

Admiralty Court website FAQs

What cases are suitable for the Admiralty Court?

The cases dealt with in the Admiralty Court are “admiralty claims”. These are claims which fall within CPR 61.1 and section 20 of the Senior Courts Act 1981. They include, for example: disputes about the possession and ownership of ships; claims arising out of marine incidents and accidents, including claims for damage caused by ships in collision, marine salvage or limitation claims, and claims for loss of or damage to goods carried in a ship; and claims for personal injury occurring on ships where the international or maritime expertise of the Admiralty Court is called for. If a claim is started in the Admiralty Court which does not require its specialist expertise, it will be transferred to a more suitable court.

Do the Civil Procedure Rules apply to cases in the Admiralty Court?

Yes. The CPR applies generally to cases in the Admiralty Court. [Part 61](#) and [PD61](#) contain special rules for claims in the Admiralty Court.

Are there any cases which can only be brought in the Admiralty Court?

Yes. The claims which must be pursued in the Admiralty Court are listed in CPR 61.2(1). They include any claim which is an ‘in rem’ claim, claims arising from damage done by a ship, claims about the ownership of a ship, claims arising from towage or pilotage of a ship, collision claims, salvage claims and limitation claims.

What is an ‘in rem’ claim?

An ‘in rem’ claim is a claim which falls with section 21(2) to (5) of the Senior Courts Act 1981. ‘In rem’ means the claim is ‘against a thing’, rather than against a natural person or a legal person such as a company. The most common thing against which in rem claims are brought are ships, but freight and cargo may also have in rem claims brought against them. In rem claims are started by the issue of a special claim form and have special procedural rules – see CPR 61.3.

What is involved in applying to arrest a ship

An application to have a ship arrested must be made under the rules in CPR 61.5. Anyone considering the possibility of applying to arrest a ship is encouraged to make early contact with the Admiralty Marshal, Paul Farren (paul.farren@justice.gov.uk / +44 20 7947 7111), or his Deputy, Wilf Orton (wilfred.orton@justice.gov.uk / +44 20 7947 6322), during normal weekday office hours.

What is the status of the Commercial Court Guide in the Admiralty Court?

The [Commercial Court Guide \(PDF\)](#) incorporates the Admiralty Court Guide within it at **Section N**. The guidance in the other Sections of the Commercial Court Guide

applies in the Admiralty Court except where Section N indicates that matters are dealt with differently in Admiralty cases.

Who are the judges in the Admiralty Court?

There is a judge in charge of the Admiralty Court (usually referred to as ‘the Admiralty Judge’), currently **Mr Justice Andrew Baker**. He is assisted by the Admiralty Registrar and Deputy Admiralty Registrar, and by the Admiralty Marshall. Admiralty claims and applications allocated to be heard by the Judge rather than by the Registrar may be listed before the Admiralty Judge, any other judge of the Commercial Court, or a Deputy High Court Judge authorised to sit in the Admiralty Court.

Where is the Admiralty Court?

The Admiralty Court is one of the Business and Property Courts of England and Wales administered from the Rolls Building, Fetter Lane, London EC4A 1NL.

For administrative, listing or other general enquiries, either of these contact addresses should be used:

comct.listing@justice.gov.uk / admiralty.registrar@justice.gov.uk

How are documents filed in the Admiralty Court?

Many documents are now required to be provided or filed electronically (e-filing) under the Electronic Working (CE File) arrangements which apply to the Commercial Court: **see Appendix 12 of the Commercial Court Guide**.

How is case management dealt with in the Admiralty Court?

Initial case management in the Admiralty Court is by the Admiralty Registrar. This includes an allocation decision on whether a claim should remain in the court or be transferred and, if it stays, whether it will be dealt with by the Judge or the Registrar. Subsequent case management is dealt with in much the same way as in the Commercial Court. A case management conference or “CMC” will take place, usually after statements of case have been served.

Are there special rules on disclosure in the Admiralty Court?

Disclosure in the Admiralty Court differs from disclosure in the Commercial Court in two respects. First, CPR PD51U does **not** apply to the Admiralty Court; disclosure in the Admiralty Court is still governed by CPR Part 31. Second, there are special rules on the preservation, disclosure and inspection of electronic track data in collision claims. These are described in Appendix 13 to the Commercial Court Guide.

Are there special rules for witness statements in the Admiralty Court?

No. CPR PD57AC, which generally applies to witness statements in the Business and Property Courts of England and Wales, now applies also in the Admiralty Court.

Are there special rules for expert evidence in the Admiralty Court?

Yes. In collision claims, if the court may need expert assistance on matters of navigation or seamanship, this will usually be provided by one or more nautical assessors appointed by the court, in which case the parties do not serve or call expert evidence on matters on which the assessors will be advising the court. Other than this exception, the rules in CPR Part 35 apply.

Do I need to engage a KC for an Admiralty case?

It is not necessary to engage King's Counsel for claims in the Admiralty Court. Parties can be, and frequently are, represented by junior counsel or solicitor advocates.

Can litigants in person appear in the Court?

Yes. The guidance contained in section M of the Commercial Court Guide applies equally to the Admiralty Court. Also the [Litigants in Person webpage](#) contains helpful advice.

How can I make a suggestion or raise an issue about the Admiralty Court?

The Admiralty Court welcomes input from Court users. Any ideas for changes to procedure, or other comments about the work of the Court, can be submitted to the Admiralty Court Users Committee which meets regularly.

Ideas or comments for this committee can be sent via the Admiralty Bar Group admin@admiraltybar.org or the Admiralty Solicitors Group <https://www.admiraltysolicitorsgroup.com> or by email to comct.listing@justice.gov.uk or admiralty.registrar@justice.gov.uk