

Richard Dawson

Call to Bar: 2001



"Richard Dawson is a well-regarded junior with a notable criminal practice. He is particularly sought after for his expertise in dangerous driving cases, and he also handles matters relating to organised crime and drugs offences." - Crime - Chambers and Partners 2024

"Richard's technical ability and advocacy are excellent. He is just very easy to work with and very good with experts." - Crime - Chambers and Partners 2024

"Richard's in-depth knowledge is brilliant. He just knows what to do and instils confidence in me." - Crime - Chambers and Partners 2024

"Richard is an incredibly hard working barrister. His drafting of legal arguments and written submissions is particularly impressive, and in relation to advocacy, he is a confident, persuasive, and seriously impressive court room presence." Recommended in Legal 500 2024 - Crime (General and Fraud)

"Richard's regulatory specialism focusses on transport law and it is an area where he is developing a national reputation as being a leading expert. He regularly appears before the Traffic Commissioner where he represents haulage companies, transport managers, and drivers, and his success rate is outstanding." Recommended in Legal 500 2024 - Business and Regulatory Crime (Inc H&S)

"Richard's written and oral advocacy skills are excellent." - Chambers & Partners, 2023

"He is a brilliant barrister to work with." - Chambers & Partners, 2023

"He is superb on serious motoring matters." - Chambers & Partners, 2023

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Practice areas:

Road Traffic Law
Regulatory
Inquests
Professional Discipline
Licensing
Serious Crime
Business Crime & Financial Regulation
Prison Law

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"Richard is a fantastic advocate. On his feet in a trial is as strong as many counsel a great deal more senior. What really makes him stand out is the ability to get to grips with and apply technical and complex expert evidence, such as collision reconstruction, medical, tachographs data etc. This enables him to challenge prosecution experts and present defence evidence in a fluent and concise way, which translates to the jury and bench." - Legal 500, 2023

Richard "has an impressive practice and has been active in multiple injury and death by dangerous driving cases." - Legal 500, 2023

"He has good attention to detail and he establishes a rapport with clients." - Chambers & Partners, 2022

"He gets his strategy and approach spot on. He is an excellent all-rounder." - Chambers & Partners, 2022

"He is brilliant with clients - he is personable and down to earth. He is extremely thorough, a very engaging trial lawyer and the juries really buy into him." - Chambers & Partners, 2022

"Richard is an extremely experienced barrister who has a keen eye for the detail. He works very well under pressure and engages with the jury in a way I've not seen with any other barrister." - The Legal 500, 2022

"The jury sit up and listen when he is on his feet and his likeable, understandable approach means all can follow the issues he raises" - The Legal 500, 2022

"His diligence, preparation and communication help put clients at ease" The Legal 500, 2021

Richard Dawson is an expert trial lawyer who specialises in road traffic law. He has a nation-wide client base and undertakes work throughout the UK. Richard has developed a strong reputation for hard work, immaculate preparation and clear fact management in complex cases and he is highly regarded by all those who instruct him. Richard is a road traffic specialist, with more than 15 years experience representing those accused with driving offences; particularly offences arising from serious road accidents.

His wealth of knowledge and skill in this highly specialised area is best demonstrated by his track record of successfully defending drivers charged with causing death and/or catastrophic injury. Richard is actively sought out by national and international private client companies and insurance companies to represent their employees and insured clients in serious injury and fatal road traffic accidents, owing to his vast experience and expertise in this niche area of law. Richard provides advice and representation to motorists at all stages of criminal investigation and prosecution. He strives to provide the highest level of service to clients and recognises the sensitivities associated with cases of this type, which often attract national media interest. Richard has built up strong working relationships with key experts in the fields of accident investigation and reconstruction; vehicle examination; tachograph analysis and route tracing; telematics ("black box" incident data recorders); CCTV image analysis and enhancement; neurology (including sleep disorders, cough syncope, and forms of epilepsy); A&E care (causation); LGV and PCV operator licensing; and transportation, trucking, haulage and passenger carrying vehicles.

