

**'London Calling': The issue of legal intimidation and SLAPPs
against media emanating from the United Kingdom**

Case Crib Sheet

The report '[London Calling': The issue of legal intimidation and SLAPPs against media emanating from the United Kingdom](#), published together with ARTICLE 19, references around 30 cases. The details of these cases are woven through the 100 page report, to various levels of detail, in order to highlight different aspects of the issue of SLAPPs. This crib sheet is therefore designed to make it easier for readers to find information about specific cases within the report, which was most recently updated in February 2023.

The below list provides the relevant page numbers where a case is referenced in 'London Calling'. Several of the most notable cases have also been turned into standalone case studies, the links to which are also provided.

1. Cases that reached Court Stage

1. Arron Banks v **Carole Cadwalladr**. Case filed in July 2019, meaning hearing in December 2019, trial in January 2022, with the judgment handed down in Cadwalladr's favour in July 2022. The case is currently awaiting the outcome of an appeal by Banks, with a hearing held at the Court of Appeal in February 2023. See pages 20-21 and 62-64. A standalone case study is available [here](#).
2. Walter Soriano v **Forensic News et al**. Case filed in July 2020, and a preliminary ruling on jurisdiction handed down January 2021, with a Court of Appeal hearing - with appeals heard from both the claimant and defendants - held in December 2021. Proceedings ongoing, with the next hearing expected on 2nd-3rd March 2023. See pages 30-31. A standalone case study is available [here](#).
3. Svante Kumlin + EEW v **Realtid et al**. - Case filed in November 2020, with an early hearing to determine jurisdiction admissibility held in March 2021, the judgement of which was handed down in May 2022. The case was settled out of court in January 2023. See pages 25-26. A standalone case study is available [here](#).
4. ENRC v **Tom Burgis + HarperCollins**. Legal case filed in August 2021, alongside case brought against Burgis and his employer the Financial Times (see below). The case was thrown out by the court in March 2022 See pages 36-37, 41 and 61. A standalone case study of this case, and the below one against Tom Burgis + the Financial Times, is available [here](#).
5. ENRC v **Tom Burgis + The Financial Times**. Legal case was filed in August 2021, alongside the one brought against Burgis and his publisher HarperCollins. After that case was thrown out by the court, this second case was withdrawn shortly afterwards also in March 2022. See pages 36-37, 41 and 61. See case study link above.
6. Charlie Elphicke v **The Sunday Times**. Case filed in 2018, meaning hearing in December 2019, withdrawn by the claimant in March 2022. See pages 24-25.

7. Roman Abramovich v **Catherine Belton + HarperCollins**. Case filed in March 2021, meaning hearing held in July 2021, judgment handed down in November, case settled in December 2021. See pages 29 and 33-36. A standalone case study regarding all the cases brought against Catherine Belton and/or her publisher HarperCollins is available [here](#).
8. Rosneft v **Catherine Belton + HarperCollins**. Cases filed in May 2021, meaning hearing held in July 2021, case settled in November 2021. See pages 34-35 and 60-66, and the case study link above.
9. Fridman v **HarperCollins** - Case brought in April 2021, meaning hearing held in July 2021 during which the case was settled. See pages 29 and 34-38, and the case study link above.
10. Aven v **HarperCollins**. Case brought in April 2021, meaning hearing held in July 2021 during which the case was settled. See pages 29 and 34-38, and the case study link above.
11. Seri Abd Hadi Awang v **Clare Rewcastle Brown**. Case brought in February 2019 and concluded with a settlement in 2019. See pages 30-31. A standalone case study is available [here](#).
12. Javanshir Feyziyev v **Paul Radu + The Journalism Development Network Association**. Case filed in 2018, settled in January 2020 on the eve of the trial. See pages 20-26. A standalone case study is available [here](#).
13. **Stocker v Stocker**. Case brought in 2014, trial held in 2016, Court of Appeal hearing in 2018, and final judgment handed down in April 2019 after a Supreme Court Appeal. See page 23.
14. Black Cube v **Keshet et al**. Case filed in June 2019 and later withdrawn by the claimant in November 2020, with Black Cube ordered to pay costs. See page 27.
15. Appleby v **BBC + The Guardian**. Case filed in 2017, settlement reached out of court in May 2018. See pages 28 and 38.
16. Raheem Brennerman v **The Sunday Times**. Case brought in August 2014 and struck out in March 2016. See page 69.
17. Lance Armstrong v **Times Newspapers, Alan Walsh + David English**. Case filed in 2004, with a settlement being reached in 2006. After Armstrong confirmed doping allegations, a subsequent settlement was reached in favour of Times Newspapers, Alan Walsh + David English in 2013. See page 70.

2. Legal threats that did not progress to court

18. Al Wazzan v **Clare Rewcastle Brown**. In 2021, Rewcastle Brown received several legal letters from Taylor Wessing, a UK law firm, on behalf of their client, Al Wazzan, an investment advisor currently on bail in Kuwait officials. After an alert about these letters was filed on the Council of Europe's Safety of Journalists Platform, the journalist did not receive any more letters. Without informing Rewcastle Brown, Taylor Wessing had also applied to the court for a writ in May, which eventually expired in October 2021. See page 45. A detailed case study is available [here](#).
19. Jeffrey Donaldson v **openDemocracy**. In 2018, after openDemocracy published several articles into Donaldson's political and business, the now leader of the DUP, he began sending legal letters and

ultimately filed proceedings. The case never ended up in court, with the legal timeframe for the case to proceed eventually running out in May 2020. See pages 52 and 61.

