



Paul Williams

BA (Hons.) Performance Arts
CPE (London)
BVC (ICSL)

Year of Call: 1994

Field of Practice

After undertaking a wide ranging common law pupillage, Paul Williams, quickly became established in serious criminal work. He accepted his first instruction in a murder case in 1996 and as a leading junior in 1999. He has continued to lead and be led in serious and complex cases on a regular basis. He has been instructed in a number of cases where there are complex medical and procedural issues. Most recently, he was junior counsel in *R v Norris*, an allegation of serial murder committed by a practicing nurse.

He has been instructed in a range of cases where large covert operations have been deployed by the investigating authorities. Consequently, he has extensive experience of cases involving covert surveillance, cell site analysis, telephone record analysis, and RIPA applications.

He has been instructed in a number of large fraud cases both leading and being led, including *R v Ashleigh-Nicholson*; an allegation of advance fee fraud arising in the international forfeiting market. This was the largest investigation by West Midlands Fraud Squad at the time.

He continues to be instructed in judicial review, prison law, actions against the police cases.

Recent Cases of Importance

Diesel Laundering:

- *R v Arthur* – A 3 handed conspiracy to evade VAT amounting to £5 million. Several tankers a week were brought into England from Northern Ireland. The police mounted a covert surveillance operation over a period of months. The Defendant was the “banker” for the operation utilising accounts in the Republic of Ireland.

- *R v Owens* – An 8 handed conspiracy of diesel brought into England from Northern Ireland. The Defendant owned a haulage firm in Armagh that provided the tankers. Again, a large scale covert surveillance was undertaken.

Importation of Drugs

- *R v Shannon* – A 6 handed conspiracy. 2 Lorries were followed by the police from Spain via Germany into England. Each lorry carried 2 tonnes of cannabis hidden in machine parts and travelled to a warehouse in the midlands. The evidence included transcripts from powerful directional microphones that had recorded conversations between the conspirators whilst out on a pleasure cruiser owned by one of them on the fens.
- *R v Mckray* – The defendants were under covert observation before the commission of the offence. They were followed to Heathrow airport where they met a man arriving on a flight from Jamaica who was brought back to Coventry and out up in a safe house, from which, cocaine was distributed. The house was raided and a kilo of cocaine and cash was found.

Sexual Offending

- *R v Coates* – Allegations of rape and indecent assault, with the help of his two sons, of a number of adult women over a period of several years. The Defendant was 79 years old with profound deafness and very poor eyesight. Successful argument as abuse of process arising from the inability of the Defendant to effectively take part in his trial.
- *R v Kennedy* – Historic sexual abuse of young men whilst army cadets by their adult instructor. The prosecution sought to have the complainants' evidence read without cross-examination on the basis that their psychiatric problems, that stemmed from the abuse, prevented them from giving evidence. Complex and sensitive legal argument based upon the evidence of several psychiatrists.

Murder/Manslaughter

Paul has been regularly instructed in homicide cases since 1996, often they have centred around complex medical issues, and the professional standards of the medical and expert witnesses.

- *R v Norris* – The Defendant was a male nurse practicing in Leeds. Having been investigated for 81 suspicious deaths, he was eventually tried in relation to 5 of them. There were 4,500 witnesses and 800 lever arch files of papers. The trial lasted 5 months. It involved many complex medical issues of causation and procedure. Pathology, neuropathology, endocrinology and cardiology were particular areas of concern, as were medical procedures and standards within the hospital.
- *R v Fitzgerald* (retrial after appeal, old lady injured in burglary to her house, broken clavicle, causation in context of pre-existing heart condition) and *R v Byram* (assisting with heroin injection that led to an overdose); both of these cases involved the close examination of the work of the pathologist who has been before a GMC fitness to practice hearing.

He has also been instructed in shaken baby cases, gang related killings, as well as the more regular homicides.

Fraud

- *R v Ashleigh-Nicholson* – The defendants were accused of an advance fee fraud whereby they undertook to be able to forfeit or discount letters of credit that were worth 10's of millions of US\$. There advance fee was 2% of the letter. The case involved many complex transactions between banks across the world. The trial took 4 months before the prosecution case collapsed.
- *R v Holland* – The Defendant was accused of Fraudulent trading. He was a property developer with a portfolio of £18 million who came unstuck when he bought and renovated the Grand opera House, York. His business collapsed in the property crisis of 1990-1991. The case revolved around expert accountancy evidence and company law.

Armed Robbery

- *R v Waite* – The defendants travelled from Leeds to Portsmouth and the South to commit two armed robberies with sophisticated planning. Stolen cars were used with fake number plates appropriate to the make, model and colour of the car concerned. The prosecution relied upon telephone traffic and cell site analysis.
- *R v Kavanagh* – The defendants committed 9 robberies of small supermarkets and petrol station shops over 3 counties. Guns, baseball bats, and a samurai sword were used as weapons. The robberies were professionally planned, the defendants using plain black clothes and balaclavas; one occasion 14 members of staff were tied up. The evidence included CCTV, cell site, telephone traffic analysis.
- *R v McGurk* – The defendants stole a skip lorry and used it to ram a hole in a bank cash depository making off with £1.85 million. They were eventually caught by a combination of an informant, cell site and telephone traffic analysis; and the fact that the Defendant's car was covertly fitted with a tracking device and sound recording equipment.

Significant CA Cases

- *R v Mason* [2002] 2 Cr.App.R.38 – Admissibility of covert recordings made whilst the defendants were held in police cells. Conversations elicited by trickery. Also, impartiality of trial judge where he knew the Chief Constable of West Midlands who was a key witness in the case.
- *R v Fitzgerald* – Successful appeal based upon new medical evidence and non-disclosure during trial by the prosecution. Issue of causation in manslaughter case where deceased was elderly with a number of co-existing medical problems, including significant heart failure
- *R v Byram* – Change in the law case. Guilty plea to manslaughter successfully appealed after the leading authority (*R v Kennedy*) was reversed in the House of Lords.

Additional Information

Professional Appointments

CPS Grade 3.

Member of Specialist Associations: Criminal Bar Association