

William Ryan

YEAR OF CALL 1994

Bill is instructed in a wide range of criminal defence work and is regularly instructed in very serious and complex cases as leading junior and junior alone.

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Career Overview

Bill was a Fire Officer in the London Fire Brigade for 11 years before becoming a barrister. He is a qualified Fire Engineer (M.I.Fire E.).

He is regularly instructed in a broad range of criminal matters including serious drugs offences and money laundering, fraud, serious violence, serious sex offences.

Bill has wide experience in defending Regulatory Offences with a particular interest in Fire Safety and Health & Safety prosecutions, which developed from his earlier career as a fire officer and his involvement in Health & Safety since its inception in 1974.

Bill's background has ensured he is able to connect with clients and juries at all levels. His 'down to earth' approach is well received by juries. He is a forceful advocate, when required, but is equally at ease dealing with vulnerable clients and witnesses. Bill's experience from his previous working life helps him deal with all types of people in a sympathetic and professional way.

Area of Practice

Bill's practice is exclusively criminal defence. He represents clients in the Crown Court and Court of Appeal. He has also appeared in a range of Regulatory matters in the Magistrates and Crown Court.

Bill can marshal and analyse complex and extensive telecoms and financial evidence to get to the heart of any issue and present the defence case in the best way possible.

He is regarded as a barrister who keeps his clients well engaged and properly informed throughout a case, whilst fearlessly advancing their interests.

Bill accepts regular instructions in the following areas:

- Fraud & Financial Crime
- Money Laundering
- Serious Drugs Offences (including importations)
- Serious Violence
- Serious Sexual Offences
- Regulatory Offences in a range of areas including Fire Safety, Health & Safety and Planning.

Notable Cases

R v MR (2019) – Kingston Crown Court - £12.5 million tobacco fraud

Operation Dalmas. An 8-defendant trial of a conspiracy to avoid duty on hand rolling tobacco.

R v IF (2019) – Central Criminal Crown Court - Attempted Murder with a shotgun

This was a revenge attack involving a car chase and a shooting at very close range. IF ran a defence case of duress. Read more here

R v SN (2018) – Woolwich Crown Court - 500 kg cocaine importation by private jet

An 8-defendant trial where private jets were hired to import cocaine from Colombia. On the second trip some 513 kg of

cocaine was found by Customs Officers in the passenger's luggage.

[Read BBC article](#)

[Read The Guardian article](#)

R v TH (2018) Birmingham Crown Court - Theft of £1.2 million of car parts by staff from a “just in time” warehouse

It was a sophisticated operation to override the normal computer led movement of car parts and divert them out of the normal supply chain onto unauthorized lorries.

R v PK (2018) Wolverhampton Crown Court - Conspiracy to Steal - a series of staged robberies of a Post Office

PK admitted some but not all the false robberies, whereas the postmaster maintained they were real robberies. An unusual cut-throat case where the crown was partly supporting PK's account.

R v RK (2018) Reading Crown Court - Making indecent images of children using Zoom video-conferencing apps

During multiple sessions of sexual activity between three gay men, Zoom was used to film themselves and stream IIOC. There was an Expert witness from Zoom by live link from California. [Read more here](#)

R v VS (2018) Derby Crown Court - Conspiracy to Steal – Forging and using a will in context of a ‘blended family’

Two of the witnesses to the will pleaded guilty making the defence case very tricky. There was clear friction between those who claimed to be disinherited and those involved on the other side of the family. Legal issues relating to open/closed conspiracy were argued. [Read more here](#)

R v AA (2018) Nottingham Crown Court - Rape and sexual assaults of two family members and two friends

This was a case of historical rape over several years of the defendant's younger sister and her friend, linked to sexual assaults of a cousin when he was 4 and sexual activity with a minor. This was a very sensitive and complex case which had extensive local authority disclosure and overlaps in the family court. [Read more here](#)

R v LM (2017) Leicester Crown Court – An 8 defendant conspiracy to produce cannabis on an “industrial scale”

There were legitimate businesses running which were used as “fronts” to mask the illegal activity. Two factory spaces were hired and converted with concealed growing areas and there were a range of other concealed grows in roof spaces and unused parts of commercial premises.

