



**Courts and  
Tribunals Judiciary**

**Business and Property Courts  
The Commercial Court  
Report 2024–2025  
(Including the Admiralty Court Report)**

February 2026





**Courts and  
Tribunals Judiciary**

# **The Commercial Court Report 2024–2025**

February 2026



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# 1. Introduction



The Law Society’s International Data Insights Report in September 2025 noted that the Commercial Court “remains the leading international centre for the resolution of complex litigation, with parties coming from a record number of countries”, handling “disputes worth billions of pounds every year, using flexible procedures to resolve cases quickly and efficiently”. The Commercial Court had a busy 2024-2025 legal year, with notable increases in the numbers of trials listed and heard, including long trials. The year was also marked by the coming into force of the Arbitration Act 2025, which updates the 1996 Act in several significant ways. The Court has continued to experience high levels of paper applications and urgent/expedited applications.

In the 2024-2025 legal year, the general level of new claims issued in the Commercial Court, Admiralty Court and London Circuit Commercial Courts, taken together, has remained fairly constant, with 1,140 new claims issued compared to 1,174 the previous year. Within those figures, there has been a notable degree of migration from the Commercial Court (609 new claims in 2024-2025 compared to 743 in 2023-2024) to the London Circuit Commercial Court (LCCC) (new claims up from 339 in 2023-2024 to 432 in 2024-2025). That shift in the balance reflects ongoing efforts to ensure cases are allocated to the most appropriate forum by value and subject matter, including the Practice Note issued on 8 June 2025 increasing the general lower limit for claim values to £7 million in the Commercial Court and £1 million in the LCCC (<https://www.judiciary.uk/guidance-and-resources/practice-note-commercial-court-and-london-circuit-commercial-court/>). This in turn helps the Commercial Court focus on the most complex, high-value cases.

The number of hearings listed and heard in the Commercial Court decreased a little, with 1,091 hearings listed and 773 effective, compared to 1,251 and 884 respectively in the previous year. However, the number of trials listed rose by 17% to 111, and the number of trials heard increased by 20% to 49. The average length of trial in the Commercial Court remains nine days, with 80% completed within two weeks, up from 65% last year. There have, though, been several particularly long trials during this legal year, including the latter half of the year-long trial in *Skatteforvaltningen v Solo Capital Partners LLP and others*, the first half of the year-long trial in *The Public Institution for Social Security v. Al-Rajaan and others*, two 3½-month trials in *NMC Health Plc (In Administration) v Ernst & Young LLP* and *Jinxin Inc. v Aser Media PTE Limited*, and a term-long trial of the first group of cases in the Russian Aircraft litigation.

The number of reserved judgments has increased to 212, matching the figure from two years ago, and the total number of judgments given Neutral Citation Numbers, whether reserved or *ex tempore*, across all four courts (including the Financial List) was 446.

Paper applications remain a defining feature of the Court's business, with 5,004 processed across all jurisdictions, slightly down from 5,077 last year but still well above pre-pandemic levels. Urgent applications continue to be numerous, with over 60 received, and the average time required for urgent applications has increased to over three hours per application.

Arbitration continues to be a cornerstone of the Commercial Court's work, accounting for around 30% of claims issued. There has been a marked increase in arbitration-related applications, including 73 section 69 appeals on points of law (up from 53), 48 section 68 serious irregularity challenges (up from 39), and 21 section 67 jurisdiction challenges. The success rate for these applications remains low. The Arbitration Bill, referenced in last year's report, has now received Royal Assent and became law on 1 August 2025.

The Court's caseload remains predominantly international, with approximately 75% of cases involving parties or subject matter outside the United Kingdom. The largest category of new claims this year was again general commercial contracts and arrangements, followed by arbitration-related matters, insurance/reinsurance, shipping, aviation, and commercial fraud. The Admiralty Court has seen a continued trend of marina owners and operators using its jurisdiction to arrest and sell vessels for unpaid berthing fees.

The Court continues to encourage the use of the Shorter Trials Scheme and Flexible Trials Scheme, both of which offer streamlined procedures and cost savings, particularly in relation to disclosure. The regime for Less Complex Claims under PD 57AD remains available for suitable cases.

The Court's engagement with regional centres remains strong, with judges travelling to hear cases outside London when appropriate. Lord Justice Foxton (immediate past Judge in Charge of the Commercial Court) and I, along with other judges, have continued to visit and speak at regional centres. Members of the Court have also actively participated in national and international fora, sharing best practice and supporting the development of commercial courts globally. Details of past and forthcoming events are published on the Commercial Court pages (<https://www.judiciary.uk/courts-and-tribunals/business-and-property-courts/commercial-court/>) of the Judiciary website.

The Court has continued to encourage the appropriate use of junior advocates, including by the Practice Guidance issued on 8 July 2025 by the Judges in Charge of the Commercial Court and the LCCC summarising the benefits of, and best practice in relation to, junior advocacy (<https://www.judiciary.uk/guidance-and-resources/practice-guidance-for-the-commercial-court-and-london-circuit-commercial-court-junior-advocacy/>). The court has noted a welcome increase in junior advocates taking significant roles in trials and other hearings even in larger cases where they are led.

The Court has continued work aiming at increasing opportunities for careers in commercial dispute resolution. Initiatives in co-operation with IntoUniversity, the Sutton Trust Pathways to Law, Bridging the Bar, and COMBAR's social mobility workshop have continued to flourish.

Congratulations are due to Lady Justice Cockerill and Lord Justice Foxton on their promotions to the Court of Appeal, and we thank them for their huge contributions over the years (including as former Judges in Charge) to the work of the Commercial Court.

Congratulations and thanks are also due to His Honour Judge Pelling KC, who retired from full-time judicial sitting in January 2026 after serving as Judge in Charge of the LCCC, to take up appointment as a judge of the Court of the Dubai International Financial Centre. The LCCC has gone from strength to strength during his 7-year tenure, and we are very much indebted to him. His Honour Judge Nigel Bird is acting as interim Judge in Charge of the LCCC, and a Judicial Appointments Commission competition is in progress with a view to appointing two new judges (including one lead judge) to the LCCC.

Pursuant to a cross-deployment initiative introduced in spring 2025, we have welcomed Mrs Justice O'Farrell and Mr Justice Saini (both of the King's Bench Division), and Mr Justice Trower and Mr Justice Michael Green (both of the Chancery Division), who sit from time to time in the Commercial Court alongside their other judicial commitments.

I am once again grateful to Lord Justice Foxton, and his clerk Kaylei Smith, for their work on the preparation of this report, and to the Commercial Court Listing Office for providing the necessary statistics.

Finally, the judges of the Court remain deeply grateful to our clerks, the court staff, Michael Tame and the listing team, whose dedication and professionalism underpin the Court's ability to handle its demanding and complex caseload. Their commitment ensures the continued delivery of justice at the highest standards.

**Mr Justice Henshaw, Judge in Charge of the Commercial Court**

## 2. The Courts

### 2.1 Judges of the Court

As of January 2026, there were 12 nominated High Court judges who sit predominantly in the Commercial Court (Mr Justice Waksman resuming his regular sitting in the Commercial Court when his role as Judge in Charge of the Technology and Construction Court came to an end in January 2026). In addition, Mr Justice Michael Green, Mr Justice Trower (both of the Chancery Division) and Mrs Justice O’Farrell and Mr Justice Saini (both of the King’s Bench Division) sit from time-to-time in the Commercial Court alongside their other judicial commitments. The current judges can be found at <https://www.judiciary.uk/courts-and-tribunals/business-and-property-courts/commercial-court/about-the-commercial-court/the-commercial-courts-judges/>.

As judges of the King’s Bench Division, the 12 judges who sit predominantly in the Commercial Court also undertake other judicial business, such as sitting on criminal trials or civil cases on Circuit, sitting in the general King’s Bench list, the Administrative Court, the Court of Appeal Criminal Division and the Competition Appeals Tribunal. Some also sit on occasion in the Technology and Construction Court. With effect from 1 November 2024, Mr Justice Bright has been a Presiding Judge of the Northern Circuit, and Mr Justice Calver became a Presiding Judge of the South Eastern Circuit with effect from January 2026.

The Court aims to have about eight or nine judges sitting at any time. However, it is challenging to maintain this figure.

The Court continues to handle a varied case load, with the balance of work including both traditional subject-matters (such as international trade, shipping, insurance and reinsurance), commercial fraud, actions arising out of commercial and business acquisition agreements, and claims relating to banking, financial services and securities transactions. Long trials which generate a significant volume of interim applications have become an increasing feature of the commercial litigation landscape.

## 2.2 Judiciary Changes

Mr Justice Birt became a High Court Judge in October 2025, and was nominated to sit in the Commercial Court with effect from November 2025.

In October 2025, Mrs Justice Cockerill was sworn in as a Lady Justice of Appeal.

In January 2026, Lord Justice Foxton was sworn in as a Lord Justice of Appeal.

Mr Justice Andrew Baker has continued in his role as the Admiralty Judge.

His Honour Judge Pelling KC continued as Judge in Charge of the London Circuit Commercial Court for the period covered by this report. He retired from full-time judicial sitting on 23 January 2026. His Honour Judge Nigel Bird took over as interim Judge in Charge pending a Judicial Appointments Commission process to recruit two new judges (including a lead judge to act as Judge in Charge) for the court.

### 3. The Work of the Commercial Court

The Commercial Court covers a wide jurisdiction, extending to any claim that arises out of the transaction of trade and commerce.

The Commercial Court deals with both international and domestic business disputes, including claims relating to:

- Commercial agreements;
- Import and export of goods;
- Carriage of goods by sea, land and air;
- Banking and financial services;
- Insurance and reinsurance;
- Markets and exchanges;
- Commodities, oil, gas and natural resources;
- The construction of ships;
- Agency; and
- Arbitration and competition matters.

#### Size of claims

Until June 2025, the minimum value for Commercial Court claims in most cases was £5m. Most of the cases in the Court are worth considerably more than this, with a number of cases worth over £1 billion being commenced every year. Ongoing efforts have been made to ensure that commercial claims which are not, in value terms, appropriate for the Commercial Court are tried in the LCCC (see for example *Gordiy v Dorofejeva* [2023] EWHC 3036 (Comm) and *Bailey Ahma Holdings Limited v Bell Holdings Limited* [2023] EWHC 2829 (Comm)).

On 8 June 2025, Practice Note: Commercial Court and London Circuit Commercial Court was issued. The Practice Note is available here: [Practice Note: Commercial Court and London Circuit Commercial Court - Courts and Tribunals Judiciary](#). The Practice Note provides that with effect from 1 July 2025, the practice of the Commercial

Court will be to transfer claims with a value at risk of £7 million or less or the foreign currency equivalent (exclusive of interest and costs) to the London Circuit Commercial Court unless retention is justified by reason of the factors set out in CPR r. 30.3(2); and the practice of the London Circuit Commercial Court will be to transfer claims with a financial value of less than £1 million or the foreign currency equivalent (exclusive of interest and costs) to an appropriate County Court, unless retention is justified by reason of the factors set out in CPR r. 30.3(2) (resulting in the retention, for example, of arbitration and shipping claims).

Efforts are made to ensure that all claims issued in the Commercial Court are audited before a CMC is booked, to ensure that the Court's resources can be given to cases which require its expertise, that smaller cases can benefit from shorter lead times in the Circuit Commercial Courts, and that claims which raise competition issues are heard by the Competition Appeals Tribunal. The Court's ability to audit cases depends in part on the value of claims being clear from the outset, which is not always the case. There are occasions when it only becomes apparent at a CMC or when a hearing has been fixed that a case would be more appropriately heard in another court. Cases will be transferred out, where appropriate, whether or not a hearing is pending.

### **Requests for expedition**

The number of expedition requests received by the Commercial Court has risen significantly over recent years. Between 1 January and 30 September 2025, 43 applications were received. Orders for expedition have an impact on lead times, and requests for expedition should be made (via the Listing Office) only when absolutely necessary. They should be succinct. A request and a response should generally be no more than four pages long in total.

### **Pre-reading and time estimates**

Users are reminded of the guidance issued on these matters by the then Judge in Charge (together with the Judge in Charge of the London Circuit Commercial Court) on 28 September 2020, which remains in effect (<https://www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Time-estimates-Notice-2020-1.pdf> or <https://www.judiciary.uk/guidance-and-resources/time-estimates-for-pre-reading-and-hearings/>); and the Practice Note issued on 30 March 2022 regarding time estimates. Parties are warned that inadequate time estimates may result in cases being stood out of the list and relisted

without expedition. The Practice Note calls for careful consideration to be given to the number of issues and authorities that can be covered at a hearing. It reminds parties that oral hearings exist for the presentation of the parties' arguments, including submissions on the law, and that it is not acceptable for advocates to provide a list of documentary references or case extracts and expect the Judge to read the material after the hearing. The Practice Note is at <https://www.judiciary.uk/guidance-and-resources/practice-note-commercial-court-2/>.

## Electronic working

Parties are required to file electronic bundles in accordance with the latest directions, updated on 29 November 2021, which can be found at: <https://www.judiciary.uk/guidance-and-resources/general-guidance-on-electronic-court-bundles/>.

## Website

The redesigned and award-winning Business & Property Courts' website includes pages relating to the Commercial Court, Admiralty Court and Circuit Commercial Courts containing a variety of useful and current information (<https://www.judiciary.uk/courts-and-tribunals/business-and-property-courts/commercial-court/>). These include a summary guide to litigating in the Commercial Court (<https://www.judiciary.uk/courts-and-tribunals/business-and-property-courts/commercial-court/litigating-in-the-commercial-court/preparing-for-hearings-and-trials/>) and a "Listing FAQ" which addresses most of the questions regularly asked of the Listing Office (<https://www.judiciary.uk/courts-and-tribunals/business-and-property-courts/commercial-court/lead-times-list-and-contacts/listings-faqs/>). The pages also include regularly updated summaries of Commercial Court judgments (<https://www.judiciary.uk/courts-and-tribunals/business-and-property-courts/commercial-court/about-the-commercial-court/judgment-summaries-for-the-commercial-court/>). The website includes reports of recent and forthcoming events involving Commercial Court judges (<https://www.judiciary.uk/courts-and-tribunals/business-and-property-courts/commercial-court/news-and-initiatives/news/>) Users are invited to submit any suggestions for improvement to the Clerk to Birt J c/o [Shannon.Riordan@justice.gov.uk](mailto:Shannon.Riordan@justice.gov.uk)

## Overview of work

The 2024-2025 legal year saw a small reduction in the number of claims issued in the four London Commercial Courts from 1,192 to 1,140. Within that figure, there was a reduction in claims issued in the Commercial Court from 743 to 609, and an increase in claims issued in the London Circuit Commercial Court from 339 to 432. This is likely to have reflected the ongoing efforts to ensure that claims are properly allocated to the right court having regard to the amounts in issue, referred to above.