Richard is experienced in regulatory matters arising in the field of road traffic law, with consistent instruction in cases commenced by the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (formerly VOSA); Trading Standards; and the Health and Safety Executive. Richard is routinely instructed in road traffic cases arising out of and/or in connection to an inquest before a Coroner, touching on the death. Richard is frequently asked to represent private client individuals charged with motoring offences. He has successfully represented professionals in both the Magistrates' Court and the Crown Court, including solicitors, accountants, medical professionals, professional sports personalities and high-net-worth individuals. Richard is licensed to provide legal advice and representation directly to members of the public

ROAD TRAFFIC OFFENCES

Accidents Resulting in Death

R v Platt – causing death by dangerous driving – Defence Counsel – privately funded case (ongoing)

R v Wall – causing death by dangerous driving – Defence Counsel – privately funded case (ongoing)

R v Sant – double fatality, causing death by dangerous driving – Defence Counsel – privately funded case(ongoing) Reported: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-devon-39707192>
<http://www.plymouthherald.co.uk/disabled-gran-who-dozed-at-wheel-jailed-for-four-years-for-killing-two-pedestrians/story-30295226-detail/story.html>

R v Webber – causing death by dangerous driving – Defence Counsel – very interesting causation argument as primary cause of death was negligent medical care – ultimately abandoned when plea to causing death by careless driving deemed acceptable – privately funded case (ongoing) Reported: <http://www.liverpooecho.co.uk/news/liverpool-news/woman-jailed-after-knocking-down-13015449>

R v Game – double fatality, causing death by careless driving – Defence Counsel – privately funded case(ongoing)

R v Flaherty – causing death by careless driving – Defence Counsel – privately funded case (ongoing)

R v McKenna – multiple complainants, causing death by dangerous driving & causing serious injury by dangerous driving – Defence Counsel – privately funded case (ongoing)

R v O'Boyle – causing death by careless driving – Defence Counsel – privately funded case (ongoing)

R v Sant – double fatality, causing death by dangerous driving – Defence Counsel – privately funded case(ongoing)

R v Webber – causing death by dangerous driving – Defence Counsel – privately funded case (ongoing)

R v Greenidge – causing death by careless driving & causing death by driving while unlicensed/uninsured– Defence Counsel – Veolia waste lorry worker went to assist elderly driver reversing to avoid fly tip – accidentally stood on accelerator in automatic, left in gear on handbrake – open door hit elderly driver, who fell and hit head, resulting in her death – acquitted of all charges – privately funded case Reported: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/12171264/Dust> <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3081531/Spitting-Image-star-s-mother-died-crash.html> <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3471766/Bin-man-knocked-killed-actor-s-mother-88-offering-drive-car-fly-tipped-rubbish-cleared-death.html>

R v Masters – causing death by dangerous driving – Defence Counsel – first ever case in UK prosecuted solely on basis of telematics data – no CCTV/witnesses to the events at all – privately funded case Reported: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-stoke-staffordshire-32932840>
http://www.cps.gov.uk/westmidlands/cps_west_midlands_news/hit_and_run_driver_jailed/

R v Shields – causing death by careless driving – Defence Counsel – prosecution based on analysis of speed from CCTV footage “drive through” comparison sequences – demonstrated to be flawed comparisons – acquitted – privately funded case

R v Maan – causing death by careless driving – Defence Counsel – dentist involved in head-on collision with family travelling to school – aquaplaning – featured in BBC documentary “The Prosecutors” – privately funded case Reported: <http://www.itv.com/news/granada/update/2015-02-13/cheshire-death-crash-driver-walks-free/>
<http://www.mirror.co.uk/tv/tv-news/bereaved-mum-confronts-man-whose-7431431>
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b071gvs3>

R v McWilliam – causing death by dangerous driving – Defence Counsel – tragic case – 68 year old learnt to drive in order to give his disabled wife some freedom – lost control due to inexperience, having driven less than 1,000 miles after passing test – pleaded guilty – avoided an immediate sentence of imprisonment – privately funded Reported: <http://www.lincolnshirelive.co.uk/pensioner-driving-months-caused-fatal-crash/story26041249-detail/story.html>

R v Dear – causing death by careless driving – Defence Counsel – lorry driver – acquitted – privately funded case

R v Hilton – causing death by dangerous driving – Defence Counsel – acquitted – privately funded case

R v Hodgson – causing death by careless driving – Defence Counsel – issues of causation – privately funded case

