

Julian Knowles QC

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matrix
chambers

Registered name on the Bar Standards Board Register: Julian Bernard Knowles QC
VAT Number: 689936352

Year of Call: 1994 Silk: 2011



Main Areas of Practice

Crime, including fraud, money laundering and related regulatory fields (including health and safety)

Extradition, mutual assistance and asset restraint

Public law

Human Rights law

Public International law

Julian Knowles QC is a leading practitioner in crime and regulatory law, corporate crime, extradition, and related fields, including health and safety. He acts for individuals, governments and companies and a large proportion of his practice has an international aspect. In 2009 he was appointed to the Serious Fraud Office's A Panel of Junior Counsel and as a Recorder of the Crown Court.

Julian is recommended in all of his fields of practice by the main legal directories and he has also been described in the media as 'demonstrating all round brilliance' and as being among 'the world's most formidable lawyers'.

Crime and regulatory law

Julian's criminal practice encompasses serious offences including murder, fraud and terrorism. He has particular expertise in appellate work and is frequently instructed in cases that involve particularly difficult or novel legal and factual issues. Julian regularly appears in the Court of Appeal, House of Lords and the Privy Council.

He is also frequently instructed by large City firms and specialist practices to provide in-depth advice to corporate and individual clients faced with criminal or regulatory issues.

Julian's experience includes:

Acting for an MP prosecuted in connection with Parliamentary expenses

Acting for BAE Systems Plc in relation to SFO corruption investigation

Advising a major investment bank on money laundering issues

Advising a Formula 1 team on criminal and regulatory issues

Advising a political party on political funding matters

Advising a senior political figure on party funding

Advising in two major SFO international corruption investigations

Advising a newspaper editor in relation to alleged insider dealing

Advising a local authority following a fatal lift accident

R (Noye) v Criminal Cases Review Commission (challenge by Kenny Noye to the CCRC's refusal to refer his case)

R v Jama (2008) (the murder of WPC Beshenivsky)

R v Ramnath (2008) (alleged medical gross negligence manslaughter)

R v Pasquill (2008) (prosecution of FCO official under the Official Secrets Act 1989)

R v Office of the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police (2007) (health and safety prosecution arising from the shooting of Jean Charles De Menezes)

R v Hyman (2007) (barrister prosecuted for attempting to pervert the course of justice)

R v Coutts (2007) (alleged sex murder of teacher Jane Longhurst)

R v Corporal Donald Payne (2006-7) (war crimes court-martial of British soldiers)

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Notable Cases

R v Siôn Jenkins (2004-6) (the 'Billie-Jo' murder case)
HSBC Plc v Brown (2006) (private prosecution of major political donor)
R v Macdonald and others (2005) (Court of Appeal, membership of the Real IRA)
R v Patrick Smith (2005) (House of Lords, jury misconduct)
R v Cooper and McMahon (2003) (Court of Appeal, the Luton post-office murder)
R v Meziane and Benmerzouga (2002) (alleged membership of al-Queda)
R v Lyons and others (2002) (House of Lords, the 'Guinness' appeal)
Prosecutor v. al-Megrahi (2000) (the Lockerbie bombing case)
R v English (1997) (House of Lords, murder and joint enterprise)

Extradition and mutual assistance

Julian is one of the UK's leading extradition and mutual assistance practitioners and a substantial proportion of his practice involves advising individuals and governments on international criminal law issues.

He acted for General Pinochet in the extradition proceedings brought by Spain between 1998 and 2000 and has appeared in a number of other high profile extradition cases, including:

Advising Isle of Man clients on mutual assistance issues
Advising offshore trusts in asset restraint litigation in the Cayman Islands
Advising a large solicitors firm in connection with a letter of request
Russia v Nikitin and Skarga (2008) (extradition of former CEO of Sovcomflot)
Algeria v Khelifa (2008) (first extradition to Algeria)
Gibson v Superintendent of HM Prison (2007) (Privy Council, habeas corpus and stare decisis)
Ahmad and Aswat v United States of America (2006) (extradition and extraordinary rendition)
Russia v Temerko (2005) (Vice-President of Yukos)
Russia v Zakaev (2003) (former Deputy Prime Minister of Chechnya)
R (Abacha) v Secretary of State (2002) (mutual assistance request relating to former President of Nigeria)
United States of America v Abdelbary (2002) (alleged Al-Queda conspiracy to bomb US Embassies in Africa)
R v Secretary of State ex parte Ramda (2002, 2005) (conspiracy to cause explosions on the Paris Metro)
Re Asliturk (2002) (political defence of Mayor of Istanbul)
R (Rottman) v Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis (2002) (House of Lords, PACE powers and extradition)
R v Metropolitan Stipendiary Magistrate ex parte Pinochet Ugarte (1998 - 2000) (House of Lords, extradition of General Pinochet)
Re Ismail (1998) (House of Lords, meaning of 'person accused' in European Convention on Extradition/Extradition Act 1989)
R v Secretary of State for Trade and Industry ex parte Levitt (1998) (judicial review of outgoing extradition request)
Ex parte Fininvest Spa (1997, request for international mutual assistance involving former Italian Prime Minister)