There was a fall in the overall number of hearings (both listed and heard) from 1,125 listed and 884 heard in 2023-2024, to 1,091 listed and 773 heard. However, there has been an increase in the number of trials listed (from 95 to 111) and of trials heard (from 41 to 49), including several very long trials as indicated in the Introduction to this report.

There was a fall in the overall number of sitting days, and an increase in the number of allocated reading and judgment writing days.

Below is a small selection of the cases heard in 2024-2025:-

- *Standard Chartered Bank Plc v Guaranty Nominees Ltd* [2024] EWHC 2605 (Comm) (Flaux C and Foxtton J): a Financial List test case addressing the effect of the cessation of LIBOR interest rates;
- *Aabar Holdings SARL v Glencore plc* [2024] EWHC 3046 (Comm) (Picken J): a determination in the context of a claim under the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 as to whether English law recognises a rule that a company cannot assert legal professional privilege against its shareholders or their successors;
- *Magomedev v TPG Group Holdings (SBS) LP* [2025] EWHC 59 (Comm) (Bright J): a 13-day jurisdiction battle as to whether claims for conspiracies relating to the alleged misappropriation of major interests in two Russian companies should be tried in England;
- *Alta Trading UK Ltd v Bosworth* [2025] EWHC 91 (Comm) (Henshaw J): claims arising from 144 contracts for the sale and purchase of West African crude oil alleged to have been undertaken fraudulently and in breach of duty;

- *Athena Capital Fund SICAV-FIS SCA v Secretariat of State of the Holy See* [2025] EWHC 355 (Comm) (Robin Knowles J): a dispute relating to a major real property investment in London made by the Holy See;
- *Palmali Shipping SA v Litasco SA* [2025] EWHC 1149 (Comm) (His Honour Judge Pelling KC): a dispute about a contract of affreightment for the carriage of Lukoil products involving claims of US\$175m and a counterclaim of US\$15m;
- *AerCap Ireland Limited v AIG Europe SA and others* [2025] EWHC 1430 (Comm) (Butcher J): claims by aircraft leasing companies in respect of aircraft and aircraft engines with an insured value exceeding US\$4.5 billion said to be lost following the Russian invasion of Ukraine;
- *Axa France IARD SA v Santander Cards UK Limited* [2025] EWHC 1881 (Comm) (Dias J): a claim to recover £675m under a contractual indemnity for liabilities incurred in respect of PPI policies;
- *Secretary of State for Health and Social Care v PPE Medpro Limited* [2025] EWHC 2486 (Comm) (Cockerill J): a claim in relation to contract for the supply of £122m of personal protective equipment during the Covid pandemic;
- *Skatteforvaltningen v Solo Partners LLP* [2025] EWHC 2364 (Comm) (Andrew Baker J): claims by Danish tax authority to recover damages exceeding US\$1.4 billion in respect of tax rebates alleged to have been paid as a result of fraud).

In addition to hearings, Judges also deal with a substantial number of applications on paper: see further section 12.2 below.

The Judge in Charge of the Commercial Court also deals with applications to transfer in and out of the Court, as well as matters concerning listing and expedition.

## 3.1 Arbitration

Matters arising from arbitration make up a significant proportion of the claims issued in the Court (around 30%), reflecting London's continued status as an important centre for international arbitration.

These matters include a range of applications made in support of the arbitral process, such as applications for injunctions, for the enforcement of arbitration awards, and other matters such as applications to the court for the appointment of an arbitrator.

The bulk of the arbitration claims issued are:

- appeals on a point of law (under section 69 of the Arbitration Act 1996);
- enforcement applications (under section 66 and section 101 of the Act);
- challenges alleging serious irregularity (section 68 applications);
- combined ss.68/69 applications;
- applications for injunctions in support of the arbitral process (section 44 applications);
- challenges to awards on grounds of lack of jurisdiction under section 67 of the Act;
- applications for the appointment of an arbitrator under section 18 of the Act.

### 3.1.1 Section 44 applications (injunctions)

During 2024-2025 there were 34 applications for injunctions under section 44 of the Arbitration Act 1996. This is a 32% decrease from 2023-2024 (50 applications). However, the figure for 2024-2025 is up substantially when compared to the number of applications made in the previous two years, 20 applications in 2022-2023 and 15 applications in 2021-2022.

These figures do not include applications to enforce arbitration agreements by anti-suit injunctions, where no arbitration seated in England and Wales has been or is to be commenced. Those cases involve relief under section 37(1) Senior Courts Act 1981 and not section 44 of the 1996 Act.

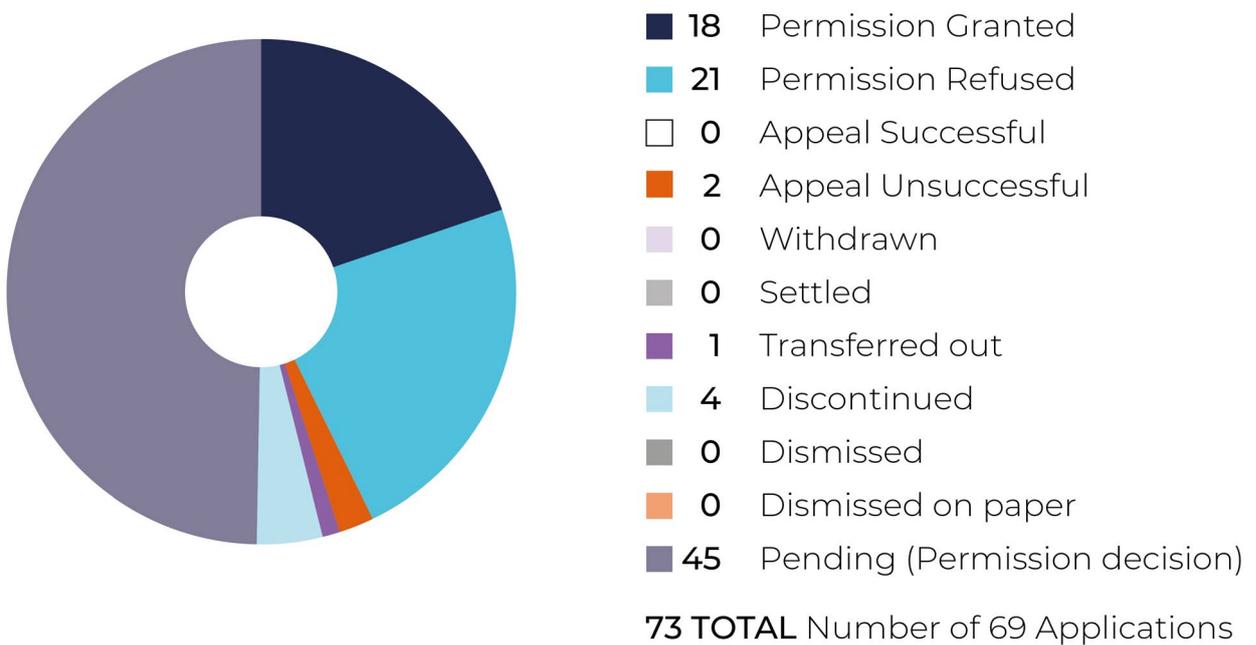
### 3.1.2 Section 69 applications (appeal on a point of law)

The number of section 69 applications received during the year was 73, compared to 53 the previous year. As at October 2025:-

- 21 had permission refused
- 18 had permission granted (and are included within the following four categories)
- 4 were discontinued
- 2 appeals were unsuccessful
- 1 was transferred out
- 45 were awaiting a permission decision or final disposal following the granting of permission

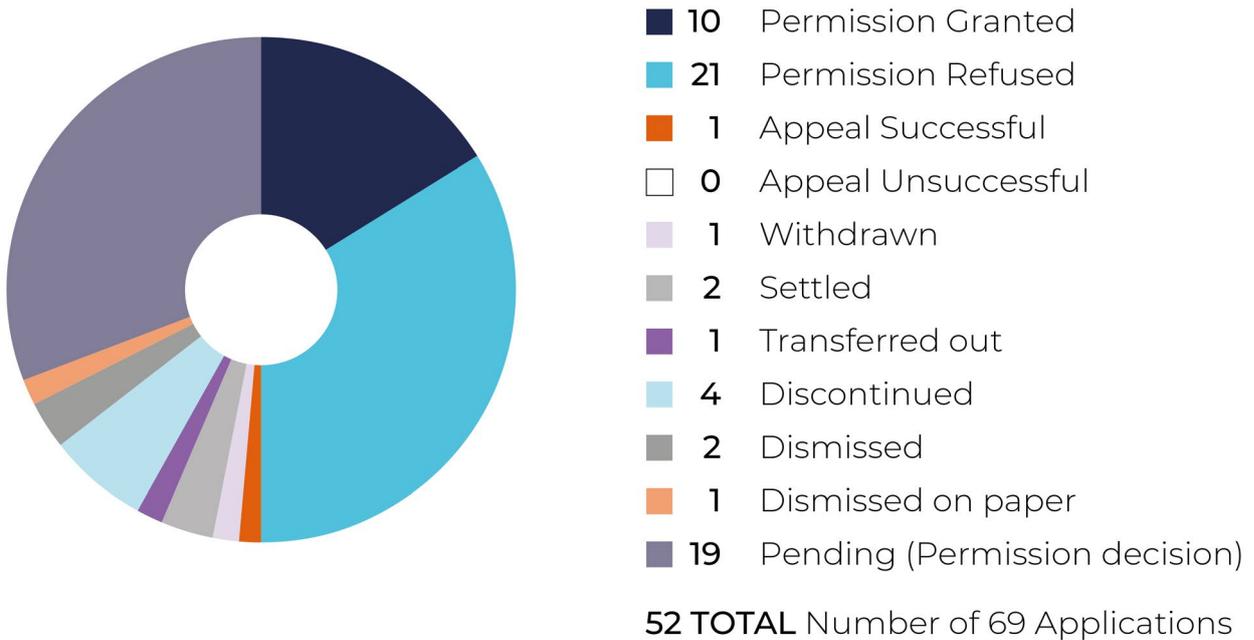
as illustrated below:

**Section 69 2024-2025**



As an arbitration case will sometimes span a year-end, a more complete picture is offered by looking also at previous years. A review of 2023-2024 shows that there were 53 applications received in that year (applications where permission is granted will be reflected in the figures for the disposal of appeals). The current position of these is illustrated below:

**Section 69 2023-2024**



**3.1.3 Section 69 applications (completion times)**

During this year it has taken on average 118 days for a decision to grant or refuse permission to appeal, including the time required for service on the respondent, for the respondent to file its response, for any reply by the applicant, and the provision of a bundle for the judge. This has increased slightly compared to applications filed during 2023-2024, when the average time was 115 days. The average completion time for applications where permission was granted (from receipt of claim to final decision) was 308 days for 2024-2025 (only 2 claims have been completed during this period) compared to 214 days for 2023-2024, 263 days for 2022-2023 and 310 days for 2021-2022.

**3.1.4 Section 68 applications (procedural irregularity)**

During the year the Court received 48 section 68 applications (a 23% increase compared to 39 applications received the previous year), of which:

- 8 applications were dismissed at a hearing

- 5 applications were dismissed on the papers
- 4 were discontinued
- 3 were transferred out
- 2 were stayed

The remaining 26 are pending.

A review of 2023-2024 shows 39 applications were received, on which the position is as follows:

- 8 were partially successful
- 8 were stayed
- 5 settled
- 4 applications were dismissed at a hearing
- 2 were unsuccessful
- 2 were withdrawn
- 2 were discontinued
- 1 was dismissed on the papers
- 1 was transferred out

The remaining 6 are pending

### **3.1.5 Section 67 applications (jurisdiction)**

During the year 21 jurisdiction applications were filed under section 67 of the 1996 Act (a small decrease from the 24 filed the previous year), of which:

- 5 were dismissed following a hearing
- 2 were dismissed on the papers
- 1 was unsuccessful
- 1 was discontinued

The remaining 12 are pending.

During 2023-2024 there were 24 applications received, of which:

- 8 were dismissed on the papers
- 4 were discontinued
- 3 were successful
- 2 were dismissed following a hearing
- 2 were transferred out

The remaining 5 are pending.

## **3.2 The London Circuit Commercial Court**

The London Circuit Commercial Court handles commercial transactions that satisfy the following criteria:

1. the case concerns a business dispute, including but not limited to such a dispute relating to:
  - Commercial contracts;
  - The export or import of goods, international carriage of goods by land sea or air;
  - Insurance and reinsurance;
  - Banking and financial services, commercial loan agreements, guarantees and indemnities;
  - The operation of markets and exchanges including those concerned with commodities of all types and financial products of all types including securities and currencies;
  - Share sale agreements;
  - Professional negligence;
  - Business agency and management agreements including those relating to professional sport;
  - Confidential information and the enforcement of post termination restraints in employment contracts
  - Ships or yachts (other than to the extent the claim falls within the exclusive jurisdiction of the Admiralty Court); or

- Arbitrations including appeals and other challenges concerning arbitrations made under the Arbitration Act 1996 and the enforcement of Arbitral Awards;
- 2. the case would be fit for commencement in the Commercial Court by reason of its subject matter but is unsuitable for issue in the Commercial Court by reason of its financial value and/or the nature of the factual, technical or legal issues that arise;
- 3. its value merits trial in the High Court (which will usually mean the amount in issue is in excess of £1m in value following the Practice Note published on 8 June 2025 referred to above); and
- 4. the factual, technical or legal issues that arise require or would benefit from the expertise of a Circuit Commercial Judge.

Each of the criteria noted in 2-4 above must generally be satisfied in addition to at least one of those identified in 1 before a case is started or transferred into the LCCC. Cases are normally heard by Specialist Senior Circuit Judges authorised to sit as High Court judges, and by specialist Deputy High Court judges. Some cases may be heard by Commercial Court judges.

His Honour Judge Pelling KC was Judge in Charge of the London Circuit Commercial Court for the period covered by this report. He also sat as a judge of the Commercial Court.

## 4. The Work of the Admiralty Court

The Admiralty Court has exclusive jurisdiction over certain maritime claims. Cases heard by the Court include:

- Collisions between ships;
- Disputes over the transport of cargo;
- Salvage of a ship, cargo or crew;
- Disputes over goods supplied to a ship;
- Disputes over mortgages and other security over ships;
- Claims by passengers or crew for injuries suffered;
- Claims by the crew of a ship for unpaid wages;
- Claims by shipowners to limit liability for loss or damage.

The Court hears claims brought against the owner of a ship ('in personam' claims) and claims brought against the ship itself ('in rem' claims). The distinctive feature of the 'in rem' jurisdiction is the ability of the court to arrest and sell ships.

The Court comprises the Admiralty Judge (Mr Justice Andrew Baker), all other judges of the Commercial Court, and the Admiralty Registrar (Master Davison) and Deputy Admiralty Registrar (Master Simon Brown). In addition, Sir Nigel Teare is available to assist the Admiralty Court as a result of his continued authorisation to sit in retirement.

