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## Greg Unwin

Greg Unwin specialises in serious organised crime, including homicide, modern slavery and drug trafficking as well as financial and regulatory crime and money laundering. He is a leading junior sought after in cases requiring complex legal argument and examination of expert witnesses.

Greg defends and prosecutes and has significant experience in the Court of Appeal. Notable cases include the DWP's largest ever fraud investigation, a gross negligence manslaughter prosecution following the electrocution of a child, the head of a country lines drugs network tried for the close range shooting of a rival dealer, an SFO corruption trial and the "Bulmer Art Heist" trial.

He is ranked by the legal directories in crime, fraud, POCA and asset recovery.

*"Greg is a meticulous, outstanding advocate, who gives great attention to the smallest of detail" · "Tactically, he was brilliant. He's a real star in the making" · "A lawyer with a brilliant mind, who is a really creative thinker. His legal arguments, both written and verbal, are very good"* – **Chambers & Partners 2024**

*"Greg has an encyclopaedic knowledge of the law and he is absolutely on top of the facts of every case he is involved in. He is trusted and popular with clients, both professional and lay, and respected by judges and other advocates. His advocacy is very smooth and accomplished"* – **Legal 500 (Crime) 2024**

*"His eye for detail means he often picks up issues in evidence others miss. He also has a calm and professional approach to every case"* – **Legal 500 (Fraud) 2024**

*"A fiercely intelligent barrister with a very fine legal brain, who is also highly approachable"* – **Chambers & Partners 2023**

*"Greg's abilities as a formidable advocate and tactician are being increasingly-recognised" · "An understated but highly-effective advocate who has excellent client care skills"* – **Legal 500, 2023**

*"Has a great analytical mind and excels in legal argument and analysis"* – **Chambers & Partners 2023**

*"Very clever and enormously hard working ... displays an immediate grasp of complex factual and legal issues ... always presents an innovative and novel approach ... a calm and considerate manner with clients which quickly puts them at their ease" – "mastery over the detail in fraud cases"* – **Legal 500, 2022**



*“Professional and diligent” · “incredibly bright and dedicated” – Chambers & Partners 2021*

*“His knowledge of the law is first class ... Very bright, and thinks outside the box” – “He has a very quick mind which means that he is normally a step ahead of the rest. He is a very effective and well-rounded advocate. Notwithstanding his no-nonsense style he is equally capable of sensitive cross-examination of a vulnerable witness” – Legal 500, 2021*

## Criminal defence

Greg Unwin's core practice is defending in complex multi-handed organised crime trials.

- R v SA (2024) – Murder.
- R v ZA (2024) – Murder.
- R v TD (2024) – Murder.
- [R v Johnson-Davies](#) (2023) – Perverting the course of justice, Beckenham Place Park murder trial.
- [Operation Galway \(2023\)](#) – Leading junior for first defendant in seven-week trial. Only defendant acquitted of drugs conspiracy. Successfully applied to dismiss firearms charge.
- [Operation Skawa](#) (2022) – Human trafficking and controlling prostitution. Seven week trial.
- Operation Balleh (2021) – For lead defendant in international modern slavery trial.
- [R v Bearman \(2021\)](#) – Gross negligence manslaughter. Fatal electrocution of 7 year old boy in pub garden.
- Operation Atoll (2021) – Multiple gunpoint robberies of cash-in-transit vans.
- [Bulmer Art heist trial](#); R v SA [2019] 4 WLR 142 – Defendant charged with conspiracy to defraud after recovering £2 million of fine art stolen from the heir to the Bulmers Cider fortune. Submission of no case to answer succeeded at trial and on the prosecution's appeal, leading to collapse of the case.
- Operation Spruce (2019) – Leading junior in seven week trial of conspiracy to export high value stolen vehicles. Client acquitted.
- [R v Smith](#) [2019] EWCA Crim 1151 – Gang shooting of drugs runner by rival county lines network. Led junior for first defendant at trial; junior alone alongside Michael Mansfield QC and Michael Borrelli QC in the Court of Appeal.
- R v CH (2019) – Led junior. Rape and causing others to engage in sexual activity.
- R v NB (2018) – Murder of resident in St Mungo's hostel, who died five years after the original assault. Led junior for defendant found unfit to plead.
- [R v Onyeagucha](#) [2018] EWCA Crim 2960 – Successful appeal against life sentence for repeated stabbing.
- [Operation Departure](#) (2017) – Defendant facilitated escape to Syria of



aspiring jihadi following the ISIS inspired murder of a spiritual healer.

