



Simon Antrobus KC



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(Legal 500, 2025)



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Simon has over 25 years' of experience as one of the leading barristers in this field of criminal regulatory law. Together with John Cooper KC, he set up the criminal regulatory team within Crown Office Chambers in 2004, having established a practice in this field whilst at Kings Chambers in Manchester. That criminal regulatory team is now the largest in any set of chambers in the country and includes barristers of all levels.

He has defended corporate clients in some of the highest profile health and safety cases that have been brought in this country, including the Buncefield Oil Terminal explosion, the the Smiler Rollercoaster accident at Alton Towers, the recent criminal prosecution relating to the Hillsborough football stadium disaster of 1989, and the ongoing public inquiry into the Grenfell Tower fire. Most recently he successfully defended a managing director charged with four counts of manslaughter in relation to the explosion at his company's wood mill in Bosley, Cheshire, in which four employees died. Simon's legal submission of no case to answer was upheld by the Court of Appeal R. v. WTL & George Boden [2021] EWCA Crim 618. He has followed this up by successfully defending a leading insurance company in relation to the death of an employee during the course of an inspection at one of its customer's premises and also a waste recycling company in relation to the death of a sub-contractor at its site.

He has represented or advised many of the largest companies in the UK and the world including BP, Shell, Exxon Mobil, Chevron, McDonalds, Coca Cola, Ikea, Balfour Beatty, Skanska, Tesco, Sainsburys, Marks & Spencer, National Grid, Starbucks, Zurich, Royal Sun Alliance and ITV.

He has also defended numerous directors, managers, site managers, construction professionals, safety consultants and employees in relation to individual prosecutions for both manslaughter, breach of health, fire or food safety law and trading standards offences.

He has been ranked as a leading barrister in the fields of criminal health and safety law and consumer law by the Chambers and Partners Legal Directory for the UK Bar for now over 20 years. He is currently ranked at the highest level, as a "star individual" for health and safety.



Manslaughter

Simon has particular experience in defending companies and individuals charged with the most serious safety-related crime: corporate manslaughter and gross negligence manslaughter.

He has a highly successful track record, having successfully represented over the years:

- a plumber accused in relation to the death of two residents within a new Barratts development (R v Williamson & Ors), [BBC News](#)
- a site manager of a construction site in Hanover Square, Mayfair, accused in relation to the collapse of a huge window frame that killed a passer-by (R v Adsett & Ors), [BBC News](#)
- a director of a company whose industrial door collapsed onto 2 members of a band attending a gig at the G-Live centre in Guildford (R v Naylor & Ors)
- a director of a roofing business whose assistant fell through a skylight in a roof they were working on (R v Jerome & Others).

More recently, Simon secured the acquittal of a waste recycling company charged with corporate manslaughter, and also the acquittal of a managing director charged with four counts of manslaughter in relation to the explosion at his company's wood mill in Bosley, Cheshire, in which four employees died. Simon's legal submission of no case to answer was upheld by the Court of Appeal *R. v. WTL & George Boden* [2021] EWCA Crim 618.

He is currently representing UK Athletics in relation to its prosecution for corporate manslaughter relating to the death of a Paralympian at a training event for the World Championships taking place in this country.

Health & Safety

Simon is ranked within the Chambers and Partners Legal Director as a "star individual", the highest ranking available, and has been recognised within this director as a leading barrister in this field for over 20 years.

He has experience of defending in all types of safety-related prosecution covering all of the major industries and sectors. These have ranged from successfully representing individuals charged with putting the public at risk, such as the fireworks organiser accused of causing the death of 7 people in a motorway pile-up on the M5 by smoke from his adjacent event, and the organiser of the Chatsworth International Horse Trials charged with the death of an off-road motorcyclist at the event, to securing acquittals for large construction companies in relation to site-related incidents (Lend Lease, ISG, Geoffrey Osborne to name but a few).

He has also been responsible for shaping some of the seminal legal arguments and principles in this field of law, most particularly in relation to reasonable practicability and causation. He regularly provides seminars and articles on such matters, including sentencing, both to companies, to firms of solicitors and to his peers within the Health and Safety Lawyer's Association (HSLA).

Food Safety, Product Safety and Trading Standards

Simon is experienced in all aspects of trading law, including the judicial review of regulatory decision-making. He was Junior Counsel on behalf of Nutricia (led by Thomas De La Mare KC) in a multi-million pound judicial review relating to the interpretation of European law as to the definition of Foods for Special Medical Purposes and the extent to which they are to be distinguished from food supplements and fortified foods.

