



SENIOR PRESIDING JUDGE
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

MANAGEMENT OF CASES FROM THE ORGANISED CRIME DIVISION OF THE CROWN PROSECUTION SERVICE

A Protocol Issued by the Senior Presiding Judge

Introduction

1. This protocol has been produced in consultation with the Organised Crime Division of the Crown Prosecution Service (OCD) and Her Majesty's Courts Service (HMCS).
2. The OCD comprises specialist Crown Prosecutors and is responsible for prosecuting cases from the Serious Organised Crime Agency (SOCA). It has offices in Birmingham, London, Manchester and York. This protocol establishes principles for the courts' management of OCD cases.

Commencement and amendment

3. The protocol will take effect on the 12th December 2008 and may be amended by the Senior Presiding Judge after consultation with the Director of the OCD.

Scope

4. This protocol applies to all cases handled by the OCD.

Background

5. It is considered that the hearing of OCD cases at Designated Court Centres (DCC) will improve the management of those cases. The cases the OCD handles typically involve more than one defendant, are voluminous and raise complex and specialised issues of law. The process of designating court centres for this purpose has taken into account geographical factors and the size, security and facilities of those court centres.

Designated Court Centres

6. Subject always to the overriding discretion of the Presiding Judges, OCD cases should be heard at a DCC. The DCC are set out below:

Northern Circuit

Manchester, Liverpool and Preston

North Eastern Circuit

Leeds, Newcastle and Sheffield

Western Circuit

Bristol, Winchester

South Eastern Circuit (not including London)

Reading, Luton, Chelmsford, Ipswich, Maidstone, Lewes and Hove

South Eastern Circuit (London)

Southwark, Blackfriars, Kingston, Woolwich and Croydon

Midland Circuit

Birmingham, Leicester and Nottingham

Procedure after charge

7. Within 24 hours of the laying of a charge, a representative of the CPS will notify the Regional Listing Co-ordinator's office of the following information to enable an agreement to be reached between the Regional Listing Co-ordinator, the reviewing CPS lawyer and the defendant's representative, if known, as to the DCC to which the case should be sent or committed:
 - a. The full name of each defendant and the name of his legal representatives, if known;
 - b. The charges laid; and
 - c. The name and contact details of the Crown Prosecutor with responsibility for the case.

Selection of Designated Court Centre

8. If arrests in a case are made in different parts of the country and the OCD wishes that all the defendants be brought together before one Crown Court, the prosecutor will at the earliest opportunity write to the Regional Listing Coordinators with a recommendation as to the appropriate DCC, requesting that a decision be made by the relevant Presiding Judges.
9. There will be a single contact person at the OCD for each HMCS region, to assist listing co-ordinators in planning court usage. Those contact persons at the OCD shall be:
 - a. Sonia Sanson, for cases on the South Eastern circuit. Telephone: 0207 796 8022; e-mail: sonia.sanson@cps.gsi.gov.uk

- b. Paul Jennings, for cases on the Northern and North Eastern circuits. Telephone: 01904 545521; e-mail: paul.jennings@cps.gsi.gov.uk
- c. Mark Holmes, for cases on the Western and Midland circuits and cases within HMCS Wales. Telephone 0121 616 3316; e-mail: mark.holmes@cps.gsi.gov.uk

Designation of trial judge

- 10. The trial judge will be assigned under the direction of the Presiding Judge at the earliest opportunity, to permit immediate case management at the DCC. Where the assigned judge is unable to continue with the case, all further pre-trial hearings must be heard by a single judge until a replacement has been assigned.

Contact details

- 11. Contact persons for the Court, OCD, SOCA and each defendant will be identified and the respective contact telephone numbers and e-mail addresses exchanged.

Bruce...

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