The Admiralty Registrar allocates cases either to the Admiralty Judge or to the Admiralty Registrar (usually those under £1 million). Where damages are to be assessed in a collision action (or any other action) they will, save in exceptional cases, be referred to the Registrar. The role of the Admiralty Registrar, combined with the high proportion of cases that settle prior to any substantive hearing, means that much of the work of the Admiralty Court is undertaken by the Registrar.

As a result of the County Court no longer having Admiralty jurisdiction, all smaller value claims raising an issue of navigation or ship management are case managed by the Registrar and, when they do not settle, are tried by him.

Many in personam claims for personal injury suffered on board waterborne craft were previously issued in the Admiralty Court

even though they did not raise any such issue and were likely to be worth well under £1 million. Since 6 April 2023 there has been no requirement for such claims to be brought in the Admiralty Court, and guidance is now given in CPR PD 61, paragraphs 2.7-2.8. Where such claims are commenced in the Admiralty Court despite that guidance, they will ordinarily be transferred out to a suitable County Court.

Warrants of arrest are executed by the Admiralty Marshall, Paul Farren.

The Court and the Marshal acknowledge the role played by solicitors in giving early notification of a Claimant's intention to arrest, which then enables the Marshal to act without delay when a warrant of arrest is issued.

The new litigation trend noted in last year's Annual Report, namely the use by marina owners/operators of the Admiralty Court's jurisdiction as a means of dealing with unpaid berthing fees, continued to be seen in 2024-2025. In several cases, the contempt jurisdiction of the court has been used to enforce an injunction requiring the performance of a contractual obligation to remove a vessel from berth (see, for example, *Premier Marinas Ltd v Roberts* [2024] EWHC 3477 (Admlty)). The totals for arrests and sales for 2024-2025, across all types of claim, were 24 warrants of arrest and 9 sales (compared with 24 warrants of arrest and 6 sales in 2023-2024, 19 warrants and 5 sales in 2022-2023).

## 4.1 Update from the Admiralty Judge

Mr Justice Andrew Baker reports that, as indicated by the statistics in section 6.3 below, 2024-2025 was a somewhat quieter year than 2023-2024 for both substantive and interlocutory hearings.

In *MSC Flaminia (No.2)*, [2022] EWHC 2746 (Admlty), [2023] EWCA Civ 1007, [2025] UKSC 14, the Supreme Court upheld Andrew Baker J's original decision that the right to limit under the Limitation Convention was not restricted to claims in respect of losses suffered in the first instance by an 'outsider' (i.e. a party not entitled to the benefit of the right to limit under the Convention in respect of the subject casualty), overruling the Court of Appeal on that point.

In December 2024, in the tonnage limitation proceedings relating to the loss of the *X-Press Pearl* in June 2021, Andrew Baker J confirmed and clarified further the law on when slot charterers will be parties entitled to limit as 'charterers' within the meaning of Article 1(2) of the

Limitation Convention: *Sea Consortium Pte Ltd (t/a X-Press Feeders) et al. v Bengal Tiger Line Pte Ltd et al.* [2024] EWHC 3174 (Admlty).

Significant judgments from the Admiralty Registrar during 2024-2025 included:

- that the Admiralty Court's jurisdiction *in rem* in respect of dock charges or dues (s.20(2)(n) Senior Courts Act 1981) could only be exercised against the ship that ran up the dock charges or dues (or a sister ship of that ship within s.21(4)(b)(ii) of the 1981 Act), so that a liability *in personam* of the owner of the *SY Explorer*, a yacht in the 2023 Ocean Globe Race, for berthing fees of other yachts in the race flotilla did not permit an action *in rem* against the *SY Explorer* (in contrast to his liability *in personam* for that yacht's own berthing fees): *Marina Developments Ltd v Owner(s) of SY Explorer* [2024] EWHC 3531 (Admlty);
- on a claim by the Port of Sheerness to levy a very substantial 'period toll' after a much prolonged discharge operation due to problems with the cargo stow: *Port of Sheerness Ltd v Swire Shipping Pte Ltd* [2025] EWHC 7 (Admlty); and
- on a salvage claim (also involving a clash of jurisdictions) brought by the Master and crew of a tug arising out of the grounding of a tanker vessel in the port of Rotterdam: *SD Rebel BV et al v Elise Tankschiffahrt KG* [2025] EWHC 376 (Admlty), which was allocated to the Admiralty Registrar after an initial decision by Andrew Baker J on an application for an interim anti-suit injunction: *Boluda Towage Rotterdam BV et al v Elise Tankschiffahrt KG et al* [2024] EWHC 1329 (Admlty).

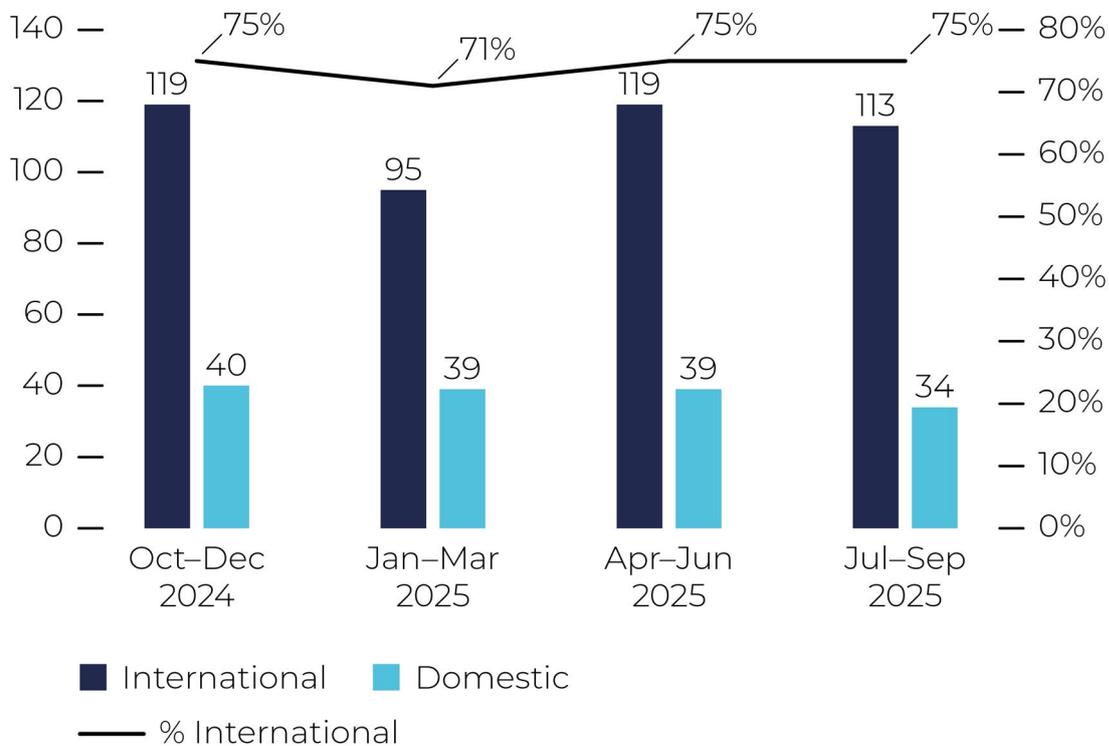
While Andrew Baker J was detained by his commitment to the long Commercial Court trial in *Skatteforvaltningen v Solo Capital Partners LLP and others* [2025] EWHC 2364 (Comm), collision trials were taken in his place by Cockerill J and Bryan J: *X-Press Mahanada c/w Burgan* [2025] EWHC 721 (Admlty) and *Kiveli c/w Afina I* [2025] EWHC 1185 (Admlty); and Cockerill J decided an issue estoppel/abuse of process question arising out of an incident involving damage to undersea high voltage electricity cables and a collision in the English Channel: *Réseau de Transport d'Électricité et al. v Stema Shipping (UK) Ltd et al.* [2025] EWHC 73 (Admlty).

## 5. Sources of the Court’s Work

As in all previous years, the Commercial Court has handled an international caseload. Cases often reach the Court because parties have contracted on standard forms in use in a particular trade which have a specific provision for English law and/or for the English courts to resolve any disputes that arise. There are also many cases based on bespoke contracts where the parties have actively chosen the jurisdiction of the English courts.

Below is a breakdown of the cases issued during 2024-2025, showing the continuing high level of international work.

### International v Domestic

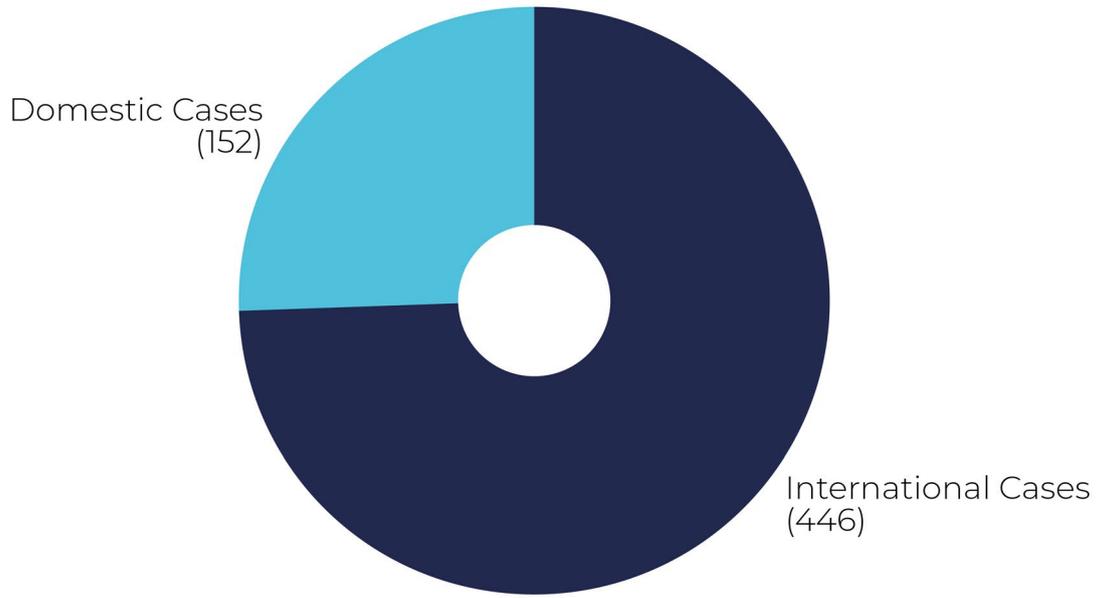


A domestic case is one where:

- a) the subject matter of the dispute between the parties is related to property or events situated within the United Kingdom, and
- b) the parties are based in the United Kingdom relative to the dispute (in other words, that the part of the business relevant to the dispute is carried on in the UK, regardless of whether the business is incorporated, resident or registered overseas).

All other cases are classified as “international”.

**International v Domestic 2024-2025**



## 6. Volumes and Business of the Court

This section contains a more detailed analysis of volumes and breakdowns of the business. This will be reported separately by each of the sub-divisions of the Court: Commercial, Admiralty and London Circuit Commercial.

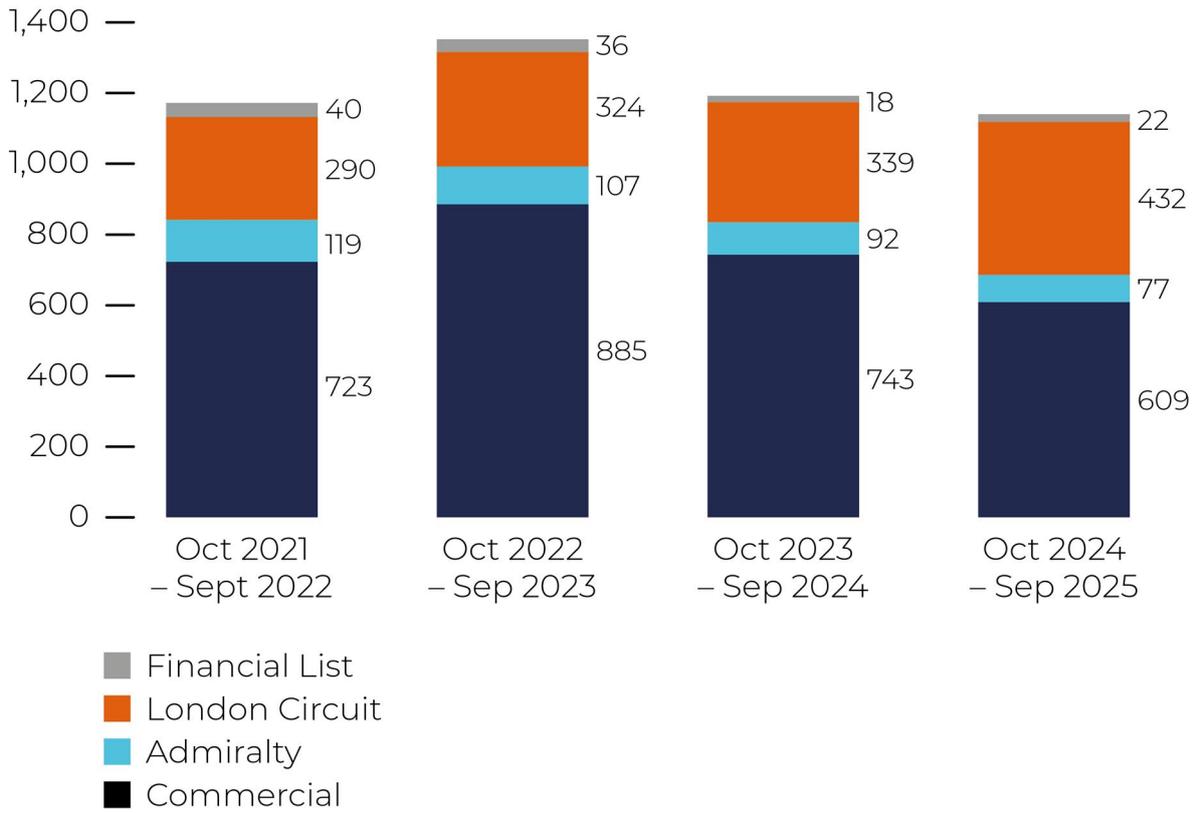
### 6.1 Number of new claims (all divisions)

During the year there were 1,140 new claims received in total, across all sub-divisions. As reflected in the graph below, the number received overall has seen a small decrease of 4% from 2023-2024 (1,192). The figure is 16% lower than 2022-2023 which involved an unusual “batch filing” of multiple SME Covid business interruption insurance claims (1,352). The number of claims is 3% lower than the figure for 2021-2022 (1,172).

Turning to the component courts, the number of claims issued in the Commercial Court this year (609) has decreased 18% from last year’s figure of 743. At the same time there has been a slight increase in the number of claims in the Financial List (up from 18 to 22), and in the London Circuit Commercial Court claims filed have increased 27% up from 339 to 432. As noted above, the change in the breakdown of the “all courts” total is believed to reflect the ongoing attempts to ensure commercial claims are brought in a court which is appropriate for the value in issue.