He has also advised global food manufacturers and FTSE listed national retailers as to the legality of their products in relation to product launches in this country and also in relation to product recalls following the discovery of safety concerns. Additionally, he has represented and advised financial and loan companies in relation to cases brought against them in relation to the Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008 and the Business Protection from Misleading Marketing Regulations 2008.

He has also represented the Fat Duck restaurant in Bray in relation to the outbreak of norovirus at the restaurant and the owners of the Godstone Farm petting zoo (led by Jonathan Waite KC) in relation to the e-coli outbreak on their premises.

Inquests & Public Inquiries

Simon has experience of representing corporate clients in some of the highest profile public inquiries and inquests involving a wide range of issues. Most recently he successfully represented ITV in relation to the suicide of a former participant on the Jeremy Kyle show which led to its cancellation. Following Simon's advice and representation over a 5-year investigation and inquest in 2024, ITV and its presenter, Jeremy Kyle, were absolved of any causal contribution for the individual's suicide in what was a dramatic and unexpected inquest conclusion. Simon has also spent the last 5 years representing Max Fordham, the M&E and building services consultancy involved in the design of the smoke ventilation system at the Grenfell Tower in relation to the Grenfell Tower public enquiry.

The range of his work in this field includes inquests and inquiries relating to:

- death in custody (Jimmy Mubenga inquest – Simon represented British Airways in relation to a death of a deportee on one of its planes).
- terrorist attacks (Simon has represented BP in relation to the 3-month inquest concerning the Al-Qaeda attack on one of its gas refineries in In Amenas, Algeria, in which seven British citizens died and Reading Borough Council in relation to a terrorist attack in which three young men were stabbed to death in a Reading park).
- drownings (Simon represented David Lloyd leisure in relation to a drowning of a 3-year old child at its Leeds club).
- Retail accidents (Simon represented Arcadia/Top Shop in relation to the death of a young child, crushed by the collapse of a 'queue barrier' at one of its TopShop stores in Reading).
- Care home fatalities (Simon is currently representing Sussex Health Care in relation to the death of a young man at one of its sites and has previously represented a care home manager in relation to the death of an elderly resident).

- Motorway accidents (Simon represented WS Atkins in relation to design issues concerning one of the original 'smart motorway' sections of the M25).
- School outings (Simon represented a girls school in relation to the drowning of a young student in a school trip to a theme park).
- Theme parks (Simon represented Lightwater Valley Attractions Ltd in relation to the death of a child on one of its rides).

Covid-19

Simon has regularly advised businesses on the impact of the Covid-19 virus in terms of their workplace safety, and has specifically advised one of the largest leisure and entertainment companies in Europe as to the legality of their policy on requiring face coverings at their attractions.

He has also written extensively on the subject, and provided a fortnightly Q&A webinar session, together with John Cooper KC and Dominic Kay KC from Chambers in front of a substantial regular audience amongst lawyers, safety managers and directors.

Recent Key Cases

R. v. Matthew Jerome & Ors (Circencester Crown Court, October 2024) – Simon successfully represented one of two directors of a roofing company charged with gross negligence manslaughter in relation to the death of one of its employees, who was working alongside Simon's client on a roof at a project in Bristol when he fell through a fragile rooflight. The prosecution arose out of a 5 year criminal investigation involving the company and both of its directors. After a 4-week trial before Mrs Justice Jefford and a jury, Simon's client was acquitted of manslaughter and convicted of a lesser health and safety offence for which he received a suspended sentence of imprisonment.

Inquest into the death of Steve Dymond (former participant on the Jeremy Kyle Show) (Winchester Coroner's Court, September 2025) – Simon successfully represented ITV in relation to a 5-year investigation and inquest into the death of a former participant on the show, who after failing a lie detector test, subsequently took his life 6 days later. Notwithstanding the huge press interest in the case and the adverse reporting about the show (including a 2-part Channel 4 documentary) Simon was able to persuade the Coroner that the show did not have make casual contribution to the individual's suicide.

R v Bywaters Waste Management Ltd (Old Bailey, June 2024) – Simon secured the acquittal of a waste management and recycling company in relation to a health and safety offence, following a 4-week trial at the Old Bailey. The trial related to the death of a sub-contractor, crushed underneath a steel structure that he and his company were in the course of removing. The case involved considerable attention as to the roles and responsibilities of a client company under the CDM Regulations 2015.

