

Rupert Bowers KC

Call: 1995 | Silk: 2015

"Rupert is extremely good and has a very wide ranging practice. He is very impressive."

Chambers UK 2026 (Financial Crime: Pte Prosecutions)



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Rupert Bowers KC's expertise as one of the country's leading barristers in financial crime and in challenging search warrants, and the seizure of property and information, has been noted in the practitioner guides for over a decade.

He has been instructed in some of the most well-known cases of recent times, including representing Lord Hanningfield in the Parliamentary expenses case, Vincent Coggins in the first EncroChat case, about whom a BBC Panorama documentary was later made, and Katrin Ivanova, one of a number of Bulgarian nationals accused of spying for Russia.

Rupert is renowned for his ability to take unusual and difficult cases that overlap criminal and civil law, and consequently he has a broad practice covering financial crime, asset freezing, private prosecutions, judicial review, extradition, data protection and information rights, espionage and terrorist offences, contempt of court, tortious claims for malicious prosecution and misfeasance, and sports law.

Over the years Rupert has represented several high-profile individuals and entities, including Harry Redknapp, Jermain Defoe, George Galloway, West Ham Utd, James Tomkins, Ben Thatcher, and Dr Edward Wojakovski.

Rupert accepts [Direct Access](#) instructions.

Expertise

Business Crime & Financial Services

Notable Cases:

R v Abbasi (Bakhtiar) [2024]

A total sentence of 12 years' imprisonment imposed on a company director after he fraudulently persuaded two brothers to pay him over

£7 million in three sham property investment deals was not manifestly excessive. A 15-year disqualification from being a company director, imposed at the time of sentencing, was also upheld following arguments on the construction and effect of the legislation.

Lim v Ong [2024]

Following the trial of a fraud claim against a company director and various of his companies, the director was sentenced to an immediate custodial sentence of 22 months for seven counts of contempt of court, including breaches of his weekly ordinary living expenses allowance contained in a worldwide freezing order; breaches of disclosure obligations; knowingly making false statements in affidavits and in a statement of affairs; dissipating assets in breach of the worldwide freezing order; and breaching a requirement to provide information under a trial order.

Tonstate Group Ltd (In Liquidation) v Wojakovski [2023]

In a committal application alleging breaches of proprietary injunctions and disclosure orders by the defendant, whilst one allegation which had been admitted by the defendant did constitute a contempt of court, the other allegations were not proved to the criminal standard. The gap between what the claimants had to prove and what they had proved could not be made up by resort to what had been established in the admitted breach.

Re Smith [2021]

Commercial Court litigation in relation to the fallout from the largest confiscation ever made. Rupert acted for a litigation funding company.

National Crime Agency v Simkus [2016]

Case addressing the ex parte procedure of applying for Property Freezing Orders.

Operation Carp [2015]

Lord Hanningfield & Others [2010]

Representing Lord Hanningfield in the MP's and peers expenses case.

[BBC News](#)

Operation Devout II [2009]

Multi million pound fraud and money laundering investigation.

Operation Vitric [2006]

£100,000,000 VAT fraud stayed for abuse of process. ([Click here](#))

[Independent](#)

Criminal Defence

Notable Cases:

R v Michael Holmes [2025]

Conspiracy to rob a jewellers shop alleged to be a front for money laundering and resulting in the tragic suicide of the shop keeper.

Click [here](#) to read about the case in the national press.

R v Nivalda Pirjani [2025]

For the mother in the murder of the her 3 month old child.

Click [here](#) to read about the case in the national press.

R v Mazebo [2024]

Attempted murder by shooting.

R v Farrell [2024]

Encrochat case involving large scale drug supply.

R v A [2021]

The lead EncroChat case dealing with the admissibility of the intercepted evidence. Rupert acted for the first defendant.

R v Cook (Sam) [2012]

The ability of the Crown to allege guilt against those already acquitted.

Diphy Menga [2012]

Acquitted of a gang related murder.

[Daily Mail](#)

Afzal Arif [2012]

The murder of a man nick-named “Nasty”.

[BBC News](#)

Azhar Hussein [2011]

Acquitted of attempting to murder his wife by stabbing her in broad daylight in a crowded high street.