The graph below illustrates the overall number of claims issued from October 2021 to September 2025:

**New Claims**



**6.2 The Commercial Court**

**6.2.1 Types of new claims**

A breakdown of new claims by type is provided below.

It indicates that the largest single category was General commercial contracts and arrangements (136), representing 22% of new claims. That category was also the largest single category and represented 19% of new claims in 2023-2024. In 2022-2023, the largest category was Insurance and/or reinsurance (21%). This category has dropped to become this year’s sixth largest category after falling to third last year, with only 33 new claims (5%), suggesting that the substantial increase in the number of insurance claims which followed the Covid pandemic and the Russian invasion of Ukraine has now passed, and a more traditional level of insurance claims has returned.

Leaving aside 74 new claims categorised as ‘other’ (as their subject-matter was not specified), which account for 12% of all new claims issued, the top ten categories by number were as follows:

- General commercial contracts and arrangements (22%)
- Arbitration appeals under s.69 of the Arbitration Act 1996 (8%)
- Arbitration enforcement applications under s. 66 and s.101 (7%)
- Other arbitration appeals/applications (6%)
- Insurance and/or reinsurance (5%)
- Arbitration injunctions under section 44 (3%)
- Shipping - charter party dispute (3%)
- Arbitration s.68 of the Arbitration Act 1996 (3%)
- Arbitration ss.68 and 69 of the Arbitration Act 1996 (3%)
- Shipping - Cargo (3%)

The category “Other arbitration appeals/applications” reflect the parties’ categorisation when the claim was issued.

**Commercial Court breakdown by type\***

136	General commercial contracts and arrangements
74	Other
47	Arbitration s.69 of the Arbitration Act 1996
45	Arbitration enforcement applications under s.66 and s.101
38	Other arbitration appeal/application
33	Insurance and/or reinsurance
21	Arbitration injunctions under s.44
20	Shipping – charter party dispute
19	Arbitration s.68 of the Arbitration Act 1996
19	Arbitration ss.68 and s.69 of the Arbitration Act 1996
19	Shipping – Cargo
18	Commercial fraud
15	Professional negligence claims
14	Arbitration s.67 of the Arbitration Act 1996
13	Aviation
12	Arbitration application to appoint an arbitrator s.18
12	Oil and gas and other natural resources
9	Provision of financial services
7	Corporate or business acquisition agreements
7	Pre-action Injunction
7	Sale of goods
7	Transfer In
4	Service out of the Jurisdiction
3	General average
3	Norwich Pharmacal
3	Physical commodity trading
1	Carriage of goods by land, air or pipeline
1	Shipping – construction
1	Transactions on financial markets or securities and/or banking
1	Unallocated

\* Breakdown of arbitration cases presented differently to previous years

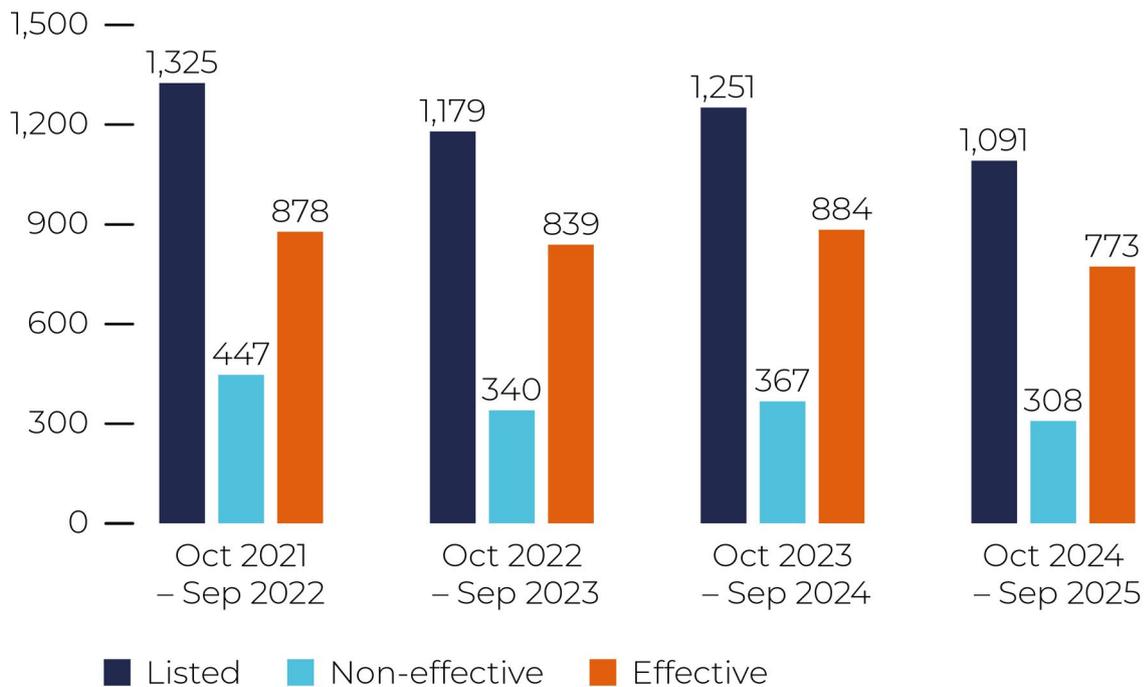
## 6.2.2 Hearings

The number of hearings listed and heard in the Commercial Court during the year has decreased: 1,091 listed and 773 heard compared to 1,251 listed and 884 heard the previous year.

Of the 1,091 hearings listed, 308 were not effective for a variety of reasons, such as the hearing being vacated or adjourned, or the case having settled on the day and/or in advance of the hearing date.

The percentage of effective hearings is the same as last year and the year before and higher than the year before that, having been 71% this year, in 2023-2024 and in 2022-2023, compared to 65% in 2021-2022. The graph below illustrates these figures:

### Commercial Court hearings



## 6.2.3 Trials

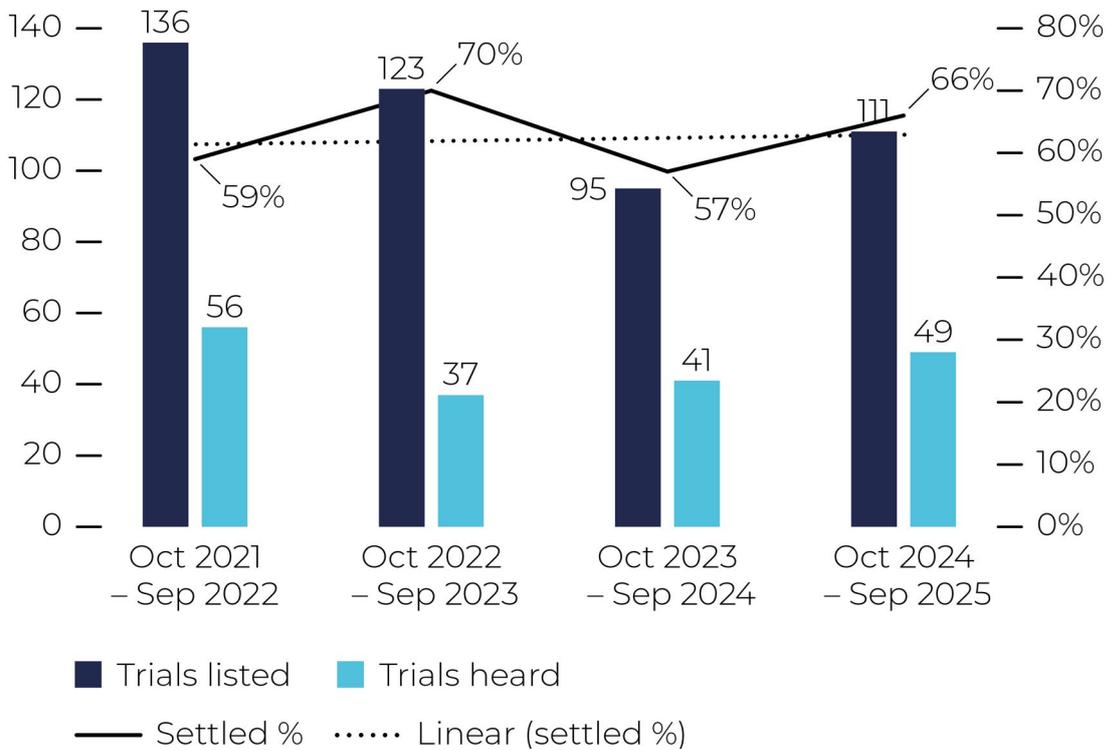
The number of trials listed has increased by 17% and the number of trials heard has increased by 20%: there were 111 trial listed and 49 heard in 2024-2025, compared to 95 listed and 41 heard in 2023-2024.

The number of trial sitting days for 2024-2025 was 438, a significant increase of 26% on 2023–2024 (349). The figure for 2024-2025 is broadly similar to 2022-2023 (429) and 2021-2022 (431).

Substantial trials that started during 2024-2025 but had not finished by the end of that period do not feature in the figure of 438. This included 68 days of sitting in *Public Institution for Social Security v Al-Wazzan*. The 438 figure does include 51 days sitting in *Skatteforvaltningen v Solo Partners LLP* from 2023-2024, as that trial concluded within the period covered by this report.

Many cases listed for trial are settled shortly - or very shortly - before the trial date. The indicative settlement rate for listed Commercial Court trials this year is around 66%. The settlement rate is higher than it was in 2023-2024 (57%), as illustrated in the chart below. The average four year settlement rate including 2024-2025 is 63%: this is the same as the average across the prior four year periods up to and including 2023-2024.

**Commercial Court trials**



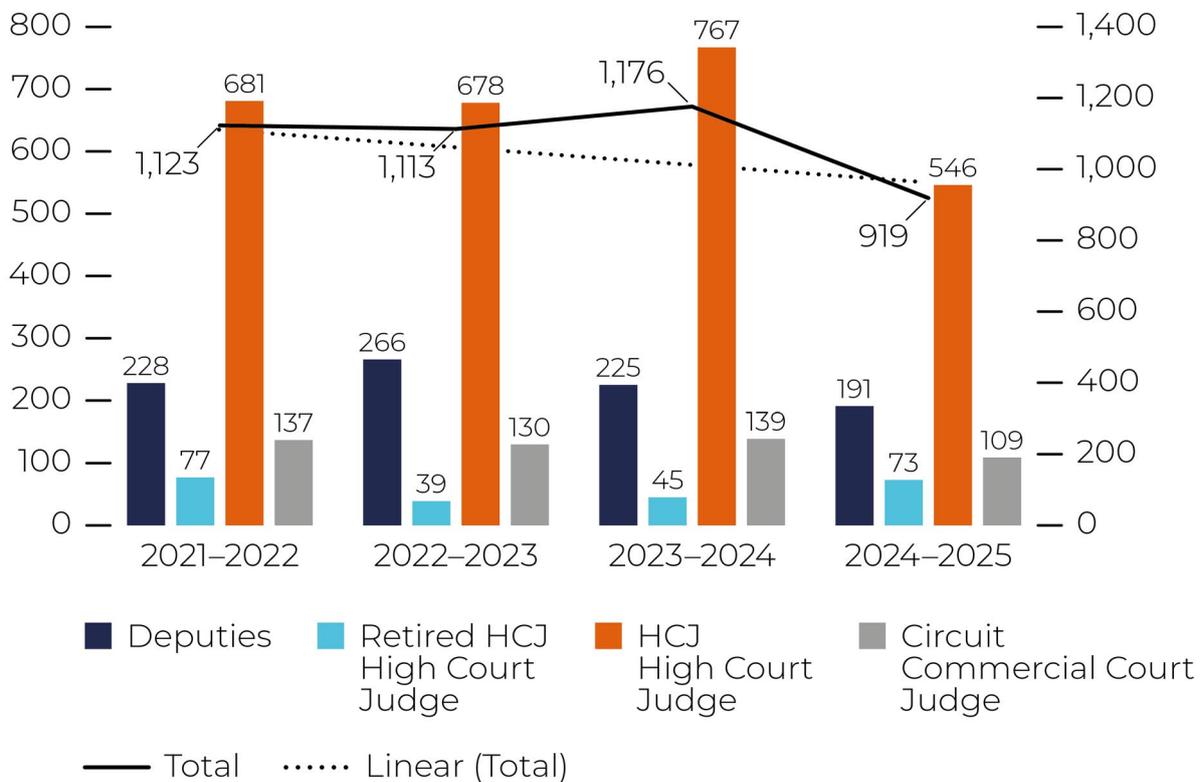
As most readers will be aware, the Court process encourages and promotes settlement by requiring the parties to define the issues at an early stage (before the first Case Management Conference), and facilitating the evaluation of the parties' positions following disclosure and/or exchange of witness statements and expert reports. Trial dates are also fixed with very reasonable lead times, which constantly focuses parties and lawyers on whether the impending trial should be fought.

### 6.2.4 Sitting days

The overall number of sitting days (trials and other hearings) for this year was 919, down 22% from the previous year’s figure of 1,176. These include days sat by High Court Judges (546) down 29%, Deputy High Court Judges (191) down 15% and the Circuit Commercial Court Judge (109) down 22%. Sitting days for Retired High Court Judges (73) were up 62%.