- [R v McCarthy](#) (2017) – Traveller site murder trial.
- [Operation Trieste](#) (2015) – Only defendant acquitted after seven week trial of multi-kilo drugs conspiracy.
- R v KR (2014) – Alleged repeated sexual assaults of a child in religious family context. Defendant acquitted.
- [Operation Ilex](#) (2013) – Armed robberies conspiracy. Junior alone for only acquitted defendant. Extensive cross-examination of telephone experts.
- [Cowan v DPP](#) (2013) 177 JP 474 – Successful High Court appeal on whether a university campus was a 'public place'.
- R v KP (2013) – Defendant with psychotic illness imprisoned her GP during home visit and attacked her with a baseball bat.
- [R v Nguyen, Mai & Dao](#) [2013] Crim LR 234 – Whether threat of false imprisonment can establish the defence of duress. Application of the Human Trafficking Convention. Junior alone for the appellants against David Perry QC.
- [R v Ray](#) [2011] 6 Arch Rev 4 – Whether a military issue smoke grenade was a prohibited firearm.

## Fraud & Financial Crime

Greg Unwin prosecutes and defends in cases involving allegations of serious fraud, money laundering and international corruption. He has advised companies during criminal investigations. He is appointed to the SFO panel B and the CPS specialist fraud panel.

- [Operation Riot \(2024\)](#) – Leading junior for first defendant in ten-week fraud trial. High Court writ of habeas corpus. Interlocutory order by Lady Chief Justice that trial continue without a jury. Defendant acquitted by judge of all counts.
- [Operation Volcanic \(2023\)](#) – VHCC. Largest known DWP fraud investigation.
- [Operation Cathird \(2022\)](#) – Company director laundering proceeds of €3.8 million European Distribution Fraud.
- [Operation Vitelius \(2021\)](#) – Junior alone in £9 million cyber fraud. Identity theft, 'vishing' and harvesting of financial details sold on the dark web for cryptocurrency.
- [R v Jiang \(2021\)](#) – £4.9m benefit figure reduced to £1.5m in contested confiscation proceedings concerning unregistered money exchange and 'Daigou' business. Led by Simon Farrell QC.
- [SFO v Güralp Systems Ltd \(2019\)](#) – Junior counsel for the SFO led by Simon Mayo QC. Deferred prosecution agreement and ten week trial of directors for conspiracy to make corrupt payments to a government official in South Korea.
- [R v SA & Ors \[2020\] 1 Cr App R 5](#) – Resisted prosecution appeal against terminating ruling in alleged conspiracy to defraud, arising from the recovery of stolen fine art.
- [Operation Range \(2018\)](#) – For lead defendant in large scale car ringing and ensuing confiscation proceedings.
- [R v Say \(2017\)](#) – Complex pensions and property fraud trial of IFA acknowledged as industry expert. Examination of financial witnesses.
- [R v Emery \(2016\)](#) – Carbon credits boiler room fraud.



- [Operation Hornet \(2015-6\)](#) – Retained by financial institution to advise on LPP in £245m criminal fraud investigation.
- [Operation Airbrick \(2015\)](#) – Company director acquitted after seven week trial of £14 million money laundering allegations in the under bond alcohol trading industry.
- **United Arab Emirates v Akhand (2015)** – Direct Access. Defendant's extradition to the UAE for US\$8 million cheque fraud resisted on dual criminality grounds.
- [Operation Steamroller \(2013\)](#) – Independent LPP counsel instructed by the SFO in international \$120 million share sale fraud prosecution.

## Criminal prosecution

Greg Unwin prosecutes offences of serious violence, fraud and drug supply as a level 3 CPS panel advocate. He is appointed to the specialist CPS panels for serious crime and fraud, the SFO Prosecution Panel B and Regulatory List B. He has also been instructed in private prosecutions.

- [Operation Charmless \(2023\)](#) – Armed robberies trial; Flying Squad investigation. Following advice on unduly lenient sentence, sentence referred to Court of Appeal by AG and increased to life.
- **Operation Volcanic (2023)** – VHCC. Largest known DWP fraud investigation.
- **Operation Cathird (2022)** – Company director laundering proceeds of €3.8 million European Distribution Fraud.
- **Operation Charmless (2023)** – Flying Squad investigation. Multiple armed robberies – convictions on all counts at trial.
- [Operation Lexington \(2022\)](#) – Conspiracy to commit multiple professional dwelling burglaries targeting £200k of firearms and high value jewellery.
- **R v Dabycharun [2021] EWCA Crim 1923** – Deliberate wounding with a vehicle. Appeal against conviction dismissed.
- **R v Dickens & Ano (2020)** – Targeted firebombing of victim in his car.
- **LB Barnet v McKenzie & Ano (2020)** – Fraud by abuse of position over 2½ years by council employees.
- [SFO v Güralp Systems Ltd \(2019\)](#) – Junior counsel for the SFO led by Simon Mayo QC. Deferred prosecution agreement and ten week trial of directors for conspiracy to make corrupt payments to a government official in South Korea.
- [R v Blackburn & Ors \(2019\)](#) – Fraudulent evasion of duty on cigarettes. Instructed by CPS Specialist Fraud Division.
- [R v Richie & Nolan \(2018\)](#) – Violent robbery and aggravated burglary of drug dealer in his home. Both defendants convicted and received double figure sentences.
- [R v Ian Paterson \(2017\)](#) – High profile cancer surgeon deliberately wounded multiple patients in unnecessary operations. Prosecution disclosure junior.
- [R v Russell & Storey \(2016\)](#) – Junior alone. Serious and highly publicised acid attack causing life changing injuries. Investigation reopened when a 'grass' came forward after a Crimewatch appeal. Both defendants were convicted after trial with lead defendant receiving



17-year extended sentence.

