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Ian Thomas

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Area of expertise

Arbitration

Inquests & Inquiries

Licensing

Public Law

Regulatory & Competition

Profile

Recommendations

"A highly capable barrister and noted food law specialist, known for representing individuals, local and national companies and government bodies in food safety and trading standards cases".

"A very experienced and able operator...Very knowledgeable in food safety and hygiene."

Chambers & Partners UK Bar Guide [2018]

"He is extremely user-friendly and makes advocacy look easy."

Legal 500 [2017]

□He has a wealth of knowledge and experience.□

Legal 500 [2016]

"Extremely thorough, pragmatic and sensitive to the clients needs, both financial and legal."

Legal 500 [2015]

Appointments

Appointed to the List of Specialist Regulatory Advocates in Health & Safety and Environmental Law (List B).

Practice

Ian Thomas practices in the full range of regulatory law including food and beverages, trading standards and consumer protection, product safety, health and safety, licensing and environmental.

He is an experienced legal trainer and he is regularly invited to speak at regulatory conferences in England and abroad. He also provides advice and guidance to businesses and regulators regarding their legal duties and powers.

Ian is dual qualified, having been admitted as a solicitor in the Republic of Ireland in 2006, and is available to advise clients on regulatory matters in that jurisdiction.

Ian is authorised to accept public access work.

Ian's practice includes:

[Food law](#)

[Trading standards and consumer protection](#)

[Health and safety law](#)

[Licensing law](#)

[Environmental and planning](#)

[Miscellaneous regulatory law](#)

General

Ian advises and represents individuals and organisations, from SMEs to multi-nationals, as well as regulators and enforcing authorities. He has a mixed practice that includes contentious and non-contentious matters.

He advises on enforcement issues including challenging the actions of the regulatory agencies by way of appeal or judicial review. He is instructed to appear in court by the regulators and by businesses and individuals. Ian advises at all stages of the regulatory process from the initial stages of an investigation up to and including trial and appeal. He is also asked to advise on ancillary matters such as disqualification and prohibition orders, and restraint and proceeds of crime.

In relation to non-contentious matters, Ian advises on a wide range of issues including product labelling, product description, the classification of borderline products, the implications of process changes on regulatory compliance, withdrawals and recalls and reviewing trading policies for compliance with local market requirements.

Ian is frequently asked to advise on the interpretation and application of EU law and he has assisted clients understand and work within the legal and regulatory framework for consumer products within the EU.

Recommendations

During his previous time in 6 Pump Court, Ian was listed in Chambers and Partners Directory as a leading junior in consumer law and described as "highly proficient" and "well-respected". He was also appointed to the Attorney-General's Panel of Prosecuting Advocates.

Food Law

Ian has significant experience in a wide range of food compliance and regulation matters. He has been instructed by food businesses across the whole spectrum including primary production, slaughterhouses, manufacture, processors, suppliers, the hospitality sector and retailers. Ian is also instructed on behalf of the Competent Authorities.

His experience includes:

Prosecuting and defending cases of unsafe food (including food poisoning outbreaks), breaches of food hygiene legislation and failing to comply with traceability requirements.

Advising on labelling and food information requirements under the Food Information to Consumers Regulation. Ian also advises in connection with specific issues such as food supplements, PARNUTS/dietetic foods, geographical indicators and country of origin labelling.

Advising on the use of nutrition and health claims and general issues relating to advertising and marketing.

Advising food businesses on traceability issues and on their obligations to withdraw and recall foodstuffs.

Working with clients to ensure their products are properly described and classified particularly with regard to general food, food supplements and medicinal products legislation.

Advising on issues relating to the mislabelling of foods and food fraud.

Co-ordinating global food marketing projects and advising external business operators on legal and regulatory issues affecting foodstuffs in England and in the Republic of Ireland.

Providing advice on the interpretation and application of EU law across the whole range of food law including those matters mentioned above and also in relation to the official controls of Competent Authorities.

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Trading Standards and Consumer Protection

Ian is very experienced in advising and representing clients in relation to a wide range of trading standards and consumer protection matters. He is instructed by the regulatory authorities and by organisations and individuals.