The total number of sitting days remained broadly similar from 2021-2022 through to 2023-2024. This year there has been a noticeable decrease in the days sat overall compared to 2023-2024 as illustrated below:

**Total number of sitting days**

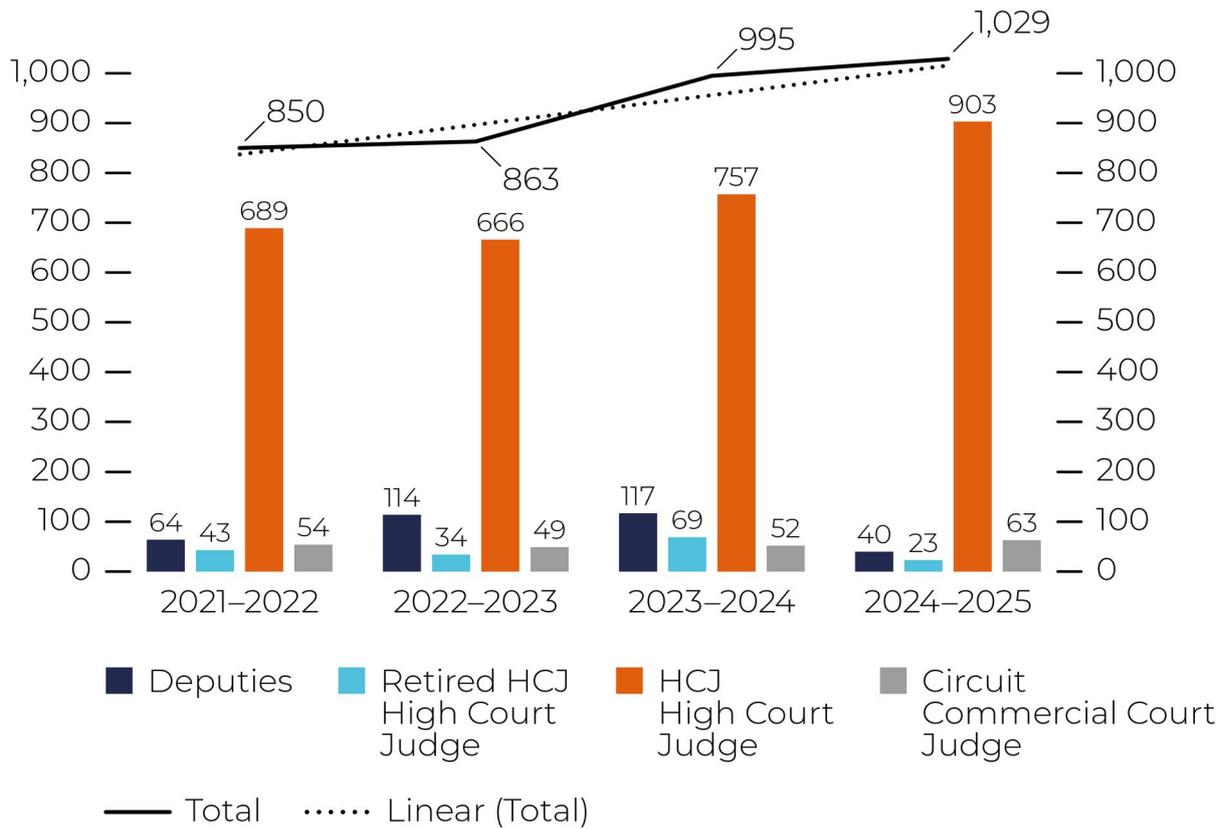


There has been an increase in the total number of reading and judgment writing days over the last four consecutive years. It is to be hoped that this reflects litigating parties and their representatives heeding long-standing judicial requests for more realistic reading time estimates (for one of many see *Al-Aggad v Al-Aggad* [2024] EWHC 673 (Comm), [16], where Cockerill J referred “to the problem which this court has repeatedly highlighted of unrealistic reading time”). The giving of realistic reading time estimates allows cases to be progressed

more quickly and reduces the number of days spent in court, for the benefit of all court users.

This year the total number of reading and judgment writing days was 1029, a 3% increase from 995 days in 2023-2024. The increase since 2021-2022 is illustrated below:

**Total number of reading and writing days**

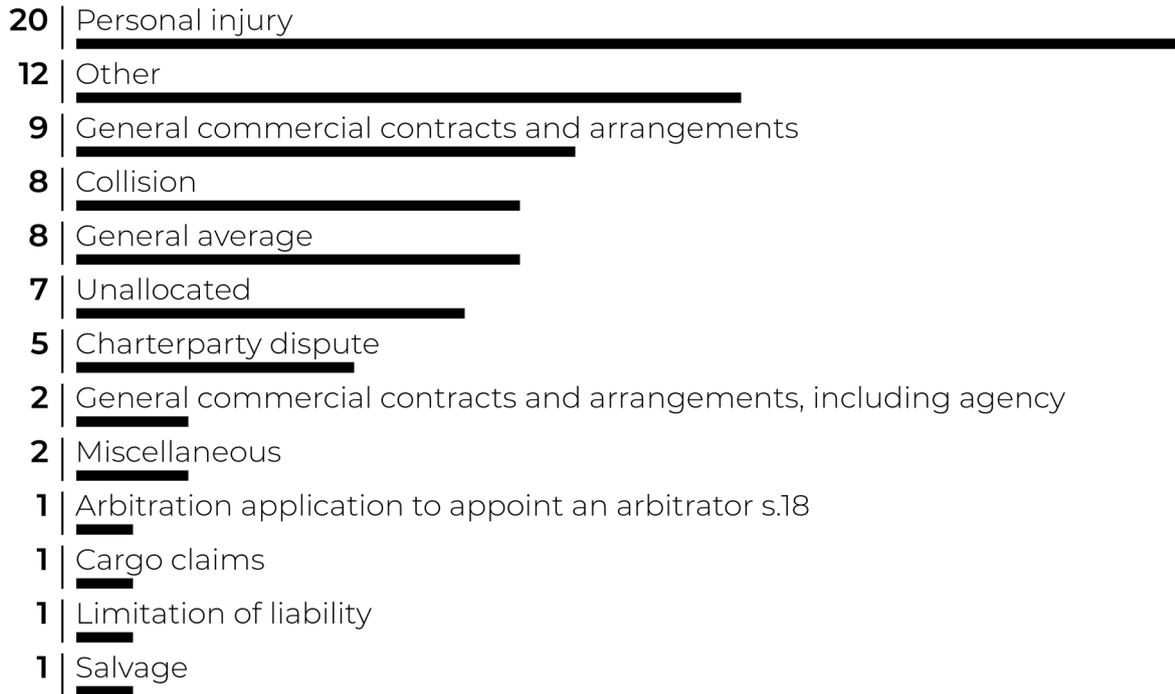


**6.3 The Admiralty Court**

**6.3.1 Types of new claims**

During the year there were 77 new claims in Admiralty Court, a decrease from 92 claims started in 2023-2024. Below is a breakdown of the types of claims issued. The largest categories were Personal Injury Claims (26%) and Other (16%). Personal injury claims increased to 20 claims, having been the third highest claims last year at 12 claims, which was down significantly compared to previous years (29 in 2022-2023 and 57 in 2021-2022). The number of claims classified by the parties as ‘Other’ limits the utility of the ‘claim type’ data being collected, however this is down from the 33 claims so-classified (36%) started the previous year.

### Admiralty Court breakdown by type



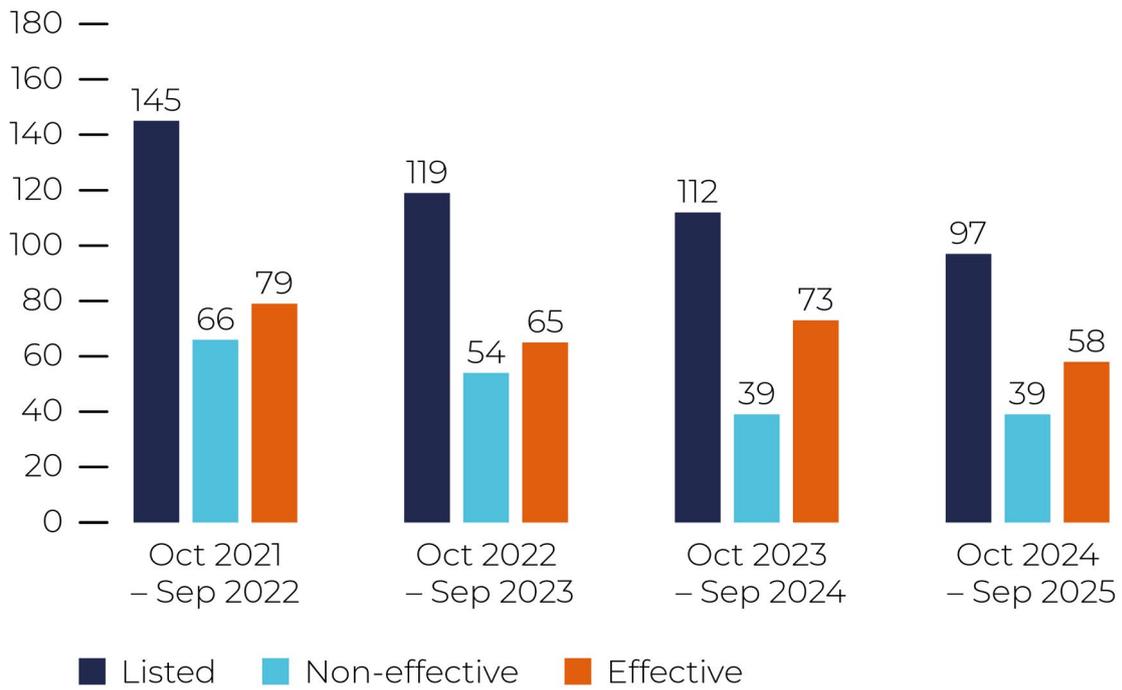
The early disclosure of electronic voyage data held by vessels involved in collisions continues to mean, as Teare J observed in the *Sakizaya Kalon*, that there is “*now, typically, no need for a trial to establish the navigation of each vessel leading up to the collision. What remains to be decided at trial are questions of fault*”: see [2020] EWHC 2604 (Admlty) at [6]. There were two effective collision trials in 2024-2025, as noted in section 4.1 above.

### 6.3.2 Hearings

The number of hearings listed in the Admiralty Court fell in 2024-2025, with 97 hearings listed in 2024-2025, compared to 112 during 2023-2024, 119 during 2022-2023 and 145 during 2021-2022.

Out of the 97 hearings listed, 39 were not effective for the usual reasons, i.e. hearing vacated, adjourned, or settled on the day and/or in advance of the hearing. Thus 60% of listed hearings were effective, a slight decrease when compared to 65% the year before, as illustrated below:

### Admiralty Court hearings



The overall number of interlocutory hearings listed has decreased in 2024-2025 when compared to the previous year:

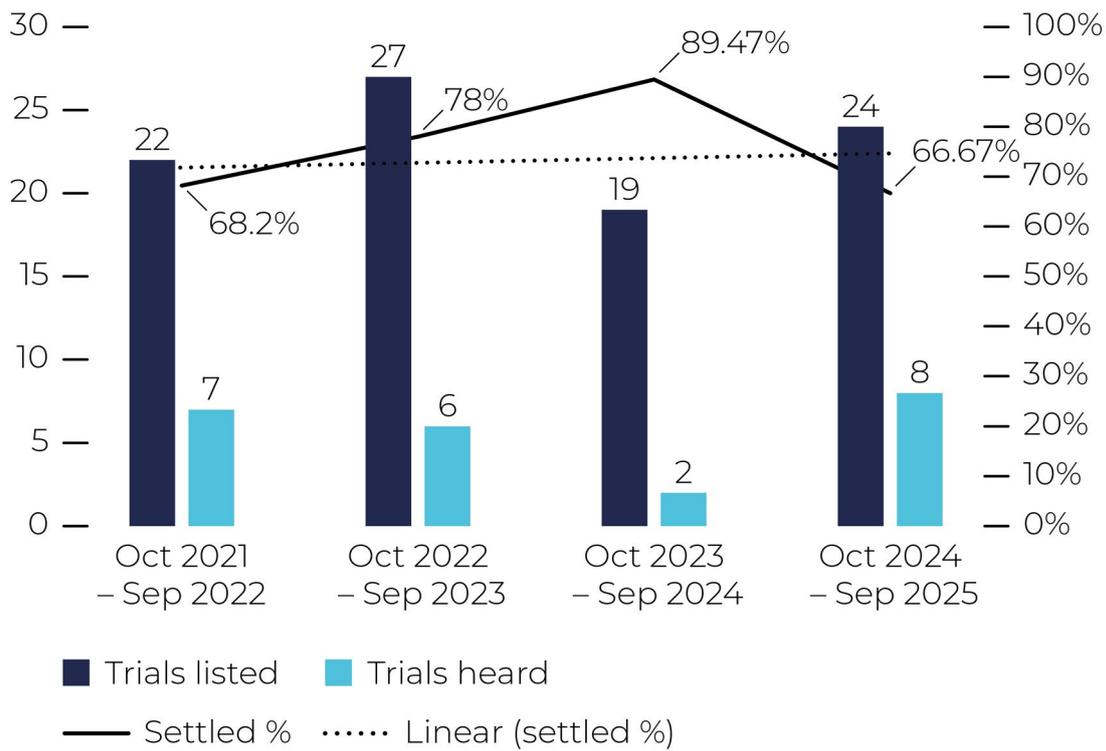
Hearing Type	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
CMCs	70	72	47	33
Other Applications	43	47	65	48

### 6.3.3 Trials

During the year there were twenty-four trials listed before the Admiralty Court, of which eight were contested.

Thus 67% of the listed trials were resolved before judgment, a decrease from last year when 89% settled, as illustrated below:

### Admiralty Court trials



## 6.4 The London Circuit Commercial Court

### 6.4.1 Update from HHJ Pelling KC (Judge in Charge, 2024/2025)

The London Circuit Commercial Court (LCCC) is part of the Commercial Court. It can offer earlier trial dates than the Commercial Court. Cases with a value of up from £1m up to about £7m are routinely issued in or transferred to the LCCC from the Commercial Court and cases of significantly higher value are regularly started there. Cases involving issues of general importance will usually be transferred to the Commercial Court at the first Costs and Case Management Conference (CCMC).

The practice of the LCCC is to hear applications of 1 hour or less between 09:30 and 10:30 on Monday to Thursdays; all other applications of up to 1 day in length on Fridays and trials and applications estimated to last longer than 1 day on Mondays to Thursdays between 10:30 and 16:30.

In the last 12 months:

- a) All applications of half a day in length or less continue to be heard remotely;

- b) The Court continues to operate on a paperless basis, with all bundles being lodged electronically and judges using electronic bundles for all applications and trials save where otherwise directed;
- c) The forms for use in the LCCC published in January 2022 continue to be updated in line with those used in Commercial Court claims and can now be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/commercial-court-forms>;
- d) The Circuit Commercial Court Guide published in February 2022 was updated and re-published in October 2023. There have been no changes of substance since then. The Guide can be found at <https://www.judiciary.uk/courts-and-tribunals/business-and-property-courts/commercial-court/circuit-commercial-courts>. By design it has brought the practice of the Circuit Commercial Courts much more closely into alignment with that of the Commercial Court with, broadly, the Commercial Court Guide applying to all Circuit Commercial Court cases save where the Circuit Commercial Court Guide expressly provides a different practice. Experience suggests that this has been welcomed by practitioners as a means of simplifying the administrative element of conducting Circuit Commercial Court litigation;
- e) Standard trial directions (which will be made at the CMC stage) continue to be given in the vast majority of Part 7 Claims which has enabled Pre-trial Reviews to be dispensed with in most cases, thereby saving both cost and court resources;
- f) The list of fee-paid Deputy High Court Judges authorised to sit in the London Circuit Commercial Court has continued to expand to ensure that waiting times can be kept within acceptable parameters; and
- g) Parties are reminded of the Practice Note issued by the Judge in Charge of the Court in April 2024 reiterating the importance of the timely lodging of bundles and skeletons.

Parties and their advisors have continued to take advantage of the Shorter Trials Scheme and of Appendix 5 to the Disclosure Practice Direction (including for cases in excess of the threshold case value, now set at £1m) in order to reduce cost and delay in getting to the first Case Management Conference stage.

All parties with low value cross frontier cargo claims are expected to issue proceedings in the LCCC rather than the Commercial Court.

