenfell Tower Inquiry where he leads a team of junior barristers and paralegals to assist the inquiry with its work. He is regularly instructed across a broad range of matters including sexual

offences, drugs, offences against the person, and financial crime. He is a specialist in information law, information governance and the assurance that information systems comply with relevant regulatory frameworks. Neil also has a long term interest in environmental law.

As a former company director, Neil has an instinctive grasp of the commercial aspects of cases involving business and finance.

Notable Cases

R v O and Others - Southwark Crown Court - Fraud

Led junior in multi million pound, multi defendant fraud trial. Over 200 000 pages of prosecution evidence. Exhaustive analysis of prosecution material including phone evidence, cell site and financial records. Neil led on the analysis of telephone material with the assistance of 2 telecommunications experts

R v G - Canterbury Crown Court - Human Trafficking

Multi defendant case involving the smuggling of people into the UK

R v T - Harrow Crown Court - Class A Drugs supply

Successfully defended allegation of possession of Class A drugs with intent to supply.

Grenfell Tower Inquiry

Neil has been instructed to act as junior counsel to the Grenfell Tower Inquiry. The Grenfell Tower Inquiry is an independent public inquiry, set up to examine the circumstances leading up to and surrounding the fire at Grenfell Tower on 14 June 2017. Neil leads a team of junior barristers and paralegals in the analysis of the evidence which will form the basis for the inquiry's conclusions and recommendations.

R v D - Isleworth Crown Court - Robbery

Hung jury after Trial one, following highly effective cross examination of complainant, cross referencing CCTV and previous witness statements. Crown persuaded to drop case on first day of re-trial.

R v N - Guildford Crown Court - Drugs

Successfully defended in a supply of Class A drugs case. Exhaustively prepared cross examination of Police officers and expert witness combined with a detailed analysis of evidence led to the acquittal.

R v M - Bulford Courts Martial

Defended client against allegation of sexual assault. Precision cross examination of complainant and forensic analysis of evidence secured a not guilty verdict.

R v K - Snaresbrook Crown Court

Defended client in a case of dangerous driving where a Police officer was injured. Following the cross examination of 5 Police officers, the Crown's case was in disarray. A successful submission of no case to answer secured the client's acquittal.

R v Z - Harrow Crown Court. Child cruelty

Complex case involving varied evidence and cross examination of vulnerable and expert witnesses.

R v N - Luton Crown Court. Fraud and theft

The Prosecution case involved 40,000+ pages of evidence, including telephone evidence, geo-location and financial documents.

R v O - Isleworth CC. Defended client at trial - Assault

Allegation of possession of bladed article, 3 x assault. Defendant acquitted.

R v W - Isleworth CC - Assault

The clients was accused of possession of a bladed article and assault on the allegation of his ex partner and her new partner. Not Guilty.

Rigorously prepared cross examination shone a light on the inconsistencies between the different accounts. Not Guilty. Isleworth Crown Court.

R v O - Blackfriars Crown Court. Importation of drugs to Prison

Prosecution persuaded to offer no evidence. Not guilty.

R v D - Wood Green Crown Court. Possession with intent to supply (Class A)

Prosecution persuaded to offer no evidence.

R v S - Southampton CC. Theft. Crown persuaded to offer no evidence

Sentenced for other matter of theft. Immediate release secured.

R v M - Southwark Crown Court. Trial - Threat

Threats to Kill. Issues of fitness to plead.

R v T - Disclosure application

Appeared at the Central Criminal Court on three occasions for this case.

Made applications that the learned Judge should order the Crown to disclose 4 pieces of evidence. My submissions persuaded the Judge to order the disclosure and prosecution counsel to review the CRIS. At a subsequent hearing, counsel for the prosecution accepted that despite the CPS position there was clearly material in the CRIS which should be disclosed. Other disclosure issues had been resolved by Police investigations directed by the Court. Crown persuaded to offer no evidence at later hearing. Central Criminal Court.

Driving

R v W - Appeal against conviction - Failure to provide drivers information (s172)

A technical defence in a paper heavy case. Not guilty. Private case, defence costs awarded. Maidstone Crown Court.

R v R - Speeding

Loughborough Magistrates Court.

The Crown had served two documents laying the information, one within and one without the 6 month time limit. Neil Identified case law which set out that in circumstances where there was confusion over the date of laying an information the Court should favour the Defence. The Bench accepted this and the Crown offered no evidence. Defence costs awarded.

R v B - Lavender Hill Magistrates Court - Driving Offence

Failing to provide details of driver.

The statement purporting to exhibit the postal summons was not written by the individual who had sent the letter, but by an individual whose evidence was that it would have been sent. Successful submission of no case to answer. Defence costs awarded.

Employment

D v Adecco

Secured a 5 figure settlement in multi-party respondent unfair dismissal case with TUPE issues.

The respondents claimed that the claimant was not an employee. At a hearing to determine this central issue, the claimant was found to be an employee. The settlement was reached following effective negotiations on behalf of the claimant on the eve of the second phase of hearings.

A v Bidvest Fresh. Employment Tribunal

Client alleged unfair dismissal. The Tribunal found for the claimant.

Detailed analysis of evidence and rigorous cross examination exposed weaknesses in the respondent's case. Substantial damages were agreed.

Other Information

Neil plays rugby regularly and is able (on occasion) to dazzle on the pitch despite his seniority in years. He is a keen mountaineer and having followed this pursuit for some years is determined to climb the Matterhorn before hanging up his crampons. He enjoys cycling and triathlon, and has raised money for charity following these pursuits including while cycling from Lands End to John O'Groats.