

Inquests & Public Inquiries

<https://test.richardmatthewsqc.com/inquests/>

Richard Matthews QC has acted for interested parties in a great many inquests, and has a particular specialism in representing corporations in jury inquests concerning work-related deaths.

“An impressive silk who has a wealth of experience in cases spanning the full breadth of regulatory and criminal health and safety issues. He has represented international corporations and individuals, as well as FTSE companies He is also noted for his representation of individuals at inquests arising from accidents at work.” – Chambers and Partners, 2021 Edition

Richard has also advised and acted for interested parties, including bereaved families, at inquests concerned with Article 2 of the ECHR and the right to life / state involvement in fatalities.

Richard represented the Whirlpool Corporation (the owner of the Hotpoint brand) at the public inquiry into the Grenfell Tower fire that killed 72 people. In 2013, Richard represented the London Borough of Southwark at the three-month [inquest into the six fatalities resulting from the fire at the Lakanal flats in July 2009](#).

Richard represented Taunton Rugby Football Club (which had hosted a public fireworks display) at the [inquest into the seven M5 motorway fatalities in thick fog on 4th November 2011](#).

Richard represented the HSE’s Chief Executive and the HSE at the second Francis Inquiry, examining the role of regulation and regulators. that culminated in the publication of the [Report of the Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust Public Inquiry in February 2013](#)

Richard represented the Bexley Academy at the Inquest into the death of one of the school’s students, Samuel Boon, on a World Challenge trip to Morocco.

Richard also represented the family of PC Timothy Payne at the inquest into his death which resulted in the review of custody procedures and bail in cases of identified suicide risk.

He has advised the HSE, the Office of Rail Regulation and the CPS in relation to very many investigations in to fatal incidents, prior to and post inquest as well as in respect of decisions to prosecute.

Reported Cases

The Grenfell Tower Inquiry: phase 1

October 2019

Richard Matthews QC represented the Whirlpool Corporation, at the first phase of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry, the Public Inquiry into the fire at Grenfell Tower on 14 June 2017.

The Phase 1 report was published in October 2019

Lakanal Fire Inquests

July 2016

Appeared as leading counsel for the London Borough of Southwark, the owner and landlord of Lakanal. Six fatalities occurred when Lakanal, a block of maisonnette apartments caught fire. The inquests were held over some three months before a Construction Court Judge, appointed as Deputy Coroner, and a jury.

The inquest jury found particular failings on the part of London Fire Brigade that contributed to the deaths. See [here](#) for verdicts and related information.

Following this, the London Fire Brigade (London Fire & Emergency Planning Authority) sought to continue a criminal investigation and prosecution of the London Borough of Southwark. Richard Matthews QC led the three counsel team that sought to Judicially review this decision, and the case was decided by the Administrative Court in a