

Eddy Steele

Call 2022



Clerks' Details

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Appointments

- Assistant Coroner, 2022
- CPS Grade 2 Prosecutor, 2023

Memberships

- Criminal Bar Association
- The Coroners Society
- Health & Safety Lawyers Association

Education

- Örebro Universitet, Human Rights Law
- American University in Cairo, Egypt, International Criminal Law
- Coventry University, Law LLB (Hons) First Class

Criminal CV

Overview

Eddy is an immensely experienced criminal and regulatory practitioner with over 15 years' experience in the legal industry.

After achieving first class honours in law, Eddy qualified as a solicitor and worked in that capacity for nine years. He then transferred to the Bar in July 2022 and joined Exchange Chambers in September of the same year.

The first period of his career was spent working at a regional heavy-weight criminal defence firm in Leeds, where Eddy worked 24/7 as a police station accredited representative for years before qualifying as a solicitor in October 2013, and then qualified as a duty solicitor in the summer of the following year. He later became a Higher Rights Advocate. Eddy therefore has extensive historical experience in criminal matters in the Magistrates' Courts and also in the police stations, in respect of the full range of criminal offences, including public order, theft/dishonesty offences and all other offences.

The second substantial period of his career as a solicitor was spent working in regulatory law, from 2015 onwards. This involved Eddy developing a national reputation (including being recognised in the Legal 500 and speaking at national conferences), and operating as the lead criminal regulatory solicitor for one of the biggest global business law firms, DLA Piper.

In this role Eddy acted for household name global businesses in very sensitive investigations and prosecutions and in health & safety fatality work which garnered the attention of national and international news coverage.

Eddy has become an expert in reputation management for large commercial organisations which become embroiled in very sensitive, national headline regulatory cases.

His regulatory experience is very broad, including –

- Ecclesiastical regulatory work arising out of historical child sexual exploitation allegations;
- Inquest proceedings as advocate, usually where there is high risk of a neglect rider and/or Prevention of Future Deaths Reports, for various sectors including: aviation, food, manufacturing, workplace fatality (range of sectors over the years), hospital negligence, medical devices/pathways cases, Article 2 prison deaths, gas network deaths, product liability, mental health/workplace bullying, care homes and many other sectors;
- Health & Safety fatality and serious injury work, including privileged investigations and Crown Court prosecutions, under various regulations including: DSEAR, CDM/management of contractors, COSHH, asbestos, WAH, PUWER, legionella, and a myriad of others to cover boutique situations. He has successfully acted for various commercial organisations under sections 2 and 3 HSWA and also for senior directors/officers under section 37;
- Road traffic, both in respect of individuals at risk of losing their licence and for commercial organisations on section 172 allegations, right through to death by dangerous and death by careless prosecutions at the Crown Court, very often involving complex, expert evidence;
- Environmental law proceedings, including under the permitting regulations and also more boutique prosecutions in respect of water law;
- Fire safety prosecutions under the FSO (prior to post-Grenfell fire safety/building safety legislation) and advising commercial organisations and ALMOs in respect of compliance with the new regime;
- Public Inquiries, including the Grenfell Tower Inquiry where Eddy was the senior criminal regulatory solicitor acting for a key Core Participant involved in the manufacturing process of the cladding. This work mandate involved international travel to conduct privileged investigations pursuant to corporate manslaughter allegations;
- Product safety and compliance with EU regulations;
- Trading Standards cases;
- Licensing law, including alcohol, gambling and firearms, usually where the facts involved a fatality, for example in respect of appearing at expedited review hearings where the business stands at risk of being shut down as a function of the tribunals review of the licensing conditions after a fatality and risk management review by the Police;
- Food safety, including national headline cases involving allergen labelling, and significant experience acting for organisations higher up the manufacturing chain, being investigated by regulatory bodies.
- Related product recall proceedings;
- Anti-bribery and corruption advice under the Bribery Act 2010, anti-money laundering and modern slavery advice.

Since being called to the Bar and joining Exchange Chambers in 2022, Eddy has already acted in significant crime and regulatory proceedings, both as prosecution and defence advocate. He regularly appears at professional discipline proceedings, in respect of the police, as well as prosecuting for various regulatory agencies, most recently the Marine Management Organisation in respect of fisheries law prosecutions.

Eddy is rightly recognised as an expert in road traffic matters, whether it be his string of successes in saving a driving licence for totters under exceptional hardship or special reasons arguments, through to defending death by dangerous and death by careless prosecutions at the Crown Court.

Eddy has received extremely positive feedback from various instructing solicitors and lay clients in respect of his results driven approach, care for detail, and drawing on his skills as a solicitor in relation to communication to solicitor and lay client at all times. He takes particular pride in his attention to detail and responsiveness to his clients.

He also has a busy care home practice, having developed a reputation for being a strong and determined advocate at inquest proceedings in the last 10 years, appearing nationally and in headline-grabbing Article 2, jury inquests, as advocate. Drawing on his substantial experience, Eddy is often called in to represent commercial organisations at PIR Hearings and also at full Inquest hearings in cases which involve a risk of a rider of neglect, finding of unlawful killing (post-Maughan and the civil standard) and in cases involving the risk of a Prevention of Future Deaths report.

Eddy is regularly instructed by insurer firms and global business law firms of solicitors, both in respect of regulatory proceedings and criminal law proceedings, but also to provide strategic advice in respect of managing the relationship with a regulator (HSE/EA) or the LA and managing the response of the duty holder lay client. He encourages early contact by his instructing solicitors to 'set the tone' which can often have a significant impact on the direction of travel in a regulator's investigation, prior to any prosecution being properly or thoroughly contemplated by said regulator. Eddy has had significant success in this regard over the years, notably (for example) in a COSHH investigation involving a household name car manufacturer and in respect of a climbing wall serious injury incident.

He gives talks (and has done for years) to commercial audiences on regulatory law, safety risk management and more particular topics in health & safety, and has been recognised in Legal 500 for health & safety law.

Running concurrent with his regulatory practice, Eddy is an accomplished criminal advocate in the Crown Court. He has a busy caseload on the full spectrum of criminal offence, from public order, dishonesty, violence and sexual offences on the one hand, through to murder and manslaughter and other very serious offences at the other. Eddy has a busy trial diary and is regularly at the Crown Court across the northern and north eastern circuits, either as junior alone or being led by KC's, depending on the nature of the allegation.

Eddy has successfully defended a number of Crown Court trials, his most recent being a section 18 and then a robbery trial. He is a respected advocate, fearless in his approach yet courteous in equal measure, both in courtroom delivery and behind the scenes dealings (with client and opponent alike), which leads to the professional respect he enjoys from the Judiciary and his opposing counsel.

Eddy also prosecutes for the Crown Prosecution Service where, again, he has managed to develop a reputation as a formidable advocate and a compassionate individual in respect of dealing with vulnerable complainants and witnesses.

In addition to his workload as a barrister, in June 2022 Eddy was appointed as a deputy coroner and he regularly sits in that capacity at Hull Coroners Court.

Recommendations

“Eddy Steele is very approachable, giving sensible, practical and solid advice.”
The Legal 500 2022

Beyond the Bar

Eddy enjoys table tennis, squash and time with his family and friends.