



Harry Steinberg KC

Year of Call: 1997
Year of Silk: 2016
Direct Access: No

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Harry Steinberg is a leading silk specialising in **personal injury**, **sports law**, private international law and **aviation**. He is recognised by Chambers & Partners as "a highly skilled practitioner known for his representation of large claimant groups. His work in the area typically arises from personal injury and industrial disease claims."

His personal injury practice focuses on high value and complex serious injuries and fatal claims, with much of his work having an international aspect. He is currently acting for thousands of former and serving military personnel in three group claims against the Ministry of Defence.

Harry has specialised in industrial disease and mesothelioma for over a decade and is recognised in the directories as a leading silk. He has taken test cases to the Supreme Court and appeared in many of the landmark cases that have shaped this area of law.

He is regularly instructed on cases which include a cross-border element, including aviation claims, environmental disasters, class actions and claims involving tort law and jurisdictional issues.

Harry is heavily involved in Brazilian football and thus has a keen interest in sports law, in particular, FA Rule K arbitrations and concussion/head injury claims. His sports practice also spans the globe, conducting international arbitrations and advising clients from UK to South America.

Areas of Expertise

Group Litigation

Harry specialises in leading large-scale group claims. He has been instructed in claims involving environmental damage, insurance, human-rights abuses, product liability and personal injury. His work often involves cross-border litigation and has included:

- The Bomu Bonny Pipeline Litigation: claims brought by 15,600 claimants arising out of two huge oil spills in the Niger Deltas. This is believed to be the UK's largest ever environmental action.

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- The Iraqi Civilian Litigation: claims against the Ministry of Defence brought by civilians who were assaulted and unlawfully detained by UK military personnel during the invasion of Iraq in 2003.
- Vilca & Ors v Xstrata Plc & Xstrata Tintaya SA: Peruvian environmental protestors brought claims for serious injuries and mistreatment sustained during demonstrations at an Andean copper mine.
- Silicosis: class action, for thousands of goldminers, in South Africa.
- Greenway and others v Johnson Matthey Plc: test litigation on behalf of hundreds of workers who contracted platinum sensitivity as a result of occupational exposure to platinum salts.
- Concept 70 and others v Cape International Holdings Ltd: product liability group test case for insurers seeking contribution to settled claims from product manufacturers.
- Group of claimants in a business interruption insurance claim arising out of the Covid pandemic
- A large scale pharmaceutical products case

Sports Law

Harry has a working interest in the Brazilian and British football sectors, which has naturally developed an acute knowledge of the law of football. His expertise in sports law includes but is not limited to FA Rule K arbitrations (involving any combination of FA participants, including football clubs, intermediaries and players) and concussion/head injury claims in the context of participation in sports.

Aviation & Travel

A number of Harry's cases involve cross border issues and he is described as "brilliantly knowledgeable in this niche area." by Legal 500 UK.

His travel law practice also encompasses aviation law, including that relating to aero toxic syndrome, caused by the inhalation of cabin air in aircraft.

His work has included:

- The Bomu Bonny Pipeline Litigation: claims brought by 15,600 claimants arising out of two huge oil spills in the Niger Deltas.
- The Iraqi Civilian Litigation: claims against the Ministry of Defence brought by civilians who were assaulted and unlawfully detained by UK military personnel during the invasion of Iraq in 2003.
- Vilca & Ors v Xstrata Plc & Xstrata Tintaya SA: Peruvian environmental protestors brought claims for serious injuries and mistreatment sustained during demonstrations at an Andean copper mine.
- Silicosis: class action, for thousands of goldminers, in South Africa.
- AB v C: acting for the Defendant in the Grand Court of Cayman Islands, the Cayman Islands Court of Appeal and the Privy Council, in a case arising out of an explosion at a power station in the Cayman Islands.

He acts in claims involving choice of law and jurisdictional issues, including in Jamieson v Württembergische Versicherung A.G.

Personal Injury & Industrial Disease

Harry is known for high value and high-profile personal injury litigation with a focus on head injury and fatal claims. Much

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of his work has an international law aspect and/or involves large groups and he is currently acting for thousands of former and serving military personnel in three groups against the Ministry of Defence.

Harry has been described as “second-to-none” (Legal 500, 2023) and having “...an exhaustive knowledge of asbestos disease issues.” (Chambers & Partners, 2023) He is the chief editor of the leading textbook, “Asbestos: Law and Litigation” (Sweet & Maxwell, 2nd edition, June 2022).

Harry regularly gives evidence in the US Courts as an expert witness on the law relating to asbestos, jurisdiction and product liability, e.g. Pyle v Pfizer Inc. He acts for both Claimants and Defendants.

Harry has appeared in many of the landmark cases which have defined and shaped this area of the law:

- Knauer v Ministry of Justice: ‘leapfrog’ appeal to the Supreme Court on the issue of the appropriate date for the calculation of multipliers in fatal claims.
- Coventry v Lawrence: in the Supreme Court on behalf of a national asbestos charity on the compatibility of the CFA regime with the ECHR.
- Rothwell v Chemical & Insulating Co Ltd: pleural plaques test cases.
- Greenway v Johnson Matthey: test case for workers who contracted platinum sensitivity as a result of occupational exposure to platinum salts.
- Head v Culver Heating: decision in the Court of Appeal on the quantification of loss of profitability in a business which had relied on the driving force of the deceased.
- Carder v University of Exeter: Court of Appeal judgment on the test for actionable damage in an asbestosis claim.
- Haxton v Philips Electronics UK Ltd: acting on behalf of the claimant at trial and in the Court of Appeal. The claimant’s husband died of mesothelioma, and she made a claim as his widow. She then contracted mesothelioma as a result of the same defendant’s negligence. This drastically reduced her life expectancy and she recovered the shortfall as the ‘diminution in value’ of her personal claim. This created a novel head of damages.
- Inglis v Ministry of Defence: high value noise-induced hearing loss as a result of exposure in the course of military service
- Bannister v Freemans Plc: decision of the High Court on causation in low exposure mesothelioma case
- Barry v Ministry of Defence: High Court decision on the diagnosis criteria for hearing loss in a military context and the application of Ogdan 8
- Ghoorah v West Essex Clinical Commissioning Group and others: appeared at trial for the claimant widow in this fatal mesothelioma claim. The judge made the highest ever general damages award in a mesothelioma case.
- Zambarda v Shipbreaking (Queenborough) Ltd [2013] EWHC 2263 (QB): acted for the claimant at trial in this fatal mesothelioma. Obtained case management costs as part of the services dependency claim.
- Wilson v Ministry of Defence [2013] CP Rep33: Novel point of law on the definition of “trial” under CPR Part 36. Successful on appeal.

Product Liability

A specialist in group litigation, many of Harry’s cases involve product liability issues. Cases include:

Concept 70 and others v Cape International Holdings Ltd: Acting for the claimants in this major product liability group test case for insurers seeking contribution to settled claims from product manufacturers.

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Publications

- Chief Editor Asbestos: Law & Litigation, Sweet & Maxwell, 2nd edition, June 2022

Recommendations



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