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Tom Panton

Year of Call: 2002
Telephone: 0115 947 2581

Overview

Tom is a specialist in claims for serious injury, chronic pain, and work-related stress.

In more than twenty years at the Bar he has built a practice based primarily on complex or multi-party liability disputes and high-value quantum cases.

A significant element of Tom's practice is now devoted to employers' liability for psychiatric injury caused by work related stress, bullying and harassment.

Expertise

Personal Injury

Employer's Liability

Tom is regularly instructed in:

- Accident cases involving all key EL areas (especially construction and work equipment)
- Multi-party CDM disputes involving complex control issues
- Workplace stress, bullying and harassment cases, including cases against local authorities, the police, and commercial organisations
- Workplace violence, particularly in the social care context (Tom is very much alive to the sensitivities of these cases and used to being involved from the early stages, dealing with disclosure involving multiple agencies and sometimes complex data protection issues).
- Work equipment cases, usually with Consumer Protection Act overlap (see here for an interesting blog with Jack McCracken on the Employer's Liability (Defective Equipment) Act 1969).

Quantum Cases

Particular emphasis on cases involving:

- Brain injury including disputes over whether any TBI sustained
- Chronic pain (including Complex Regional Pain Syndrome and Functional Neurological Disorder)
- Amputations, usually in the EL context
- Fatal accidents: Tom has represented both claimants and defendants in FAA claims for many years and is known for his careful, conscientious and sensitive handling of this most taxing and stressful type of litigation. He is used to bringing £1million-plus claims to settlement before court proceedings become necessary, and handling difficult disputes between defendants. Tom welcomes early involvement from the Inquest stage, and (for defendants) close coordination between the teams responsible for regulatory and civil actions.

Product Liability

Tom has considerable experience of Consumer Protection Act personal injury cases involving a diverse range of products from cosmetics, to domestic tumble dryers, to substantial pieces of plant, frequently overlapping with the EL context.

Disease

Work-related Stress/Psychiatric Injury

Tom's experience of work-related stress claims encompasses a wide variety of workplace situations including:

- Local authorities, particularly in relation to employees engaged in SEND activities and social work
- Policing (including front-line officers and support staff)
- Health service including complex environments such as psychiatric institutions
- Commercial defendants including large financial institutions
- Bullying/harassment cases as well as 'Hatton-typical' cases relating to overwork etc

Vibration, Noise and Dust Diseases

Tom is forever indebted to the late, much-missed Simon Beard of Ropewalk Chambers for a thorough grounding in industrial disease work from the very start of his career back in 2002. Tom has since built significant experience in all kinds of occupational illness litigation including noise exposure, vibration, asbestos, and hypersensitivity pneumonitis cases.

Professional Membership

- Personal Injuries Bar Association

Qualifications

- LLB, University of Kent at Canterbury
- BVC, Nottingham Law School

Notable Cases

Bloor v Anchor Hanover Group [2024] EWHC 1772 (KB). Employer's duties in respect of risk assessment in relation to a live-in employee at a supported housing scheme.

Brown v South West Lakes Trust, South West Water Ltd and Cornwall County Council **[2022] EWCA Civ 18.** Local authorities' duties in relation to the construction and design of highways; duties of occupiers to highway users unintentionally trespassing off the highway onto their land.

AB v Chief Constable of X Constabulary **[2015] EWHC 13 (QB).** Former undercover police claiming damages for psychiatric illness; issues relating to workplace stress and defence of *ex turpi causa*.

Smith v Northamptonshire County Council **[2009] UKHL 27.** Interpretation of r3 of PUWER, relevance of concept of control to imposition of statutory duties.

Hood v Mitie Property Services **(Midlands) Ltd & Royal Mail Group plc** [2005] All ER (D) 11 (Jul). Contribution claim by the employer of a catastrophically injured claimant against the occupier of premises where he had fallen from height.

Recommendations

"Tom is an engaging advocate. He is understated and not flamboyant, but very impressive. He is persuasive."

- Chambers UK 2026

"Tom Panton is an extremely strong advocate with excellent client care skills and commercial awareness. He provides strong tactical advice in complex areas of law."

- Chambers UK 2026

"Tom is an exceptional advocate and lawyer."

- Chambers UK 2026

"Tom is technically excellent, practical and great with clients. A real first-class all rounder. Very good at complex claims, particularly claims involving stress."

- The Legal 500 2026

"'Put simply, Tom is as good as it gets. He is always prepared, thorough, excellent on strategy and legal drafting, and a great negotiator. He is a first-class advocate."

- The Legal 500 2025

"Tom is absolutely superb. He cuts through the issues in complex matters with ease."

- Chambers and Partners 2023 – Personal Injury

"Tom's preparation and attention to detail is meticulous when it comes to his advice and settling pleadings. He's approachable and friendly in conference with clients and has a commanding presence in court."

"Always well prepared and takes the time to think cases through, providing excellent advice on strategy as well as the law."

- The Legal 500 2023

"Significant expertise in employers' liability claims. He also has vast experience in industrial disease claims, including hand-arm vibration syndrome, noise-induced hearing loss and asbestos cases."

"He has a relaxed manner which calms witnesses, and his advocacy is excellent and very robust." He's straight-talking, to the point and fully aware of the economic and commercial side of things. He always has the client's best interests at heart."

- Chambers and Partners 2021

"Significant expertise in employers' liability claims. He also has vast experience in industrial disease claims, including hand-arm vibration syndrome, noise-induced hearing loss and asbestos cases."

"He is very clear in his advice and has a good manner with clients in conference."

- Chambers and Partners 2020

"I was thoroughly impressed. He is charming in court and will go places."

"Very intelligent and good with tactics.'"

- Chambers and Partners 2019

"Very experienced in industrial disease cases."

- The Legal 500 2019

"A very safe pair of hands, very pragmatic and very easy to engage with. He provides practical, commercial advice. Pleasant, professional and straightforward."

- Chambers and Partners 2018 – Personal Injury

"He has a good judgement of tactical points, a sound eye for the true issues in a case and he is very calm under pressure."

- Chambers and Partners 2017 – Personal Injury

"Solid in every area, he is always well prepared and can communicate the most complex arguments."

- The Legal 500 2017

"Sought after for his expertise, which includes employers' liability, road traffic accidents, and industrial disease."

- The Legal 500 2016

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