Public law

Julian's public law practice includes challenges to prosecutorial and regulatory authorities' decisions. In 2006 he brought the challenge over the Government's refusal to pardon Private Harry Farr who was executed in the Great War for cowardice (*R (Harris) v. Secretary of State for Defence*). This case led to the grant of a pardon to all the 306 soldiers shot for military offences. Others cases include:

R (Whitinstall) v Chief Constable of Northumbria (2008) (human rights - disclosure of criminal conviction to employer)

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R (Harris) v Secretary of State for Defence (2006) (pardons for executed soldiers)
R (Bushell) v Newcastle Magistrates Court (2003) (licensing and articles 6 and 8).
R (Chief Constable of Lancashire) v Preston Crown Court (2002) (whether licensing courts are article 6 compliant)
R (Hussain) v Derby Magistrates Court (2000) (unlawful detention and bail)
Cedeno v Logan (2002) (Privy Council, reasons/due process)
Taylor v Director of the SFO (1998) (House of Lords, immunity from suit of prosecuting agencies)
R v Criminal Injuries Compensation Board ex parte K (1998) (causation in the CICA scheme)

Human rights

Lambert Watson v The Queen (2004) (Privy Council, mandatory death penalty in Jamaica is unconstitutional)
Fox v The Queen (2002, PC) (mandatory death penalty in Eastern Caribbean is unconstitutional)
Constantine v Trinidad (2002) (Inter-American Court of Human Rights, mandatory death penalty violates American Convention on Human Rights)
Neville Lewis v Attorney-General of Jamaica (2001) (Privy Council, power of mercy is subject to judicial review)
Higgs and Mitchell v Minister of National Security (1999) (Privy Council, due process and the death penalty in the Bahamas)
Mohammed v The State (1999) (admissibility of evidence obtained in breach of constitutional protections)
Maharaj v State of Florida (1999) (Florida Supreme Court - as amicus curiae representing House of Commons)
Briggs v Baptiste (1999) (Privy Council, binding effect of orders of Inter-American Court of Human Rights)
Thomas v Baptiste (1998) (Privy Council, death row prisoners cannot be executed before their applications to the Inter-American Human Rights Commission have been decided)
Tracey v The Queen (1998) (Privy Council, amendments to the indictment in capital murder trials)
Logan v The Queen (1996) (Privy Council's jurisdiction in capital cases)

What the Directories Say

Chambers & Partners 2012 recommend Julian Knowles QC as a New Silk in Civil Liberties and Human Rights; Crime; Crime: Extradition Experts; and Fraud: Criminal ("switched-on and committed").

Legal 500 2011 recommend Julian Knowles QC as a New Silk in Administrative and Public Law; Civil Liberties and Human Rights; and Fraud: Crime.

Chambers & Partners 2011 ranked Julian in Civil Liberties; Crime; and Fraud: Criminal ("a brain on legs who is developing a great appellat practice").

Legal 500 2010 ranked Julian as a leading Junior in Fraud: Crime; Crime; Human Rights and Civil Liberties; and Administrative & Public Law.

Chambers & Partners 2010 recommended Julian as a leading Junior in Civil Liberties and Human Rights; Crime; and Fraud: Criminal ("will pursue all points - both legally and evidentially - to make sure they will work for the client").

A panel of experts in the Independent on Sunday described Julian as "demonstrating all-round brilliance". In 2000, the Scotsman newspaper described Julian as being among a group of "the world's most formidable lawyers".

Publications include

Fraud Criminal Law and Procedure (Oxford, 2008 Montgomery and Ormerod (Eds))

The Law of Extradition and Mutual Assistance (Oxford, 2007, 2nd Edn) (3rd Edition forthcoming in 2012) (with Clive Nicholls QC and Clare Montgomery QC)

Smith, Owen and Bodnar, Asset Recovery (Oxford, 2007) (Contributor)

Blackstone's Guide to The Extradition Act 2003 (Oxford, 2004)