The issuing of cases in the LCCC that are not fit for the High Court and do not require the expertise of a Circuit Commercial judge has continued notwithstanding active discouragement including by transferring such cases either to regional CCCs or an appropriate County Court. Such transfers are necessary if acceptable waiting times are to be maintained. For that reason:

- a) Practitioners should be aware that all cases started in the London Circuit Commercial Court are triaged by the Judge in Charge of that Court following issue. Parties are reminded of the Practice Note issued by the Judge in Charge in December 2023 reiterating the importance of ensuring that the claims issued in the Court have been appropriately commenced there.
- b) Subject to paragraph (c) below, the current practice of the London Circuit Commercial Court is to transfer claims with a financial value of less than £1,000,000 or the foreign currency equivalent (exclusive of interest and costs) to an appropriate County Court unless retention is justified by reason of the factors set out in CPR r. 30.3(2). No case is transferred without giving the issuing party (and all other parties if they have been served) an opportunity to make representations. In practice, cases with a value of less than £1,000,000 that do not require the expertise of a Circuit Commercial judge for trial will be transferred to the County Court. For example, debt collection claims are routinely transferred. Claims with a value of less than £1,000,000 have been retained where the subject matter requires it.
- c) All international road, sea and air cargo claims (“*Cargo Claims*”) that would otherwise be started in the Commercial Court but are not suitable for commencement in the Commercial Court by reason of their financial value and/or the nature of the factual, technical or legal issues that arise should be commenced in the London Circuit Commercial Court.
- d) All Cargo Claims and arbitration claims started in or transferred to the London Circuit Commercial Court will be retained in that court (or, if appropriate, the Commercial Court), regardless of financial value and the nature of the factual dispute.

## **6.4.2 Types of new claims**

There was a total of 432 new claims in the London Circuit Commercial Court this year, which has increased 27% from the previous year (339). The majority of those new claims were General commercial contracts and arrangements claims (121), representing 28% of new claims. That category also represented the majority of claims in the previous year, at 125 claims and 37% of claims that year. The next largest category this year was Shipping – Cargo claims (68), up from 41 claims in the previous year. There has been a marked increase in arbitrations claims, with 40 new arbitration claims being issued up from 27 the previous year and 17 the year before that. Of those, the biggest increase was in respect of appeals under s.69 of the Arbitration Act 1996. In order to cater for this increase in work volumes, a Practice Note was published in March 2025 which provides for how this work stream is to be managed.

## London Circuit Commercial Court breakdown by type

121	General commercial contracts and arrangements
68	Shipping – Cargo
33	Other
30	Insurance and/or reinsurance
24	Carriage of goods by land, air or pipeline
22	Commercial fraud
15	Professional negligence claims
14	Shipping – charter party dispute
11	Arbitration enforcement applications under s.66 and s.101
10	Arbitration s.69 of the Arbitration Act 1996
10	Aviation
10	Provision of financial services
8	Sale of goods
7	Other arbitration appeal/application
6	Arbitration s.68 of the Arbitration Act 1996
6	Corporate or business acquisition agreements
6	General average
5	Arbitration s.68 and s.69 of the Arbitration Act 1996
5	Physical commodity trading
4	Oil and gas and other natural resources
4	Pre-action Injunction
3	Service out of the Jurisdiction
2	Arbitration injunctions under s.44
2	Miscellaneous
2	Pre-action Disclosure
1	Arbitration application to appoint an arbitrator s.18
1	Arbitration s.67 of the Arbitration Act 1996
1	Transactions on commodity exchanges
1	Transactions on financial markets or securities and/or banking

### 6.4.3 Hearings

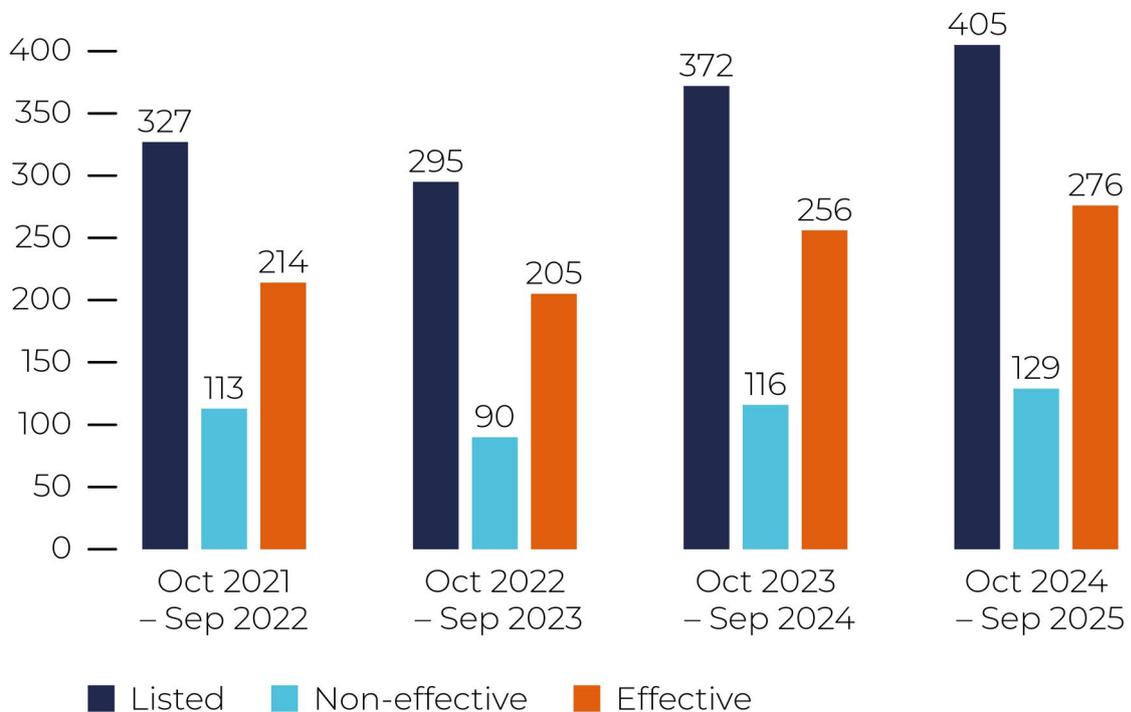
There were 405 hearings listed this year, compared to 372 in 2023-2024, 295 in 2022-2023 and 327 in 2021-2022. Of the 405 listed hearings, 129 were not effective for the usual reasons, i.e. hearing vacated, adjourned, or settled on the day and/or in advance of the hearing. This compares to 116 non-effective hearings the previous year and 90 in 2022-2023. The number of effective hearings this year was 276, compared to 256 in 2023-2024 and 235 in 2022-2023.

The percentage of effective hearings overall is comparable to the previous two years, and slightly higher than the year before that:

- 68% in 2024 - 2025
- 69% in 2023 - 2024
- 69% in 2022 - 2023
- 65% in 2021 - 2022

The graph below illustrates these variances:

#### London Circuit Commercial Court hearings

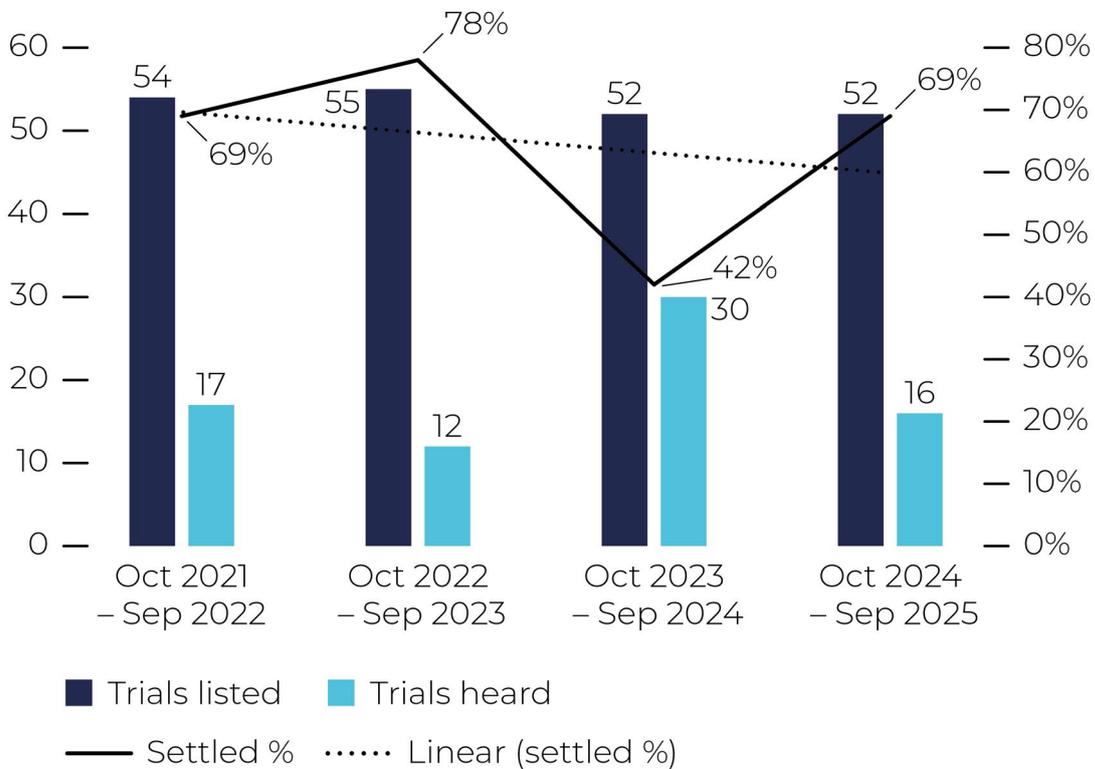


### 6.4.4 Trials

During the year there were 52 trials listed before the London Circuit Commercial Court, of which 16 were contested, indicating a little over 69% of cases being settled before judgment. This has significantly increased from the previous year when 42% of cases were settled, and decreased from 2022-2023 when 78% settled and is equal to the 69% of cases which settled in 2021-2022.

The number of trials listed this year is the same as the previous year and very similar to the previous two years, as illustrated below:

#### London Circuit Commercial Court trials



### 6.4.5 Applications

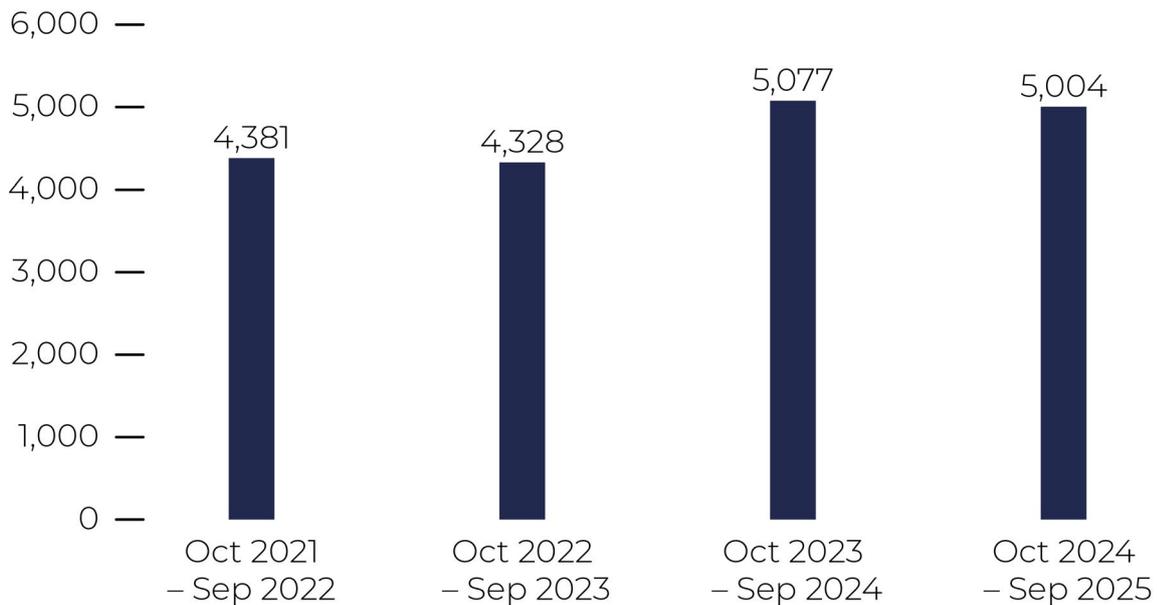
Paper applications again increased. There were 982 paper applications of various sorts sent to judges for determination or approval throughout the period, up from 946 in 2023-4 and 704 in 2022-2023. In addition, the number of applications for permission to appeal under s.69 of the Arbitration Act 1996 and for summary disposal of applications under s.68 increased in line with the increase in arbitration claims issued during 2024-2025.

## 6.5 Paper Applications (all jurisdictions)

Paper applications are frequently used where the parties agree to resolve the whole or part of their dispute (or procedural aspects of it), and for minor adjustments to case management directions where the Court can be satisfied that the change will not have an adverse impact on a trial date or other undesirable consequences. In addition, certain types of paper applications are routinely made without agreement (e.g. applications for permission to serve a skeleton argument or statement of case longer than the prescribed maximum). There are also more substantive paper applications made without notice such as applications to serve claims out of the jurisdiction, to extend the validity of claim forms or for orders for alternative service.