R v Attila Makai [2008]

Trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation. Case arising out of the raid on “Cuddles” in Birmingham.

[BBC News](#)

Ricky Maynard and others [2008]

The manslaughter of a London barrister’s clerk.

[BBC News](#)

Operation Movement [2007]

Conspiracy to traffic prestige vehicles – The largest case of its type.

[BBC News](#)

Karl Pettitt [2007]

One of the UK's largest cocaine importers.

[BBC News](#)

Operation Alington [2007]

Supergrass case in which all but one defendant was acquitted. Alleged to be the breaking of the largest cocaine cartel in the UK.

Robert Howard [2003]

The murder of Hannah Williams, a case linked in the media to the disappearances of Danielle Jones and Milly Dowler.

[Wikipedia](#)

Judicial Review & Civil Law

Notable Cases:

R (on the application of Dost) v Manchester Crown Court [2025]

HMRC was entitled to apply under the Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001 s.59 for permission to retain items seized pursuant to a search warrant even though it had conceded a judicial review claim that the warrant should not have been executed against the claimants. Although there had been procedural inconsistencies, there had been no bad faith or sufficiently serious or egregious conduct on HMRC's part to justify the court in making an order precluding the application under s.59.

R. (on the application of Abbasi) v Southwark Crown Court [2025]

The court considered the Crown Court's jurisdiction under the Criminal Procedure (Attendance of Witnesses) Act 1965 s.2(1) to issue witness summonses in respect of confiscation proceedings. There was nothing in the wording of s.2(1) which supported the contention that the Crown Court's power to issue a witness summons ceased once a criminal charge had been determined. If the court was satisfied that the evidence sought was likely to be material evidence in "any criminal proceedings", a witness summons would be issued if it was "in the interests of justice" to do so.

Hughes v Revenue and Customs Commissioners [2024]

A multi million pound civil claim for Malicious Prosecution and Misfeasance in Public Office following the spectacular collapse of the criminal case against the Claimant financier for tax evasion.

R. (on the application of Jabbar) v Sheffield Crown Court [2022] – For the Claimant.

Where a judge refused to extend a custody time limit, or no extension to a custody time limit had been sought, and consequently the judge released the defendant on bail before the expiry of the custody time limit, the custody time limit regime no longer applied and

there was therefore no limit applicable to any further period on remand. Each such release was “in consequence of the expiry of” the custody time limit within the meaning of the Prosecution of Offences Act 1985 Pt III s.22(5)(b), and the custody time limit came to an end upon release.

R. (on the application of Siddiqi) v Westminster Magistrates’ Court [2021]

Judicial review in relation to the setting aside of summons.

R. (on the application of C) v DPP [2020]

Judicial review of the European Investigation Order which was responsible for the entirety of the EncroChat evidence arriving in the UK.

R (on the application of McKenzie) v Leeds Crown Court [2020]

Judicial review of the Lord Chief Justice’s decision to suspend trial by jury in the wake of the Coronavirus pandemic.

Malik v Manchester and Salford Magistrates’ Court [2018]

A case addressing whether an application to vary a final order should be treated as a relief from sanctions and whether the Court of Appeal had jurisdiction to entertain an appeal against the Divisional Court’s ruling on this issue.

R (on the application of A) v Central Criminal Court [2017]

A challenge to search warrants executed at the homes of solicitors and a member of the bar.

R (Merida Oil Traders Ltd) & Others v Central Criminal Court [2017]

Case addressing the unlawful practice of the City of London Police of asking financial institutions to create cheques via production orders so they may then be seized using the summary cash seizure provisions and frozen in the Magistrates’ Court.

Lucas v Security Service [2017]

Representing George Galloway before the Investigatory Powers Tribunal in a claim against the Government in relation to the alleged interception of communications in breach of the parliamentarian Wilson doctrine.

R (on the application of HS) v South Cheshire Magistrates’ Court [2016]

The Divisional Court did not have to determine every issue in a judicial review of a search warrant prior to a section 59 hearing taking place.

Sher and Others v United Kingdom [2015]

Judgment of the European Court of Human Rights in relation to the pre-charge detention regime under Schedule 8 of the Terrorism Act 2000, and in relation to the width of search warrants executed in Operation Pathway.

