

NAME

Darren O'Keeffe

EMAIL

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YEAR OF CALL

1984

AREAS OF LAW

Personal injury litigation; Coroner's Inquests; Clinical and other professional negligence litigation; Cases on behalf of the police.

OVERVIEW

Darren is an approachable highly experienced civil lawyer with a practical attitude to litigation also hallmarked by close attention to detail. He is a skilled negotiator in settlement meetings and a strong advocate in court. He appears in the County Court, High Court and Court of Appeal.

He has a strong practice in the fields of personal injury and Coroners' Inquests. He has also over many years undertaken clinical negligence work, as well as civil cases on behalf of the police.

Of the non-police work roughly 75% is for Defendants and 25% for Claimants. Darren has particular expertise in advising and appearing for major UK insurance companies, local authorities and corporate clients in employers' and public liability litigation involving liability and/or quantum disputes concerning all manner of personal injuries or death. This covers the full range of accidents at work, occupiers' liability cases, highways claims, motor accident claims (including fraud), industrial disease actions (mostly for work-related upper limb disorders or noise-induced hearing loss), holiday sickness claims; etc.

The full spectrum of advisory drafting and advocacy is offered, the last a complete service from procedural/interlocutory hearings (e.g. cost and case management hearings, applications to strike out, public interest immunity applications, preliminary hearings on limitation and other issues) to joint settlement meetings and mediations to trial.

In general no case is too big or too small. Although most of Darren's work has been in the multi-track he appears regularly in fast track cases. He has several times appeared (without a leader) in high value cases up to c.£3.5m, most such concluding via joint settlement meetings or mediation: but the majority of his work concerns claims worth under £150,000, with many worth less than £50,000.

Other more occasional fields of practice have included solicitors' accountants' and other non-clinical professional negligence, and some data protection work.

CFA claims are undertaken in appropriate cases after preliminary consideration of the Instructions.

EDUCATION

- M.A. (Oxon)

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

- PNBA; PIBA

PERSONAL INJURY

Mostly accidents at work or occupiers/public liability, or road traffic accidents. Liability and/or quantum disputes.

Examples:

- fall from a height at work causing broken back: settlement at £825,000.
- traumatic amputation of fingers in machinery, with psychiatric sequelae: settlement at £400,000.

However most claims are worth under £150,000 with many under £50,000.

CORONER'S INQUESTS

Mostly under Article 2, including deaths in custody/under medical care etc.

Examples:

- Europe's largest cycling disaster, with multiple casualties: represented the police in a 4 week hearing;
- deaths in police custody: represented the police in hearings lasting up to 3 weeks;
- death in prison: presented the deceased's family in a 3-week hearing;
- numerous cases of death in the workplace:: represented employers/ insurers in c.90% of these and the deceased's family in c.10%.

CLINICAL AND OTHER PROFESSIONAL NEGLIGENCE

Mostly clinical negligence.

Examples:

- perinatal delayed treatment causing brain damage: settlement at £3.3m (acted for Claimant).
 - misdiagnosis of lower limb disease leading to amputation and additional complications: settlement at £1.2m.
- However most claims are worth under £150,000 with many under £50,000.

Some occasional solicitors'/accountants' and other non-clinical negligence work.

CASES ON BEHALF OF THE POLICE

Defence of civil claims for damages/representation at Inquests/professional discipline work.

Examples:

- Civil claims: particularly interlocutory hearings in wrongful arrest/false imprisonment and/or assault cases, including public interest immunity applications, applications to strike-out, costs issues, etc. Recently, a slightly novel assessment of damages by the Administrative Court arising out of a Judicial Review.

- Disciplinary work: advocate and legal advisor to police disciplinary panels on various occasions, including as legal advisor at a hearing which made national news when an Assistant Chief Constable was summarily dismissed.