During the year there were 5,004 paper applications received for all jurisdictions, compared to 5,077 the previous year. The table below shows the total number of paper applications for all jurisdictions from 2021/2022 onwards:

### Paper applications (all jurisdictions)

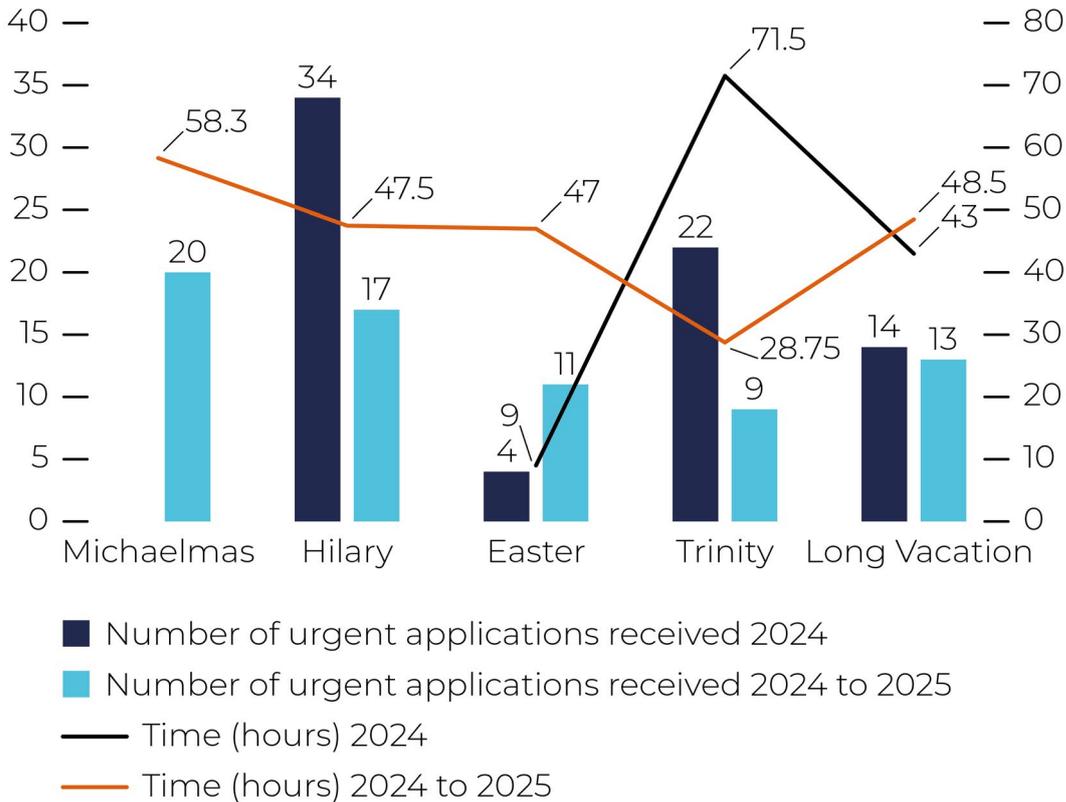


■ Paper applications (all jurisdictions)

## 6.6 Urgent Applications (all jurisdictions)

The Court deals with a high volume of urgent applications for injunctive relief – for freezing injunctions, relief on *American Cyanamid* principles and for anti-suit and allied relief. Data has been collected since Hilary Term 2024 for the number of applications, and since Easter Term 2024 for the accompanying time estimates. The table below shows (for all sub-divisions) the number of urgent applications received in 2024-2025, with the figures for “time” combining estimates of reading and hearing time for the applications where available. The average time for urgent applications received in 2023-2024 (Easter, Trinity and Long Vacation) was over 2 hours per application, whereas the average time in 2024-2025 was over 3 hours per application.

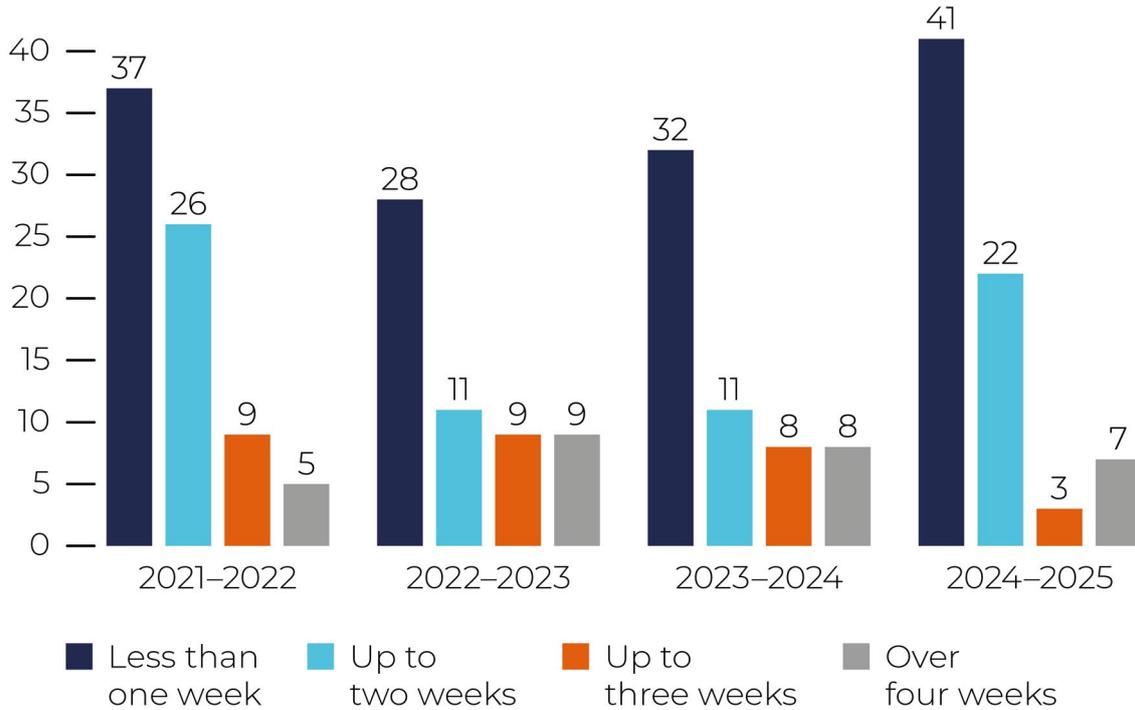
### Urgent Applications



## 6.7 Length of Trials (all jurisdictions)

The chart below illustrates the length of trials conducted by the Court over the past four years for all three jurisdictions combined (Commercial, Admiralty and London Circuit Commercial):

**Length of Trials (all jurisdictions)**



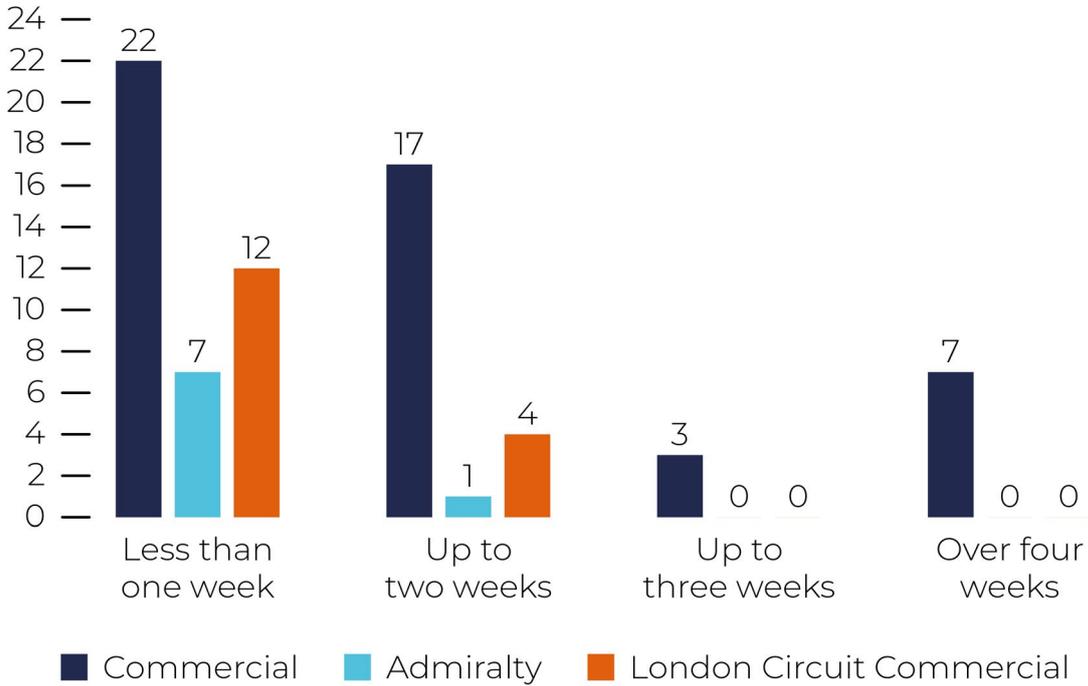
As illustrated above, 41 out of 73 (56%) contested trials during the year were tried within four days i.e. one Commercial Court week. This compares to:

- 54% completed within one week in 2023-2024 (32 out of 59)
- 44% completed within one week in 2022-2023 (28 out of 57)
- 48% completed within one week in 2021-2022 (37 out of 77)

The chart also indicates that there were double the number of trials heard that last longer than one week but less than two weeks (22) compared to the previous two years (11).

Set out below are the lengths of trials reported by each jurisdiction:

**Lengths of trials breakdown by Court 2024-2025**



80% of trials this year in the Commercial Court were completed within two weeks, which is up from 65% last year. The Admiralty Court heard eight trials, seven of which lasted less than one week and one which was under 2 weeks. The London Circuit Commercial Court heard sixteen trials, twelve of which were completed within one week and four of which were completed within two weeks.

The table below shows average lengths of trial this year and the two preceding years, by court, excluding reading days:

Court	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
<b>Commercial</b>	9 days	9 days	9 days
<b>Admiralty</b>	7 days	4 days	3 days
<b>London Circuit Commercial</b>	3 days	3 days	3 days

- The longest trial heard in the Commercial Court this year was the *Skatteforvaltningen trial (which started in April 2024). The trial was heard over 108 days.*
- For the Admiralty Court, the longest trial this year was 7 days. The longest trial in the previous year was 4 days.
- In the London Circuit Commercial Court, the longest trial lasted 8 days this year, compared to the longest trial length of 9 days in the previous year (with 2 trials of this length) and of 10 days in 2022-2023.

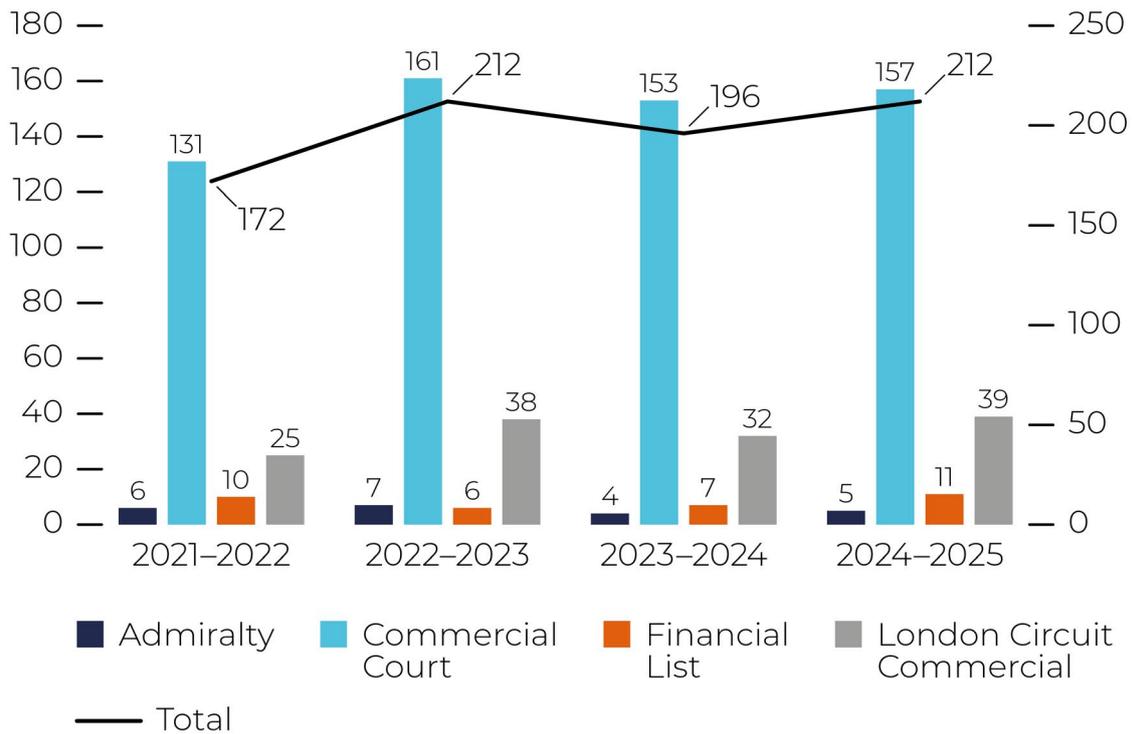
## 6.8 Reserved Judgments

Where, as is very often the case, a hearing results in a judgment, the judgment may be either delivered orally, as an *ex tempore* judgment, or reserved and handed down in writing.

Statistics are available for the number of reserved judgments, identified by their being individually listed in the Cause List for hand-down. The combined number of judgments reserved by the Judges of the Court this year was 212. This has increased from 2023-2024 (196) and is the same as 2022-2023 (212) and higher than for 2021-2022 (172). The distribution of judgments across the courts remains broadly similar year to year.

It is not possible to track the number of *ex tempore* judgments, other than by taking the overall number of hearings as a guide. However, the number of judgments given Neutral Citation Numbers (NCNs) (which includes more significant *ex tempore* judgments as well as reserved judgments) for 2024-2025 for the 4 courts combined is 446. With 212 accounted for by the reserved judgments, that would suggest that 234 *ex tempore* judgments have been transcribed and published (in addition to a larger number of *ex tempore* rulings, or reserved rulings which were not given an NCN on issues such as costs or other procedural issues).

### Number of Reserved Judgments



Breaking these numbers down further:

- The number of judgments reserved in the Commercial Court was 157, compared to 153 in 2023-2024, 161 in 2022-2023 and 131 in 2021-2022.
- The number of judgments reserved in the Admiralty Court was 5, compared to 4 in 2023-2024, 7 in 2022-2023 and 6 in 2021-2022.
- The number of judgments reserved in the London Circuit Commercial Court was 39, compared to 32 in 2023-2024, 38 in 2022-2023 and 25 in 2021-2022.
- The number of judgments reserved in the Financial List was 11 compared to 7 in 2023-2024, 6 in 2022-2023 and 10 in 2021-2022.

## 7. The Financial List

The Financial List is a specialist list for financial claims exceeding £50 million, or cases that raise issues concerning the domestic and international finance markets. It was announced by the then Lord Chief Justice in his Mansion House Speech on 8 July 2015 as part of an active and forward-looking strategy for the United Kingdom regarding commercial dispute resolution, which is designed to respond to users. The List is a joint initiative of the King's Bench Division and the Chancery Division, with judges from both jurisdictions having been nominated to sit as Financial List judges. It ensures that cases which would benefit from being managed and heard by a judge with specific expertise in the law relating to the financial markets, or which raise issues of general importance to the financial markets, are dealt with by judges with suitable expertise and experience.

The nominated judges of the Financial List from the Commercial Court as at January 2026 are:

- Henshaw J (Judge in Charge of the Commercial Court)
- Andrew Baker J
- Bryan J
- Butcher J
- Knowles J
- Picken J

The nominated judges from the Chancery Division are:

- Sir Colin Birss (Chancellor of the High Court)
- Michael Green J
- Hildyard J
- Marcus Smith J
- Trower J
- Fancourt J

## 7.1 Type of new claims

There were 22 claims issued in the Financial List over the past year. This is a 22% increase from the 18 claims issued in 2023-2024; a decrease of 39% from the 36 claims issued in 2022-2023 and a 45% decrease from 2021-2022 when there were 40 claims issued.