R v Zurich Management Services Ltd (Reading Crown Court, February-March 2024) – Simon secured the acquittal of a global insurance company in relation to the death of one of its engineering inspectors following a fall from height at a client's premises. The co-defendant company (the client) was convicted following a trial before a jury lasting 3 weeks. The case related to issues concerning protection from falls from height and the responsibilities of insurance companies for off site inspections of client premises. Simon's client was acquitted.



R v Arcadia PLC & Ors (Reading Crown Court) January – April 2022 – Simon represented both Arcadia PLC and TopshopTopman Ltd in a 3-month trial relating to the death of a 10-year old boy at a Topshop store in the Oracle shopping centre, Reading. The child was crushed to death when he overturned a heavy corian-clad 'queue barrier' in front of the tills, that had been inadequately secured to the ground by shopfitting contractors appointed by Arcadia.

Inquest into the death of Dorothea Hale (Newport Coroner's Court) June 2021 – Simon represented the Registered Manager of a nursing home in relation to the death of one of its residents due to neglect of bed sores and consequent sepsis. The inquest was part of a series of investigations brought about by the Flynn Report into the conduct of various care homes in South Wales in which residents had died through poor or maltreatment.

R v WTL & George Boden & Ors [2021] EWCA Crim 618 – Simon successfully persuaded the Court of Appeal to uphold the decision of Mrs Justice May to dismiss the four counts of manslaughter against his client, George Boden, the managing director of the company that owned Bosley wood mill that exploded in 2015 killing four employees (see below).

R v WTL & George Boden & Ors (Chester Nightingale Court) January – April 2021 – Simon secured the acquittal of the managing director charged with four counts of manslaughter arising out of the explosion of the wood mill owned by his company, in Bosley, Cheshire. The case was one of the largest gross negligence manslaughter trials brought in this country, in front of Mrs Justice May and a jury in Chester Town Hall, sitting as a Nightingale Court during the second lockdown of the Covid pandemic. Simon and Dominic Kay KC (representing WTL) persuaded the Judge at the close of the prosecution case after hearing 3 months' worth of evidence that there was no case to answer in relation to the manslaughter charges for want of proof of legal causation. The decision was upheld by the Court of Appeal following an appeal by the Prosecution of the terminating ruling (see above).

Inquest into the death of Kaden Reddick (Reading Coroner's Court) March 2020 – Simon represented Arcadia Group at the inquest into the death of a 10-year old boy who died whilst swinging on a heavy corian 'queue barrier' in front of the tills at the TopShop store in the Oracle shopping centre, Reading. The jury delivered a conclusion of accidental death. The criminal investigation into the incident remains ongoing.

Inquest into the death of Rocco Wright (Wakefield Coroner's Court) February 2020 – Simon represented David Lloyd Leisure Ltd at the inquest into the death of a 3-year old boy who drowned at a swimming pool one of the leisure company's private member leisure clubs in Leeds. The jury delivered a conclusion of accidental death. The criminal investigation into the incident remains ongoing.

R v ACE Waste Haulage Ltd (Old Bailey) January 2020 – Simon secured the acquittal of a waste recycling company (in liquidation) charged with corporate manslaughter following a 4 week trial at the Old Bailey before Mrs Justice Thornton and a jury. The company was convicted of a lesser safety breach.

Grenfell Tower Inquiry 2018-2020 (ongoing) – Simon (together with Lynne McCafferty KC) has represented and continues to represent M&E consultancy, Max Fordham LLP, in relation to their involvement in the design of the M&E aspects of the Grenfell Tower refurbishment, including the design of the smoke ventilation system.

R v DJT Surfacing Ltd & Stagecoach (St Albans Crown Court) June 2019 – Simon, leading Harry Vann from these Chambers, secured the acquittal of a small highways contractor (DJT Surfacing Ltd) charged in relation to the death of a woman who was run over by one of its delivery vehicles, on a pedestrian crossing



at Bedford Bus Station. The trial lasted 4 weeks at St Albans Crown Court before Mr Justice Turner and a jury. The co-defendant, Stagecoach, was convicted in relation to the incident.

R v Chevron Ltd and Valero Energy UK Ltd (Swansea Crown Court) (April 2019) – Simon represented Chevron in relation to the criminal prosecution concerning the explosion at the Pembroke Oil refinery in 2011, in which four workers died. The company pleaded guilty and the sentence was expected to be one of the largest ever financial penalties imposed under the new Sentencing Guidelines for this type of offence. Ultimately, the business was fined by Mr Justice Lewis a sum of £5 million, which, whilst at the time the joint largest health and safety fine, was nevertheless viewed as extremely lenient in the circumstances, given the sheer size of the corporate entity, the high culpability finding (stretching back 13 years), and the number of fatalities involved.