R (on the application of Kouyoumjian) v Hammersmith Magistrates’ Court [2015]

The first case in which the Court denied the losing defendant police force the opportunity to remedy its unlawful possession of material seized under a warrant that was subsequently quashed.

R (on the application of Panesar) v Central Criminal Court [2015]

A challenge to the jurisdiction of the Crown Court to remedy the unlawful possession of material seized under the authority of warrant

that was subsequently quashed in judicial review proceedings.

R (on the application of F) v Blackfriars Crown Court [2014]

The Divisional Court quashed a search warrant issued to seize legal files for its failure to particularise the material sought.

R (on the application of B) v Huddersfield Magistrates' Court [2015]

A search against practising solicitors was held to be unlawful because of police failures of disclosure. All seized material was returned.

R (on the application of S) v Chief Constable of the British Transport Police [2014]

A successful challenge to the seizure of material from solicitors premises which was subject to LPP. The court gave guidance on how applications for search warrants should be made.

Lord Hanningfield v Chief Constable of Essex [2013]

Successful action for unlawful arrest.

[BBC News](#)

R (on the application of Herron) v The Parking Adjudicator [2012]

Judicial review of the legality of Controlled Parking Zones for one of the original “metric martyrs”.

[BBC News](#)

R v Cook (Sam) [2012]

The ability of the Crown to allege guilt against those already acquitted.

R (Glenn & Co. (Essex) Ltd and others) v HM Commissioners for Revenue and Customs and another [2012]

Challenge to search warrants.

R (on the application of Panesar (t/a Anami Law) v Bristol Crown Court [2011]

Successful challenge to search warrants using the res judicata principle and leading decision on police bail.

R (on the application of Windsor and others) v Bristol Crown Court [2011]

A challenge to unlawful search warrants following HMRC's refusal to accept the judgment in an earlier case above.

Windsor v CPS [2011]

Leading case on restraint and receivership orders.

Sher v Chief Constable of Greater Manchester [2011]

A public law challenge to the pre-charge detention regime in terrorist cases. Later subject to a decision of the ECtHR as above.

[BBC News](#)

R (Cook) v Serious Organised Crime Agency [2011]

A successful challenge to the contrived use of the power of seizure under section 19.

R (on the application of Cummins) v Manchester Crown Court [2010]

A search warrant was quashed and material returned to the claimant because of a defect in the pro-forma application used by SOCA.

R (Wood) v Avon and Somerset Magistrates' Court [2010]

Challenge to a search warrant.

Bates v Chief Constable of Avon and Somerset [2009]

The successful challenge to the search of the home of a forensic computer expert led to the refusal of the Chief Constable to return Mr. Bates' property following the High Court ruling. Eventually this led to an application to commit the Chief Constable to prison whereupon the property was returned the evening before the court hearing.

[The Times](#)

R (Redknapp) v Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis [2009]

Acted for both Harry and Sandra Redknapp in this successful challenge to the execution of a search warrant at the Redknapp's.

[Telegraph](#) | [The Daily Mail](#)

Extradition

Notable Cases:

Germany v Parkes

Although a district judge at an extradition hearing had not formally excluded a requested person's unsigned proof of evidence after he decided not to give oral evidence, it would not have made any difference to the outcome of the case. The court suggested that once a proof was included in a hearing bundle, the judge should be entitled to treat the parties as having agreed that it was part of the evidence to be considered, unless either party wished to argue to the contrary.

Vladislav Dudko reported as Dudko v The Government of the Russian Federation [2010]

Successful appeal against extradition to Russia. One of the few domestic cases to consider Article 6 of the European Convention on Human Rights as it applies in the requesting state.

John Irving

Extradition request relating to sanctions breaching offences under the UN oil for food programme.

Salazar-Duarte v United States

Question certified to the SC as to the point at which time starts to run for the purposes of the service of an Appellant's Notice. SC refused permission.

Terrorism & Espionage

Notable Cases:

R v Akbal and others [2026]

For one of the defendants accused of being members of the Kurdish PKK, a proscribed organisation under the terror legislation.

Click [here](#) to read about the case in the national press.

