

Press release: Next Director of the CPS announced

The Attorney General, Geoffrey Cox QC MP, has today (24 July) announced that Max Hill QC has been appointed as the next Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP).

Leading barrister Max Hill will leave his posts as Head of Red Lion Chambers and Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation to lead the CPS. His tenure as DPP will begin on 1st November for a renewable term of 5 years.

Max Hill brings a unique combination of legal expertise and public service at the highest levels, demonstrated most recently through his role as 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.

Max Hill was appointed by the Attorney General after a rigorous and open competition, overseen by a Civil Service Commissioner.

Commenting on the appointment, the Attorney General said:

I am very pleased to announce that Max Hill will be the next Director of Public Prosecutions. Mr 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 am very grateful to him for taking on these onerous responsibilities.

I am 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 now build on the achievements of Alison Saunders to whom I am grateful for her 32 years of public service. The role of DPP is difficult and requires exceptional qualities of judgement and character. I am looking forward to working with the new Director.

Commenting on his appointment, Max Hill said:

I am honoured to be the next Director of Public Prosecutions. I am grateful to Alison Saunders for her service and look forward to building on her legacy. This is a challenging time for the CPS, with the rise in complex cases and negative publicity about its handling of disclosure in some cases. I have seen first-hand the sterling work of the CPS and I am determined to restore public trust in all of its work.

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. The current DPP will serve her full five year term, which is due to end in October 2018.

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.