Hillsborough trial (R v Duckenfield and Mackrell) (Preston Crown Court) February 2019 – Simon, together with Jason Beer KC, represented Graham Mackrell, Sheffield Wednesday's Club Secretary and Safety Officer back at the time of the 1989 disaster at Hillsborough football stadium in which 96 people died, in this groundbreaking criminal prosecution arising 30 years later. The criminal investigation and resulting prosecution was initiated by the then Home Secretary, Theresa May, after a renewed inquest into the disaster chaired by Lord Justice Goldring made a number of causal findings against various people and organisations. In the criminal trial Mr Mackrell faced three safety offences, two of which (punishable by imprisonment) were withdrawn following legal argument during the course of the proceedings. Mr Mackrell was convicted of the remaining non-causative safety offence, which was punishable only by way of fine, and received a fine of only £6,500.

R v Interserve Facilities Ltd (Hove Crown Court) (November 2018) – Simon represented the company responsible for the facilities management of the Animal and Plant Agency's high containment biological agent facility at Weybridge, following an incident where there was a failure of the power supply serving safety critical containment and control systems. The company chose to plead guilty and notwithstanding the size of the business, it was fined only £93,000 after Simon's mitigation.

R v Adsett & Ors (Old Bailey)(February 2018) – Simon represented a site manager charged with gross negligence manslaughter in relation to his management of a busy construction project in Hanover Square, Mayfair, London, from which a large and heavy window frame fell, crushing to death a female passer by. Simon led Alice Jarrett from these Chambers in the case. After an 8-week trial, the site manager was cleared by the jury of manslaughter and convicted of a lesser safety offence for which he received a suspended sentence. A sub-contractor's director was convicted of manslaughter.

R v McDonalds (Basildon Crown Court) (January 2018) – Simon represented the well known burger chain in relation to an incident at its Lakeside Drive-Thru branch when congestion at the site caused an irate driver to run down an employee who was being required to direct traffic flow. The company chose to plead guilty and, notwithstanding the size of the business, the company was fined only £200,000 after Simon's mitigation.

Recommendations

"Simon is first class."..."extremely talented and dedicated with a real drive to get to the bottom of tricky issues."...He "is exceptional when it comes to managing clients, and academically he is superb."

Chambers & Partners, 2025

"An exceptional KC and superb advocate. He knows how to read the court and jury."..."Simon has a phenomenal capacity and an ability to assimilate a vast amount of evidence which us mere mortals can only dream about."

Legal 500, 2025

"Simon is an excellent advocate, gaining the trust of clients, judges and juries alike."..."Simon is one of the best in this field. He makes clients confident because he makes it clear he's going to do his very best for them."

Chambers & Partners, 2024

'Simon is meticulous in his preparation and his advocacy is firm, persuasive and impressive.'

Legal 500, 2024

'Simon advocates on his clients' behalf with grace and panache. His statements are concise and precise, often encapsulating complex points and principles in both judge and jury-friendly terms and aided by his crystal-clear delivery.'

Legal 500, 2024

"One of the best trial counsel around and an expert at setting out mitigation. Simon can deal with those cases where you need a touch of magic to navigate difficult or complex issues."

Chambers & Partners, 2022

"Absolutely first class. He has a fantastic feel for a case, and really gets into the detail and understands every aspect."

Legal 500, 2022

"His written work is brilliant, his cross-examination skills are very, very good and he's a brilliant trial advocate."

Chambers & Partners, 2021

"Simon is a star performer in the top bracket. He is very astute and his strategic thinking and attention to detail are second to none. Makes clients feel reassured that they have someone at the top of their game who will fight their corner."..."Real expertise, very approachable and measured in his approach – my go-to advocate!"

Legal 500, 2021

"He is fiercely intelligent, very commercially aware and has a brilliant manner with clients. He has a real strength in understanding and simplifying technical and expert evidence for judges and juries alike and is amongst the most polished advocates around. Simon is particularly good at looking at novel arguments and bringing a new way of thinking to the case."

Legal 500, 2021

"A brilliant barrister who will fly in silk."; "He gets a great rapport going with clients and has a good criminal legal brain which is of great help on strategic issues that come up."

Chambers & Partners, 2020