R v Cox – double fatality, causing death by careless driving – Defence Counsel – head on collision with husband & wife on a motorbike – Cox unconsciously steered across into the opposing carriageway and tragically into collision, as a result of choking on a throat lozenge – successfully argued automatism on the basis of cough syncope – acquitted – privately funded case Reported: www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/biker-couple-killed-driver-started-4104246

R v Smith – causing death by careless driving – Defence Counsel – tragic case on the motorway, resulting in the death of a teenage student – lorry never actually collided with or indeed touched the car driven by the deceased – the deceased lost control in the course of overtaking the lorry, which was itself overtaking another slower moving vehicle – acquitted – privately funded case

R v Creasey – causing death by careless driving – Defence Counsel – privately funded case

R v O’Loughlin – causing death by careless driving – Defence Counsel – acquitted – privately funded case

R v Ward – causing death by careless driving whilst under the influence of alcohol – Defence Counsel – in excess of 3 times legal driving limit – privately funded case

R v Christie – causing death by careless driving – Defence Counsel – deceased was 83 years old – acquitted by unanimous verdict – privately funded case

Accidents Resulting in Catastrophic Injury

R v Aslam – causing serious injury by dangerous driving – Defence Counsel – privately funded case (ongoing) **R v Rathbone** – dangerous driving – Defence Counsel – privately funded case (ongoing)

R v Sweeting – multiple complainants, causing serious injury by dangerous driving – Defence Counsel – privately funded case (ongoing)

R v Harris – causing serious injury by dangerous driving – Defence Counsel – epilepsy and drug issues – privately funded case

R v Halliday – careless driving – Defence Counsel – “ring & ride” driver reversed into elderly pedestrian, who subsequently died – causation issues – primary issue concerned internal audible reversing system – acquitted – privately funded case **R v Hellewell** – dangerous driving – Defence Counsel – acquitted – privately funded case

R v Kala – causing serious injury by dangerous driving – Defence Counsel – Kala lost control in the rain when overtaking on a section of wet road incorporating tram tracks; part of the Sheffield Supertram network – acquitted

R v Bedward – causing serious injury by dangerous driving – Defence Counsel – acquitted – privately funded case

R v Makin – careless driving – Defence Counsel – privately funded case

R v Lonsdale – dangerous driving – Defence Counsel – multi-car pile up resulting in catastrophic life changing injuries – Lonsdale fainted and drove into head-on collision – successfully argued automatism on the basis of cough syncope – Prosecution dropped the case – £4 million reserve – acquitted – privately funded case
Reported: www.thenorthernecho.co.uk/news/local/southdurham/spennymoor/11415412.Charge_dropped_against_driver_accused_over_multi_vehicle_crash/
www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2733926/Driver-hit-motorbikesidecar-killing-married-couple-cleared-death-careless-driving-choked-SWEET-seconds-crash.html

R v Day – careless driving – Defence Counsel – Complainant motorcyclist & pillion sustained extremely serious injuries – £2 million reserve – acquitted – privately funded case

R v Potter – careless driving – Defence Counsel – motorcar collided with teenage pedestrians crossing a dual carriageway – life changing injuries sustained by both; rest of life care necessary for one of the pair – £3 million reserve – acquitted – privately funded case

R v Harper – careless driving – Defence Counsel – defending a paraplegic, himself previously injured in a motorcycle accident, who knocked a cyclist off his bike – privately funded case

R v Semeniuk – careless driving – Defence Counsel – acquitted of failing to give way to a motorcyclist – able to demonstrate that the Complainant motorcyclist was the author of his own misfortune (he lost a leg in the accident) in that he had attempted a dangerous overtaking manoeuvre when he should not have – privately funded case

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R v Melia – careless driving – Defence Counsel – HGV driver found blameless in relation to accident causing life changing injuries to young children – Court upheld a submission of no case to answer after demonstrated that car braked heavily and without warning, resulting in the collision – privately funded case

R v Nicholson – careless driving – Defence Counsel – retired Consultant Surgeon acquitted when District Judge upheld a submission of no case to answer and stopped the case – privately funded case

R v Brooks – careless driving – Defence Counsel – Prosecution offered no evidence after cross-examination of the Complainant pedestrian – privately funded case

R v Lamb – careless driving – Defence Counsel – HGV driver acquitted of fault in relation to accident when baby caused serious injury – privately funded case

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