20. Turab Musayev v **The Shift**. In June 2020, The Shift published a letter from London-based firm Atkinson Thomson Solicitors sent on behalf of Turab Musayev, an Azerbaijani-British National, in response to articles about his involvement in the Montenegro wind farm scandal. 34 The Shift have reported that they were advised by lawyers in London that mounting a defence against Musayev's threat would require €50,000 to €100,000 even if the claimant's case is weak. As of yet, it appears no further legal action has been pursued. See pages 40 and 47-48.
21. Murari Lal Jalan v **amaBhungane**. In October 2020, amaBhungane, an award winning South African non-profit investigative media outlet, received a letter from London-based firm Kobre & Kim after approaching Indian businessman Murari Lal Jalan for information regarding his business dealings with the controversial Gupta family. See pages 48 and 67.
22. Farnoush Farsiar v **MaltaToday**. In October 2020, the media outlet MaltaToday received a letter from UK based law firm Schillings, demanding upon instructions from Farnoush Farsiar that an article allegedly contravening the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) be removed from the outlet's website. See page 29.
23. Wildcat Haven Enterprises vs **Andy Wightman**. Former Green SNP, Wightman had to start a gofundme to raise money to defend himself against a £750,000 action brought against him in 2020 by Wildcat Haven Enterprises for comments he made on his blog. See page 57.
24. Joseph Muscat v **Manuel Delia, John Sweeney + Carlo Bonini**. In 2019, after the co-authors of the book Murder on the Malta Express: Who Killed Daphne Caruana Galizia? put questions to then Maltese Prime Minister Joseph Muscat, legal letters were sent by UK law firm Carter-Ruck threatening legal action, which resulted in their UK publisher dropping the publication. The book was subsequently published by a local Maltese publisher Midsea before being later published in the UK by Silvertail. See pages 46 and 52.
25. Arlene Foster et al v **Sam McBride**. In September 2019, journalist Sam McBride, claimed that he had been subject to legal threats by the then DUP leader Arlene Foster and four of her party colleagues in relation to his book, Burned: The Inside Story of the Cash-for-Ash Scandal. After Foster denied her solicitors had sent a legal threat, framing the response sent to McBride's requests for comment as 'legal advice', McBride took the step of publishing the legal letter online. See page 53.
26. Wirecard v **Daniel McCrum + The Financial Times**. After the investigation into the German financial technology firm pre-action letters began in 2014 (alongside hacking and surveillance of McCrum), action ended in 2019 when Wirecard was found guilty of fraud. See pages 44 and 46.
27. Jho Low v **Hachette, Tom Wright, Bradley Hope; Clare Rewcastle Brown and 'Booksellers'**. Between 2018-19, the UK law firm Schillings sent threatening letters to bookshops around the world in an attempt to block distribution of a book 'Billion Dollar Whale', by former Wall Street Journalists Bradley Hope and Tom Wright, that detailed Jho Low as the mastermind behind the 1MDB scandal. The publisher of the book Hachette held back on the UK distribution over concerns regarding legal threats. Rewcastle Brown has said that she had to self-publish her own book about the 1MDB scandal in 2019 due to legal threats from Low facilitated through London law firm Schillings. Low remains on the run from prosecution in Malaysia, Singapore and the US. See page 45.

28. Henley & Partners v **Daphne Caruana Galizia**. In 2017, in the months before her murder, Caruana Galizia received legal letters from London law firm Mischon de Reya, on behalf of Henley and Partners, a British company contracted to the Maltese Government to market citizenship to wealthy investors. See pages 46-47.
29. Henley & Partners v **The Shift**. In December 2017, the Group Head of Public Relations at Henley & Partners wrote to The Shift threatening legal action if they did not remove an article about the company within 24 hours. The Shift refused, publishing the letter along with their own response to it as part of their wider interest reporting. See page 47.
30. Jean-Claude Bastos v **Maka Angola**. In March 2017, the award winning Angolan journalist and anti-corruption campaigner Rafael Marques de Morais published an article on his blog about a legal letter he had received from London-based law firm Schillings on behalf of Jean-Claude Bastos, Swiss-Angolan businessman, after the journalist wrote a series of reports regarding the activities of a firm connected to Bastos. See page 48.
31. Petro Poroshenko v **Ukrainska Pravda + Maxim Tucker**. In 2016, British law firm Atkins Thomson wrote to the Ukrainian news website Ukrainska Pravda, as well as to the British freelance journalist Maxim Tucker then based in Kiev, warning them against publishing accusations against the then Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko put forward by local MP Oleksandr Onishchenko. See page 49.
32. Scientology Co v **Sky Atlantic**. Sky Atlantic faced similar threats for a documentary, also called Going Clear, released in 2015 based on Wright's book. The documentary was eventually screened six months later after Sky had sought further legal advice and incorporated the responses from the Church of Scientology "where appropriate". See pages 52 and 53.
33. **Karen Dawisha**. In 2014, Professor Karen Dawisha, a Russia scholar was dropped by her long-time publisher Cambridge University Press (CUP) over concerns that her book, *Putin's Kleptocracy: Who Owns Russia?*, would attract libel cases in London. The book was later published by Simon and Schuster, a US publisher. See page 44.
34. Scientology Co v **Lawrence Wright**. In 2013, the Church of Scientology had successfully blocked the publication or distribution of American author and journalist Wright's book *Going Clear*, in the UK and Ireland. The original publishers, Transworld, cancelled the publication in Britain and Northern Ireland following legal advice, but proceeded with sales in Europe and the US. *Going Clear* was only published in the UK three years later, in 2016, after the rights were bought by the publisher Silvertail. See page 53.
35. Ian Taylor v **The National Collective**. After articles, published in April 2013, questioned donations made to the Better Together campaign, The National Collective, a cultural movement for Scottish independence during Scotland's Referendum from December 2011 to September 2014, and two of its members received multiple libel threats from chief campaigner Ian Taylor. See page 56.