R v BFZ (aka Ivanova) [2024]

A judge considering terms within the Official Secrets Act 1911 s.1(1)(c), in advance of the trial of six defendants accused of conspiracy to spy for Russia, had correctly construed “an enemy” to potentially mean any state which presently posed an active threat to the UK’s national security, and had properly held that “for any purpose prejudicial to the safety or interests of the state” was to be considered from an objective standpoint.

R v Gibbons

Defendant accused of terrorist offences for publishing podcasts espousing far right ideology. The case engaged issues relating to the right to free speech.

R v Altaf Hussain [2022]

Acquitted of terrorist charges. Mr Hussain is the leader of the Pakistani political party MQM but has been in exile in England since 1992. The MQM represents the rights of the Mohajir community in Pakistan who are often the subject of state oppression. Mr Hussain was accused of encouraging acts of terrorism by delivering a speech in 2016 to those assembled at a hunger strike in Karachi organised in protest against the media ban imposed upon the reporting of his speeches.

Sher v Chief Constable of Greater Manchester [2011]

A public law challenge to the pre-charge detention regime in terrorist cases. The case is now before the European Court of Human Rights. (Archbold 2013 25-101, 25-158)

[BBC News](#)

Sher and Others v United Kingdom [2015]

Judgment has been received by the European Court of Human Rights in relation to the pre-charge detention regime under Schedule 8 of the Terrorism Act 2000, and in relation to the width of search warrants executed in the operation.

R v A Youth

Successfully defended a youth against a charge under section 5 of the TA 2006. The defendant was a white supremacist with links to the proscribed organisation National Action.

[The Guardian](#)

Sports Law

Notable Cases:

British Association of Snowsports Instructors (BASI)

Drafting BASI's Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures.

World in Motion Ltd. v Samuel Inkoom

Successful appearance before CAS for the Claimant WIM.

Brett Adams v The Football Association

Successful appeal against the level of sanction imposed against the Appellant. The successful argument has meant that the FA will need to change its procedure in relation to paper hearings.

R v James Tomkins

Represented the West Ham defender.

[The Guardian](#)

Emily Sarsfield

Advising Britain's number one ski cross athlete on the British Olympic Association's decision not to offer her a re-allocated place for the 2014 Sochi games.

[Telegraph](#)

João Moutinho

Acted successfully for World In Motion Ltd against the Portuguese midfielder before CAS.

Francisco Sandaza

Acting for the player against Rangers F.C. in the recent "tapping up" case by a hoax caller.

[Telegraph](#)

Danish Kaneria

Assisted Tim Moloney QC in the preparation of submissions as to whether the ECB disciplinary procedures were arbitral proceedings for the purposes of the Arbitration Act 1996 and so whether a witness summons could be obtained against Mervyn Westfield.

[The Guardian](#)

Harry Redknapp

See under the heading Actions Against the Police.

[Telegraph](#) | [Daily Mail](#)

Bradley Wright-Phillips

The case against Mr Wright-Phillips was dismissed at committal stage following submissions.

[Independent](#)

Ben Thatcher

Appeared for Mr Thatcher at the FA disciplinary tribunal following his challenge on Pedro Mendes.

[The Guardian](#)

Jermain Defoe

For Mr Defoe in this Football Association arbitration against his former agent Sky Andrew. Also represented or advised: M&C Saatchi Merlin, Steve Cotterill, Emmerson Boyce, Leon Cort, Rowan Vine, Chris Hussey, Tommy Miller, Micah Richards, Jordan Robertson, World in Motion Ltd. And others in a variety of contexts.

[Daily Mail](#)

Consumer & Trading Standards

Notable Case:

Fischer Future Heat UK (2023)

Represented this national heating company in a prosecution brought by Leicestershire Trading Standards relating to allegations of breaches of the Consumer Rights Act 2015. The case was resolved by undertakings provided under the Enterprise Act 2002.

R (on the Application of Proimage Ltd) v. Lancashire Magistrates' Court [2021] EWHC 3244 (Admin)

The High Court considered the extent to which a warrant was required to refer to specific legislation, namely the Trade Mark Act 1984 and the Consumer Rights Act 2015. Represented the claimant company.

Hargreaves & ors v Powys County Council Trading Standards Department & anor [2015]

Successful challenge to a search warrant issued under the Trading Standards regulations.