R v SE (2017) Maidstone Crown Court - Arson reckless as to endangering life

Acquitted despite jury being told of a previous arson offence. Fire service knowledge was very important in this case.

R v RE (2016) Maidstone Crown Court – Bomb hoax in the Santander in Sevenoaks with blackmail

RE was a 74 year old man who planted a fake bomb inside the Santander Bank and then passed over a written demand for cash with threats. The town centre was closed down for hours whilst the bomb squad checked assessed the situation. [Read more here](#)

R v AM (2016) Harrow Crown Court - Conspiracy to Transfer Prohibited Weapons

Sourcing a large number of deactivated firearms and reactivating them and selling them on with manufactured ammunition.

R v FB (2016) Snaresbrook Crown Court – High value car theft and handling conspiracies using very sophisticated methods

Range Rovers were selected and targeted for theft. Door locking was jammed and keyless access was cloned. A tracker was then placed in the vehicle. Days later the cars were ‘found’ and stolen after jamming the car’s tracker. Other high value cars were stolen and broken up to sell the parts. [Read Daily Mail article](#)

LB Southwark v AC (2016) Woolwich Crown Court - Fraud concerning false advertising of and selling businesses in LB Southwark

The defendant bought and sold a business in the borough. He was accused of selling a business he didn't have due to lease restrictions. Defence representations caused trial to collapse on fourth day.

R v PK (2015) Blackfriars Crown Court - An 11-defendant £4 million Conspiracy to Handle Stolen Phones

The phones were bought in bulk from multiple suppliers and then ship abroad to overcome blocking on UK networks. There were multiple strands of evidence including covert surveillance and audio recording. The surveillance evidence alone was contained on eleven 500 gb hard drives.

R v DP (2015) Woolwich Crown Court - An 8-defendant Conspiracy to Pervert The Course of Justice by direct intimidation

There were two attacks on the home of a witness. One was shooting at the door and the second involved exploding a live grenade. Phone evidence was central to the allegation. Careful analysis of the evidence against DP undermined key aspects of the case against him. One of the main defendants ran a cut-throat defence against all other defendants. [Read more here](#)

R v CG (2015) Southwark Crown Court - Drugs

Importation of 100 kg Cocaine in bananas. [Read more here](#)

R v AT (2014) Bolton Crown Court - Rape – A sleep walking and ‘sleep sex’ case

The defence was non-insane automatism. The two most eminent experts in the field of sleep gave evidence in this case.

R v JC (2014) Norwich CC - A 12-defendant kidnap and torture case

An extended family found out items stolen from their nan were sold to a local shop. Unfortunately the lady died the same night. The couple involved in the sale of these item were kidnapped separately and suffered severe maltreatment and torture. In trial, the alibi account of AC was bolstered by a defence ‘phone expert’. [Read more here](#)

R v SS (2014) Southwark Crown Court - Money Laundering

A £145 million Money Laundering Conspiracy using several Bureaux De Change. Read more here

R v RR (2014) Wolverhampton Crown Court - Money Laundering

A £4 million Money Laundering Conspiracy using the Hawala system.

R v NA (2014) Maidstone Crown Court - Drugs

A 10-defendant Conspiracy to Supply £2.5 million of Cocaine & Cultivate Cannabis.

Berkshire Fire Authority v PB and Belforce (2013) Reading Crown Court

Very serious breaches of Fire Safety Regulations for a 30 bedroom HMO

Some breaches were prosecuted by the local authority with an overlap to alleged breaches in this case. The company and company director were on trial. It was a complex case including Autrefois Convict issues. Charges were reduced and a favourable plea basis secured.

Bill has also defended in an extensive range of criminal cases including murder, manslaughter, death by dangerous driving, fraud and serious public order.

He has also defended a wide range of Regulatory Cases including Fire Safety, Local Planning, Building Regulations. Health and Safety at Work and Local Authority Licencing.

Memberships

Professional Memberships

- Criminal Bar Association

Education

- Leicester University, LLB (1993)
- Inns of Court School of Law, Bar Practice Course (1994)

Other Information

Bill speaks conversational French.

He passed his Graduate of Institution of Fire Engineers exam in 1980 and Member of Institution of Fire Engineers exam in 1982

For some reason Bill still enjoys DIY having renovated a massive French property a few years ago. Apart from that he has a passion for travel and has visited some 46 countries.