## Regulatory Law

Greg Unwin advises and defends individuals and companies facing investigation and prosecution for alleged regulatory breaches, particularly by Trading Standards authorities. He is able accept instructions directly from the client. In 2019 he was appointed to the Regulatory Advocates List B. He is experienced in healthcare professional regulatory proceedings.

- **Re S Ltd (2021)** – Successfully resisted private prosecutor’s application for a summons alleging consumer protection offences against online retailer.
- **R v RW** – Defending fisherman prosecuted by IFCA under EU Fisheries and Hygiene regulations.
- **Re S UK (2020)** – Direct Access. Advised multinational €1.4bn retailer on the application of the English and Welsh Coronavirus Regulations, resulting in withdrawal of threatened enforcement action by Trading Standards.
- **R v SL (2020)**– Successful motion to quash charges turning on the interpretation of the Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008.
- **Re T Ltd (2019)** – Direct Access. Advised award winning boutique drinks company on the Nutrition and Health Claims Regulations.
- [\*\*R v Madden & Ors \(2018\)\*\*](#) – Defended timeshare regulations prosecution brought by Trading Standards.
- **Re C Ltd (2017)** – Advised multi-office conveyancing firm on the Money Laundering Regulations 2017.
- [\*\*Winterbourne View Hospital \(2016-7\)\*\*](#) – Healthcare professional regulatory proceedings.
- [\*\*NMC v Coulter, Banwell & Kennard \(2015\)\*\*](#) – Healthcare professional regulatory proceedings.

## Asset Forfeiture and Confiscation

Greg Unwin acts principally for the defence in post-conviction confiscation proceedings and on private instruction in account freezing / forfeiture applications.

- [\*\*R v Jiang \(2021\)\*\*](#) – £4.9m benefit figure reduced to £1.5m in contested confiscation proceedings concerning unregistered money exchange and ‘Daigou’ business. Led by Simon Farrell QC.
- [\*\*Operation Princekin \(2020\)\*\*](#) – Advising several respondents to NCA applications for Account Forfeiture Orders, introduced by the Criminal Finances Act 2017.
- **R v Barrington (2019)** – Benefit figure reduced in confiscation proceedings from £3m to £500k.
- [\*\*R v Navarro \(2018\)\*\*](#) – Section 22 POCA reconsideration involving third party interests.

## Professional Discipline



Greg Unwin has presented numerous fitness to practise hearings before healthcare regulatory panels. He was chosen to present particularly complex and high profile cases on behalf of the NMC. He is able to accept direct access instructions from individual healthcare professionals.

- [Winterbourne View Hospital \(2016-7\)](#) – Series of document-heavy hearings against multiple senior nurses in management roles during the institutional abuse scandal exposed by BBC Panorama.
- [NMC v Coulter, Banwell & Kennard \(2015\)](#) – Secret footage, shown on BBC Newsnight, revealed mistreatment of brain injury patient.
- [NMC v Matthews \(2014\)](#) – Midwife threatened mother in labour.
- [NMC v Avramova \(2013\)](#) – Catalogue of misconduct charges including attempt to inject air bolus into newborn baby.
- [NMC v Johnson \(2012\)](#) – Manager of mental health ward performed nazi salutes and mistreated patients and staff.

## Professional Memberships

- JUSTICE working party member
- Grade 3 CPS Counsel, including serious crime and fraud panels
- SFO Prosecution Panel B
- Regulatory List B
- Fraud Lawyers Association
- Criminal Bar Association
- South Eastern Circuit
- Pupil Supervisor

## Awards, Qualifications & Other

- South Eastern Circuit Florida Advanced Advocacy Scholarship 2014.
- Winner / Finalist: BPP, City and ELMC mooted competitions 2007-2008, judged by Longmore LJ, Lord Neuberger and ECJ judges.
- Times Law Award 2007, presented by the Lord Chancellor.
- Bar Vocational Course, BPP Law School, London (Middle Temple Queen Mother Major Scholarship 2007).
- Graduate Diploma in Law, City Law School, London (Middle Temple Queen Mother Major Scholarship 2006).
- MA (Hons) Philosophy, Queens' College, Cambridge University (College Prize and Exhibition 1997).

Greg Unwin's professional judgement and technical skills benefit from a previous six-year career with an international consulting and design services firm before he joined the Bar. His clients included the Guardian, Shell, Barclays, HMRC and the House of Commons (where he gave evidence to a Select Committee).

## Direct Access

Greg Unwin is approved to accept instructions direct from international and UK clients on a direct access basis, without the need for a solicitor intermediary in appropriate cases.