



Paul Darling OBE KC

Year of call: 1983 | Silk: 1999

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“a doyen of his area”

“He’s the man you go to if you have a difficult case; he will always come up with an innovative solution and he won’t give up, even on the difficult points.”

Chambers and Partners Asia Pacific

Paul Darling OBE KC has established a formidable reputation as an advocate in all types and levels of tribunals all over the world. He specialises in complex cases which feature multiple parties, large teams, and high volumes of material, and is often brought in by clients at short notice, late in proceedings. An ability to work with colleagues from any jurisdiction, and to grasp detail, strategy, and tactics quickly has allowed Paul to develop a practice which has taken him to every major jurisdiction, appearing in a wide variety of construction, energy, and commercial matters. Adaptability and focus have contributed to Paul's reputation as a gamechanger, brought in to direct some of the construction and commercial world's most difficult cases. Paul has represented diverse clients in tribunals such as the Commercial Court, the Technology and Construction Court, and the Court of Appeal in London, the High Court and the Supreme Court in Dublin, the High Court in Northern Ireland and Arbitration Tribunals globally. Since the early 1990s he has conducted many arbitrations in Hong Kong, Singapore, and the Middle East. He has acted in ICC, LCIA HKIAC, SIAC and DIAC Arbitrations.

Paul is also called to the Northern Ireland Bar (2004).

Areas of expertise

- Construction and Engineering
- Adjudication
- Commercial Litigation and Sale of Goods
- Professional Negligence
- Domestic and International Arbitration
- Procurement
- Health and Safety

Health and Safety

Paul has a considerable interest in Health and Safety in the public sector, having been Chairman of the Sports Ground safety Authority, the body set up after Hillsborough to prevent recurrence of that disaster. In that capacity he has considered and managed risk based regulation and disaster prevention in the public sector at the highest levels and providing advice to Ministers. His work covered design and construction of stadia and other structures and safety management generally. The SGSA was the authority responsible for licensing stadia and the contents of Safety Certificates. It was responsible for reviewing the contents of Safety Certificates issued by Local Authorities. He liaised extensively with all integrated groups including spectators. His experience involved issues of fire safety and management.

This follows on from his appearance as counsel for the Engineers at the Public Inquiry into the deaths caused by legionnaires disease at the Stafford Hospital. The inquiry set up after the death of 39 people from legionella considered all aspects of design construction and management of the hospital.

Paul represented a quarry owner in the Pyrite litigation in Dublin. In the High Court in Dublin, a building contractor sued the quarry owner for supplying material containing pyrite which was said to have expanded and damaged the structures under which it was placed. The case went on appeal to the Supreme Court. The trial occupied 60 days and the hearing in the Supreme Court, 5 days. The issues included whether the cause of damage to the building was defective design and construction or the expansion of pyrite, whether the pyrite in fact expanded, whether there were breaches of the Sale of Goods Act about merchantable quality and fitness for purpose, whether contractual terms applied and whether there were limitations on liability. Paul appeared in the Court of Appeal in Belfast on an appeal about the notice provisions under the NEC 3 Variation Clauses.

Appointments

- Appointed by the Secretary of State as Chair of the Horserace Betting Levy Board – April 2020

Memberships

- Technology and Construction Bar Association London
- Common Law and Commercial Bar Association
- Society of Construction Law
- Professional Negligence Bar Association
- Commercial Bar Association Bar of Northern Ireland (2004)
- Chartered Institute of Arbitrators
- London Court of International Arbitration International Bar Association

Recommendations

- *"He is pragmatic, reliable and a massive presence." "Tenacious, a good advocate and tough in any case that you give to him."* Chambers and Partners
- *"He is extremely good, very practical and very down to earth"... "As a QC he just commands enormous gravitas and the very best respect for his advice and opinions."* Chambers Global
- *"As always, Paul's advice is commercial, he is responsive and he turns the advice around quickly." "A larger-than-life character coupled with a fearsome intellect."* Chambers and Partners

- *"He has a very bright and analytical mind and remains one of the leading advocates – very impressive on his feet."* Chambers and Partners

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