Stephen Spence

Call 1983

Stephen.Spence@drystone.com 020 7404 1881

Stephen Spence is a highly regarded criminal practitioner, regularly instructed as a leading junior in murder, manslaughter, fraud and large-scale drug cases.

He is also widely known for his aviation practice expertise defending for both individual and corporate clients in prosecutions by both the CPS and the Civil Aviation Authority.

Stephen is also instructed in inquests and civil actions arising out of aircraft accidents and has been involved in a large number of high-profile cases including the death of footballer Emiliao Sala.

A significant part of his practice is prosecuting and defending in rape and sexual offences against children, with CPS Grade 4 and RASSO list. Stephen is also a vulnerable witness questioner, trainer and facilitator.

Expertise

Murder & Manslaughter

Stephen has prosecuted and defended as both led and leading counsel and sole counsel in a number of murder cases and attempted murders.

He has a particular interest and expertise in DNA evidence and forensics.

He has also been involved in a number of cases where there have been potential difficulties with witnesses because participants were gang members, or similar, and were unwilling to co-operate with the police.

Notable Murder & Manslaughter cases

Indicative Case

Alexander Palmer. Prosecuted would be serial killer.

1 Bedford Row
London
WC1R 4BU

T: +44 (0)20 7404 1881
E: clerks@drystone.com
DX: 332 London/Chancery Lane

G-STYX case

Defended an Aircraft Inspector charged with gross negligence and manslaughter. A successful application for a Nolle Proseque resulted in the case being stopped.

R v Hoyle

Defended a pilot charged with gross negligence manslaughter arising out of the crash of a vintage aircraft. Client found not guilty after trial.

R v Hill

11 counts of gross negligence manslaughter. Defended the pilot in the Shoreham Air Show crash.

Sexual Offences

Stephen has prosecuted and defended extensively in cases involving rape and other serious sexual offences, particularly offences involving children.

He is an accredited trainer/facilitator for the questioning of vulnerable witnesses and s28 procedures and is frequently instructed in cases involving young and/or vulnerable complainants and witnesses.

He has successfully defended in several 'grooming gang' cases in the North of England.

Historic Sexual Offences

Stephen has a wealth of experience in prosecutions and defendants in allegations of historic sexual abuse. He acted as leading counsel in the prosecution of a number of teachers charged with sexual offences and cruelty arising out of allegations of behaviour at a residential school for 'problem children'.

Notable Historic Sexual Offences cases

R v C - Prosecution

This was a cold case review of an historic rape relying upon familial attribution and STR DNA. Attribution of the DNA was hotly contested by the defendant. Following his conviction a review of other cold cases resulted in further charges of rape and further convictions.

Firearms

Stephen's in depth knowledge of firearms legislation means he is frequently called upon to prosecute or defend the illegal possession of weapons, appeals against revocation/refusal to grant certificates/licences etc.

1 Bedford Row
London
WC1R 4BU

T: +44 (0)20 7404 1881
E: clerks@drystone.com
DX: 332 London/Chancery Lane

Military Law

Stephen has a good working knowledge of Military Law and military practices. He has defended both Army and RAF personnel at Courts Martial for a variety of offences including assaults, sexual offences and drug possession.

Aviation: CAA Prosecutions

Stephen is recognised as the 'go to barrister' for defending prosecutions brought by the CAA. He has defended in cases ranging from allegations of endangering aircraft through to paperwork issues. He has acted for pilots, engineers, corporations and international airlines, both UK and overseas carriers.

He is an RAF trained pilot with a wide experience of piloting experience so his knowledge and expertise in this area is unmatched.

Notable Aviation: CAA Prosecutions cases

CAA v Amazon

Defended the retail giant Amazon on charges brought by the CAA for carrying dangerous goods by air.

CAA v K H

Helicopter company charged with a number of paperwork deficiencies. Conviction would have resulted in the closure of the business – found not guilty after trial.

CAA v TH

Helicoptor company charged with offences arising out of allegations of engineering discrepancies and failings. Conviction would have resulted in the revocation of licences and closure of a multimillion pound helicopter operator. Found not guilty after trial.

Defended airlines such as Malaysian and Norwegian in respect of unauthorised carriage of animals.

During the pandemic provided advice to international airlines regarding coronavirus regulations.

CAA v H

Stephen is regularly instructed to accompany pilots and other aviation professionals at Regulatory interviews, and has successfully represented pilots and others at Regulatory Article 6 Appeals against CAA decisions/enforcement action.

Aviation: CAA Appeals

Stephen is regularly instructed to accompany pilots and other aviation professionals at Regulatory interviews, and has successfully represented pilots and others at Regulatory Article 6 Appeals against CAA decisions/enforcement action.

1 Bedford Row
London
WC1R 4BU

T: +44 (0)20 7404 1881
E: clerks@drystone.com
DX: 332 London/Chancery Lane

Aviation: Aircraft Ownership

Stephen advises on aircraft ownership agreements, operating agreements and chartering. These have ranged from light aircraft group agreements through to multimillion pound global business jet operations.

Inquests

Stephen has been instructed in a number of high profile inquests resulting out of aircraft accidents, due to his extensive experience and knowledge in this area.

He acted for the family of the pilot in the Vauxhall helicopter crash and was involved in the Shoreham and Sala inquests.

A number of these claims settled following mediation. Stephen is qualified as a mediator and undertakes mediations on behalf of clients.

Notable Inquests cases

Civil claims

Stephen was instructed by insurers in respect of High Court claims and potential claims arising out of aircraft crashes. His clients have included The Light Aircraft Association, The BHGA, The BPA as well as aircraft owners and operators.

Qualifications

- B.Sc(Econ)

Memberships

- Criminal Bar Association
- South Eastern Circuit

Awards

1 Bedford Row
London
WC1R 4BU

T: +44 (0)20 7404 1881
E: clerks@drystone.com
DX: 332 London/Chancery Lane

Stephen Spence

1 Bedford Row
London
WC1R 4BU

T: +44 (0)20 7404 1881
E: clerks@drystone.com
DX: 332 London/Chancery Lane

Stephen Spence

1 Bedford Row
London
WC1R 4BU

T: +44 (0)20 7404 1881
E: clerks@drystone.com
DX: 332 London/Chancery Lane

1 Bedford Row
London
WC1R 4BU

T: +44 (0)20 7404 1881
E: clerks@drystone.com
DX: 332 London/Chancery Lane

1 Bedford Row
London
WC1R 4BU

T: +44 (0)20 7404 1881
E: clerks@drystone.com
DX: 332 London/Chancery Lane