

James Buchanan

Call: 1993

"James's written work is always at the highest standard and turned around quickly. He is good at handling clients and keeping them focused on strategy."

Chambers UK 2025



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James Buchanan is recognised as a leading criminal regulatory practitioner, specialising in health and safety, environmental law and inquests. He acts for corporates, directors and employees and is instructed regularly in prosecutions arising from fatal and other serious accidents.

James works across a number of industry sectors, including construction, transport, manufacturing, waste management, policing and healthcare. He has particular expertise in representing individuals charged with gross negligence manslaughter.

Shortlisted for Chambers UK 2023 – Health and Safety Junior of the Year.

Expertise

Environmental

Cases

EA v ETC Ltd (2024)

A food company charged following the discharge of trade effluent into a number of waterways, the pollution event causing a significant fish kill. For trial in 2024.

EA v EMA (2024)

An airport operator charged following the discharge of water contaminated with de-icing fluid from aircraft and runways into the River Trent. For trial in 2024.

Health & Safety

Cases

R v WH (2024)

Dairy farmer investigated for Gross Negligence Manslaughter following the death of a farm worker during the course of routine maintenance of farm machinery. No further action taken after service of Written Submissions and attendance at police interviews.

R v ET Ltd (2024)

Haulage company charged following catastrophic injuries sustained by a member of the public during an unloading operation. The HSE offered no evidence following the service of expert evidence accompanied by written submissions.

R v CR (2024)

The first known case of its kind arising from the death of participant in the adventure sport, coasteering. CR, the activity instructor, was investigated for gross negligence manslaughter and for breaches of HSWA. Following an inquest into the death, the prosecuting authority elected to take no further action against CR.

R v SA Ltd (2024)

Prosecution arising from a crane collapse, with the significant aggravating feature of a component part having fallen into a school playground. For trial in 2024.

R v SZ (2024)

Representing a HGV driver in connection with the death of a domestic customer during the course of an unloading operation

R v KC (2024)

Acted for a contractor on the Gatwick Airport development project, following the death of an employee during the course of a lifting operation.

R v FF (2024)

Representing an international fitness centre brand, following a fatality in a swimming pool.

Re. EE (2023)

Death of a toddler who fell to his death from the open window of a high-rise block of flats owned by Leeds City Council. Inquest concluded in December 2023, the senior coroner concluding that the actions of LCC did not cause or contribute to the tragic death.

R v SO & SW (2023)

Co-defended with Mark Balysz KC and secured the acquittal of a trainee paramedic charged with Gross Negligence Manslaughter following a 4-week trial in front of Mrs Justice Cheema-Grubb, the jury returned not guilty verdicts in less than an hour.

R v NJS & SA Limited (2022)

Successfully defended the director of a roofing company, who was acquitted of gross negligence manslaughter, following a four week trial at Brighton Crown Court.

R v NS (2021)

Instructed to represent a company director charged with Gross Negligence Manslaughter following the death of a sub-contractor who was working at height on a construction site. Trial listed in April 2022.

R v P Ltd (2021)

Instructed to act on behalf of a specialist roofing contractor (acting as the Principal Contractor) following the death of the employee of a sub-contractor.

HSE v DDL (2021)

Advising a haulage company following the death of an employee during the course of a complex lifting operation. Charged with s.2 HSWA.

Concerning the deaths of S and A (2020)

Instructed to represent a flying school following the deaths of a flying instructor and student during the course of a seemingly routine 'VFR' flight.

HSE v BD (2020)

A demolition company charged with section 2 HSWA offence following catastrophic crushing injuries sustained by an employee when working at height.

HSE v N (2020)

Representing the Principal Contractor charged with CDM 2015 offence following a near fatal accident during the course of a lifting operation on a construction site.

HSE v TD (2020)

Representing a mine operator charged with section 2 HSWA offence following an underground collapse causing serious crushing injuries to a number of employees.