

Protocol for the control and management of heavy fraud and complex criminal cases

Transcript of proceedings: 22 March 2005

A Protocol, and three new Practice Directions were handed down by the Lord Chief Justice, Lord Woolf, on 22 March 2005. The Protocol relates to the management of complex trials in England and Wales; its aim is to reduce the length of complex trials for fraud and other crimes. The Practice Directions relate to the introduction of improved case management into criminal hearings in the Crown Court and magistrates' courts in England and Wales, and jury service. The transcript of the proceedings is below.

Transcript of proceedings in the Court of Appeal, Criminal Division on 22 March 2005

Before the Lord Chief Justice, Lord Justice Thomas, Lord Justice Auld, Lord Justice Hooper and Mr Justice Calvert Smith.

Consolidated Criminal Practice Directions and Protocols

1. [Amendment No 9 to the Consolidated Criminal Practice Direction \(Jury Service\)](#)
2. [Amendment No 10 to the Consolidated Criminal Practice Direction \(Forms for use in Criminal Proceedings\)](#)
3. [Amendment No 11 to the Consolidated Criminal Practice Direction \(Case Management\)](#)
4. [A Protocol for the control and management of heavy fraud and other complex criminal cases](#)

The Lord Chief Justice:

The hearing this morning is being held to mark a significant stage in the evolution of the Criminal Justice system -- a system that includes both the Crown and Magistrates Courts, and is will shortly be supported by a single service, Her Majesty's Court Service.

The immediate purpose of this hearing is to enable the Court to hand down three Practice Directions and a Protocol. The handing down of those documents does not explain the significance of this hearing. To understand its significance it is necessary to start by referring to the report of Lord Justice Auld, who I am delighted is sitting with us this morning. His report, ['The Review of the Criminal Courts'](#), was completed in October 2001. It contains 328 recommendations which provide a blueprint -- a blueprint that could transform our venerable criminal justice system that has served us well for centuries, into a system which is better suited for the 21st century.

Lord Justice Auld's vision was not one which could be achieved overnight. Its implementation so far has required a vast amount of effort and co-operation from all those engaged in the criminal justice system, including the Department for Constitutional Affairs, the Home Office, the Attorney General's Office, the Crown Prosecution Service, practitioners from both sides of the profession and all those who are concerned with the welfare of victims and witnesses of crime.

