

News story: Max Hill QC joins the CPS as Director of Public Prosecutions

Leading QC Max Hill takes up his new role as Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) today (1st November).

Mr Hill is a former Chairman of the Criminal Bar Association and defended and prosecuted a number of complex cases of homicide, violent crime and corporate crime. He was instructed in many of the most significant and high-profile murder trials in recent years, including the second set of trials concerning the killing of Damilola Taylor and the London bombings of 2005. He also has extensive advisory experience both nationally and internationally.

Mr Hill replaces Alison Saunders who is stepping down after 5 years as DPP following the completion of her full term. She leaves after 32 years of dedicated public service. Ms Saunders joined the CPS as a barrister in 1986 in its founding year. As well as DPP she has undertaken roles as Chief Crown Prosecutor for London and Head of Organised Crime Division. Ms Saunders' achievements include the prosecution of Stephen Lawrence's killers, and the prosecution of Roy Whiting for the abduction and murder of 8 year old Sarah Payne. She also secured a conviction in the Parsons Green bomber case and introduced the 'Speaking to Witnesses at Court' initiative. In the 2013 New Year Honours, she was appointed Companion of the Order of the Bath (CB) "for services to Law and Order especially after the 2011 London Riots". In 2013 she was the first DPP to be appointed from within the CPS.

Commenting on the appointment, the Attorney General, Geoffrey Cox QC MP said:

Max Hill is a distinguished and extremely experienced Queen's Counsel who has demonstrated a profound commitment both to the criminal justice system and to public service. I'm confident that he will be a good and collaborative leader of the Crown Prosecution Service and a principled and strongly independent chief prosecutor. The public will rightly expect nothing less.

He will replace Alison Saunders to whom I am grateful for her 32 years of public service. I have no doubt Max will build on Alison's achievements. The role of Director of Public Prosecutions is a crucial one in delivering justice for the public and requires exceptional qualities of judgement and character. Alison has demonstrated both during her term as Director.

As Attorney General I want to thank her for her dedicated and professional public service and I wish her all the best for her future.

Max Hill was appointed by the Attorney General, Geoffrey Cox QC MP, after a rigorous and open competition, overseen by a Civil Service Commissioner. His tenure as DPP is a term of 5 years.

As set out in the Criminal Justice Act 1987, the Attorney General appoints the DPP. The process to recruit the next DPP began under the previous Attorney General, Jeremy Wright QC MP. It was completed and approved by the new Attorney General after his appointment on 9 July.

Max Hill QC Biography:

Max Hill QC is Head of Red Lion Chambers and, since March 2017, the current Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation. He is also the former Leader of the South Eastern Circuit (2014-16) and Chairman of the Criminal Bar Association (2011-12). Whilst unable to advise or appear in terrorism related cases during his tenure as Independent Reviewer, Max maintains a heavyweight crime practice, defending and prosecuting in a number of complex cases of homicide, violent crime and high value fraud and corporate crime. He also has extensive advisory experience both nationally and internationally. Max has been instructed in many of the most significant and high-profile murder trials in recent years, including the second set of trials concerning the killing of Damilola Taylor, and the London bombings of 2005. Murder cases include R v Long (2015), R v Campbell and others (2014-5) and R v O'Driscoll (2014).

Max defends in substantial fraud cases, including tax fraud. In fraud, he was instructed for the defence in the SFO Forex (Foreign Exchange) investigation and the long-running SFO pharmaceutical cartel case. His terrorism cases include R v Bourgass and others (the ricin conspiracy), R v Ibrahim and others (the 21/7 bombers), R v Ali and others and R v Girma and others (the 21/7 follow-on trials). He appeared for the Government in the Binyam Mohamed case in the Administrative Court. He acted for the Metropolitan Police in the Inquests into the 7th July London bombings. Most recently he prosecuted a London taxi driver and bomb-maker for the killing of a US soldier in R v Sardar (2015). He also prosecuted two men who gave sums of money to the Paris and Brussels terror suspect Abrini, engaging in conduct in preparation for acts of terrorism. Max appeared as lead prosecution counsel, alongside Michelle Nelson, in Channel 4's The Trial (2017) in which real juries, together with actual barristers and judges, tried a fictional Murder case in order to explore the workings of the jury system.