Ian has been involved in prosecuting and defending cases across the range of trading standards and consumer protection matters, including appealing enforcement notices. He also advises on general regulatory matters particularly around product labelling and withdrawals and recalls.

Examples of Ian's work in this area include trade marks (e.g. counterfeit clothing, DVDs, household goods and the like), product safety (including toys and household goods) and unfair and misleading trading regulations.

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Health and safety law

Ian has been instructed to advise and represent clients (businesses and regulators) in a wide range of health and safety matters.

He has acted in cases involving workplace accidents involving fatalities and very serious injuries. These include representing a business manager in an investigation into the death of a customer, prosecuting a case involving a serious injury to a child in retail premises and a defending in a workplace incident in which an employee was seriously injured whilst dismantling a steel frame. Ian has also been instructed in matters involving fire safety.

Ian has advised on issues relating to appealing enforcement notices, including successfully challenging an improvement notice, and procedural issues such as extending time limits in the Employment Tribunal.

Ian has presented to senior managers about their obligations under health and safety legislation.

He has been instructed to advise on, and appear at, inquests. These have included workplace fatalities and deaths at supervised living establishments.

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Licensing law

Ian advises and represents clients across a wide range of licensing matters such as; alcohol, sex establishments, hackney carriages and private hire vehicles and street trading.

He has advised on the powers of seizure of private hire vehicles being use without insurance.

Ian is instructed to appear before local authority committees as well as in appeals in the magistrates' and crown courts.

His work includes interim steps hearings, advising on the lawfulness of licensing conditions, appearing in criminal prosecutions, appealing cases involving the grant, suspension or revocation of licences.

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Environmental and planning

Ian has advised and appeared in the criminal courts in respect of a range of environmental and planning matters such as waste management, trans-frontier shipment and pollution. He has experience of cases involving statutory nuisance.

Ian has also been instructed to appear in planning enforcement cases in the criminal courts and in appeals and he has represented clients at public inquiries.

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Miscellaneous Regulatory Law

Ian has been instructed in various miscellaneous regulatory law matters.

Medicinal products

He has advised organisations in relation to the law relating to medicinal products and how products can be medicinal by presentation and by function. This has involved single product issues (i.e. assessing whether a particular product is a medicinal product) or borderline product issues (i.e. determining whether a foodstuff should be classified as medicinal and if so how to amend the labelling and claims to ensure that it was not medicinal by presentation).

Local government

Ian has advised local authorities on many regulatory matters including the Primary Authority scheme and judicial review, including in relation to council tax.

Tattooing

Ian was asked to advise in connection with an investigation into alleged illegal tattooing. This was a complex matter as it involved issues of public and regulatory law concerning the interpretation and application of primary legislation, secondary legislation and bye-laws.

Animals

Ian has been instructed in cases involving animal welfare. He has also advised in a case involving the cattle identification regulations which required the use of DNA analysis to identify cattle, dams and calves.

Anti-social behaviour

Ian has advised on issues around anti-social behaviour and represented clients in court on applications for closure orders and on other applications under the anti-social behaviour legislation.

Data protection and information governance

Ian has advised on data protection matters for clients involved in his specialist areas of work and he has also presented courses on information governance in the health sector.

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Conferences and seminars

Ian is regularly invited to present sessions at conferences and seminars in England and Wales, Ireland and in mainland Europe including:

The EU food law institutions; EU food law; due diligence in buying food ingredients; enforcement notices; food law – a new opportunity; food Information; sentencing in food law matters; food law updates; food fraud, food authenticity; food poisoning law and practice; licensing law updates; product withdrawals and recalls (food and non-food); health and safety obligations.

Training

Ian has prepared and presented many legal courses for non-lawyers. Delegates have included enforcement officers, investigators and private sector employees tasked with internal investigations (e.g. following regulatory breaches of health and safety incidents).

Ian is on the panel of trainers for La Touche Training (related to Bond Solon) and he has lectured for Central Law Training.

Courses run by Ian include: law, practice and procedure (general and specific to a particular organisation or local authority); written evidence; investigative interviewing; courtroom skills; cross-examination skills; expert witness training and data protection/information governance.

Direct Access