The list below gives a breakdown of the types of claims issued in the Financial List during 2024-2025, with the large somewhat general categories reflecting the parties' classification when the claims were issued:

### Financial list - breakdown by type

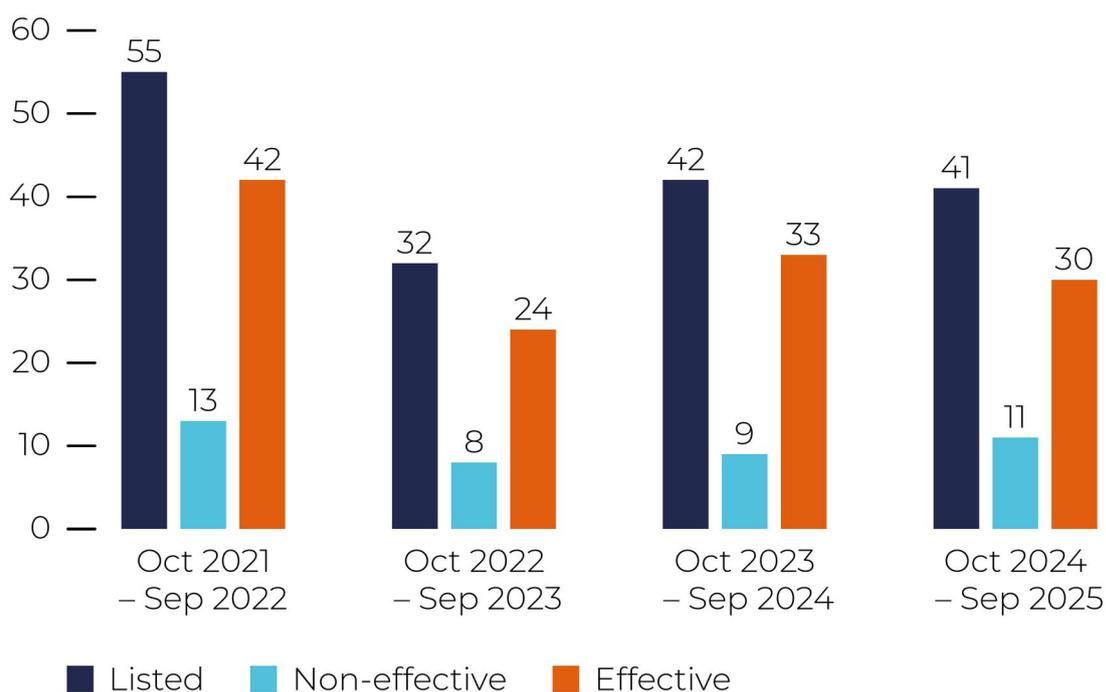
8	Other Importance for Financial Markets/Expertise Required
7	Miscellaneous
3	Derivatives/complex financial products
2	Banking transactions/loans/project finance
1	Bank guarantees
1	Pre-action Disclosure

## 7.2 Hearings

The Financial List had 41 hearings listed during the year, of which 30 were effective, with the balance settling or not proceeding for other reasons.

The effective hearings included 8 application hearings and 10 CMCs.

## Financial list hearings



## 7.3 Paper Applications

During the year there were 245 paper applications for Financial List cases, an increase of 26% on the previous year (195).

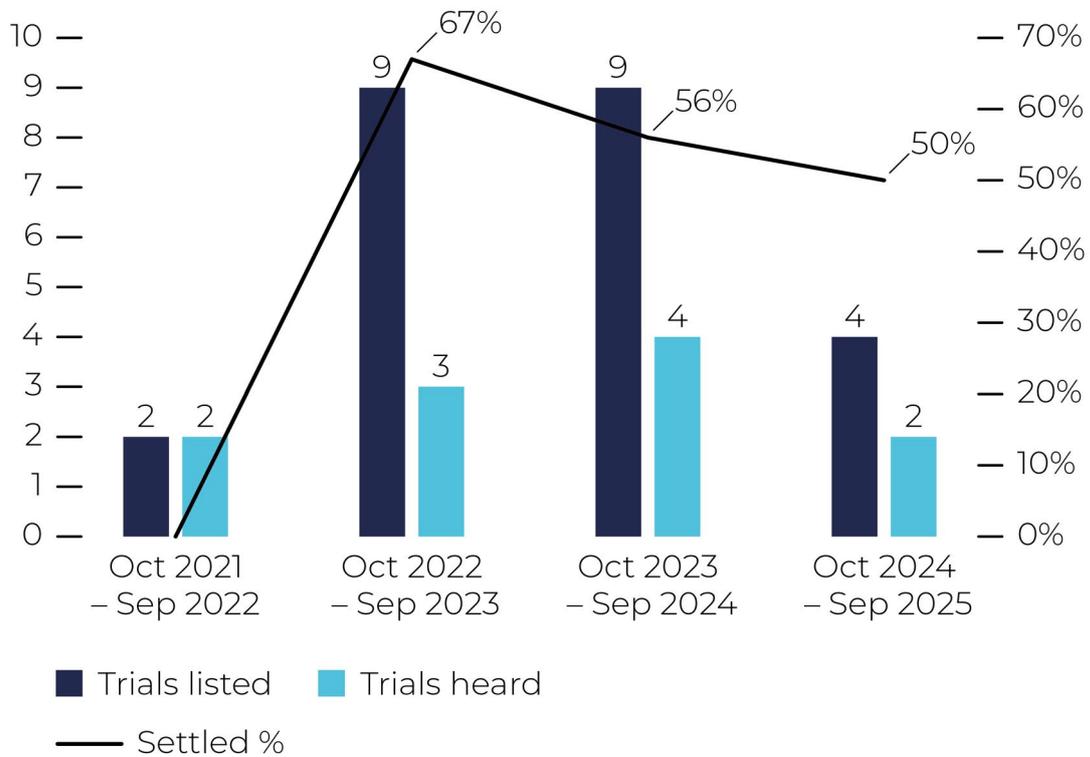
## 7.4 Trials

There were 4 substantive hearings listed in the Financial List, 2 of which were contested. Financial List judgments handed down in cases started in the Commercial Court during the period covered by this report are:

- *Standard Chartered Plc v Guaranty Nominees* [2024] EWHC 2605 (Comm), the second use of the Financial List Test Case scheme;
- *Dexia Credit Local SA v Patrimonio del Trentino SpA* [2024] EWHC 2717 (Comm);
- *Aabar Holdings SARL v Glencore Plc* [2024] EWHC 3046 (Comm); [2025] EWHC 2243 (KB)
- *Dexia SA v Regione Emilia Romagna* [2024] EWHC 3236 (Comm) and [2024] EWHC 3238 (Comm);
- *Dexia SA v Comune di Torino* [2025] EWHC 1903 (Comm).

The numbers of trials listed and heard between October 2021 and September 2025 are illustrated below:

### Financial list trials



## 8. Case Management

Case management has been a key feature of litigation in the Commercial Court since its inception.

### **Case Management Conferences/Costs and Case Management Conferences**

All cases will feature at least one Case Management Conference (“CMC”) or Costs and Case Management Conference (“CCMC”), the purposes of which are familiar to Court users. Briefly, both types of hearing generally set a timetable down to trial. Where costs budgeting applies, the hearing will be a CCMC and will also include consideration of the parties’ costs budgets.

Practice Direction 51ZG1 established a pilot scheme to test new approaches to costs budgeting in certain Business and Property Courts, including the Commercial Court and the London Circuit Commercial Court. It applies to Part 7 multi-track claims issued on or after 6 April 2025 and before 6 April 2028. Among other things, it provides that where the claim has a value of £1 million or more, the court shall not manage the costs of the parties unless satisfied that the litigation can only be conducted justly and at proportionate cost if a costs management order is made. It also permits the court to give directions for simplified costs budgeting for claims worth less than £1 million. As a result, costs budgeting is currently very infrequent in new claims being commenced in the Commercial Court.

CMCs and CCMCs will normally also include consideration of the Disclosure Review Document (DRD), and, where possible, resolution of any outstanding contested matters in connection with it. The parties are required to cooperate in this regard, and the Court will generally expect to be able to finalise the DRD in no more than 1 hour as part of the CMC/CCMC hearing.

The parties are expected to co-operate more generally in advance of a CMC/CCMC, and the Court requires an updated draft order to be provided by 4pm on the working day before the hearing, indicating matters that are agreed/remain unagreed (see paragraph D7.8 of the Commercial Court Guide (11<sup>th</sup> edition)).

Where permission to serve expert evidence is sought, the Court will generally wish to specify in any order granting such permission (generally the CMC/CCMC order) the particular question(s), within their expertise, on which the expert(s) is/are to be instructed to provide an opinion. The Court may limit the length of experts' reports.

Parties should consider whether attendance by their more senior advocates is required at the CMC/CCMC. Whilst each party must be represented by an advocate who will be instructed for trial, the Court often finds that junior advocates are well placed to assist the Court on matters arising at CMCs/CCMCs, including disclosure, costs and directions.

Over the past year, the following percentages of listed CMCs (including CCMCs) were heard:

- 63% of the 172 listed in the Commercial Court;
- 45% of the 33 listed in Admiralty Court;
- 54% of the 102 listed in the London Circuit Commercial Court.

## **Negotiated Dispute Resolution**

The Court encourages parties to engage in Negotiated Dispute Resolution (“NDR”), which is a way of resolving disputes outside of court via mediation, conciliation, expert determination or other binding or non-binding process. Parties must consider NDR in advance of the CMC, inform the Court at the CMC what consideration has been given to the matter, and keep the Court updated.

Parties may be agreeable to submitting a shortlist of potential mediators or other facilitators in an NDR Order to the judge conducting the CMC, with an understanding that the parties will work with the judge's choice of mediator from the agreed shortlist. The Court can perform an “Early Neutral Evaluation” itself, although there has only been one such hearing (in 2020/21) in the last four years.

When parties attend a CMC, a “progress monitoring date” will be set, which is the date by which parties must report to the Court their compliance with the pre-trial timetable and preparation for the trial. These reports will then be reviewed and, if necessary, steps taken to ensure the case will be ready for trial on the fixed date.

In the interim, any changes to the timetable set out at the CMC are kept under review by the judges of the Court, with any amendments to the timetable to trial having to be approved by order of a judge (usually on the papers). If the judge reviewing the proposed amendments to the timetable is not happy with the progress towards trial, they will call the case in for a review. This is designed to ensure that there is no need to vacate hearings close to trial owing to lack of preparedness.

## **Pre-Trial Reviews**

In larger cases a Pre-Trial Review (PTR) will be scheduled for a few weeks before the trial date. Wherever possible this is heard by the trial judge. A PTR enables the parties to deal with any late applications before trial, and to settle the trial timetable, including the timetable for calling witnesses, and the length and format of closing submissions. Frequently a listed PTR does not require a hearing and the matters arising can be disposed of on the documents.

## **9. Shorter and Flexible Trials and Expedition**

### **Shorter and Flexible Trials**

The Court continues to see cases brought under the Shorter Trials Scheme, although the Flexible Trials Scheme continues to be under-utilised by parties.

The Shorter Trials Scheme is designed for cases which can be heard in no more than 4 court days and provides for a timetable which enables determination of a dispute within a year of the claim being issued, together with a streamlined process for the assessment of the costs of the trial. The scheme is suitable for a wide range of disputes. The Flexible Trials Scheme is designed to encourage parties to limit disclosure and to confine oral evidence at trial to the minimum necessary for the fair resolution of their disputes. It provides an opportunity for parties to tailor the court procedure to the needs of the individual case – including the possibility of determining certain issues solely on the basis of written evidence and submissions. It therefore has the potential to considerably shorten the time to a final determination. The disclosure practice direction PD57AD (see below) does not apply to cases in either scheme.

## Expedition

The Court is also able to order expedition of suitable cases outside of these schemes. Applications to expedite hearings are referred to a judge, usually the Judge in Charge, for decision on the documents. The conditions for ordering expedition were set out by Foxton J in *Lopesan Touristik SA v Apollo European Principal Finance* [2020] EWHC 2642 (Comm), citing *Apache Beryl I Limited v Marathon Oil UK LCC and others* [2017] EWHC 2258 (Comm) (Males J):

*“... there are four factors ...:*

- i) First, a threshold question of whether, objectively, there is urgency.*
- ii) Second, the state of the court’s list and the impact of expedition on other court users.*
- iii) Third, the procedural history including whether there has been any delay.*
- iv) Fourth, whether there will be any irremediable prejudice to the respondent...”*

As noted earlier, orders for expedition impact on lead times, and requests for expedition should be made (via the Listing Office) only when absolutely necessary. They should be succinct: a request and a response should generally be no more than four paragraphs long in total (see further section 12.3 below).

## 10. Disclosure

The rules and practice relating to disclosure are addressed in Section E of the Commercial Court Guide (11<sup>th</sup> edition, February 2022). Section E.2 of the Guide deals with cases to which the former pilot Practice Direction 51U applied. With effect from 1 October 2022, that Practice Direction ceased to apply, and permanent changes were introduced by Practice Direction 57AD for existing and new proceedings in the Business and Property Courts. The provisions of PD57AD are substantially similar to those of PD 51U, and the substance of Section E.2 of the Commercial Court Guide remains applicable.

Users are reminded of the statements in *McParland v Whitehead* [2020] EWHC 298 (Ch) by Sir Geoffrey Vos, Chancellor of the High Court, that the type of any Extended Disclosure sought must be fair, proportionate and reasonable; that the parties need to think cooperatively and constructively about their dispute and what documents will require to be produced for it to be fairly resolved; and that cooperation between legal advisers is imperative.

The parties are required to cooperate in relation to the Disclosure Review Document (DRD), and the Court will generally expect to be able to finalise the DRD in no more than 1 hour as part of the CMC/CCMC hearing. Parties should bear in mind that any DRD should be kept simple and concise; and in most cases the List of Issues for Disclosure should be shorter (or much shorter) than the list of issues in the List of Common Ground and Issues. It should contain only the key issues in dispute that the parties consider will need to be determined by reference to contemporaneous documents over and above the Initial Disclosure. A List of Issues for Disclosure is not required at all unless one or more of the parties has stated that they are likely to request Extended Disclosure including the use of Model C, D or E.

Parties are reminded that paragraph 7.3 of PD 57AD requires that when serving a draft List of Issues for Disclosure, the claimant should state which model it proposes for each issue and, where Model C is proposed, how it proposes the relevant particular documents or narrow class of documents should be defined for that purpose. In this way, a defendant can consider the proposals in the round, rather than being asked to agree an issue or Model C request without knowing what it might mean in practice.

A Working Group is considering the operation of disclosure in the Business and Property Courts. A questionnaire seeking to canvass the views of those courts' users was sent out in November 2025 with responses due (following an extension) by 3 February 2026. The answers will inform decisions as to whether any changes to the current disclosure rules should be recommended.

## 11. Witness Statements

CPR Practice Direction 57AC, with its Appendix (Statement of Best Practice), came into force on 6 April 2021 so as to apply to trial witness statements signed on or after that date. The Commercial Court Guide therefore now points to the Practice Direction without seeking to add to it (see Section H1.1), and the need to obtain permission for a trial witness statement to be longer than 30 pages was not retained in the 11th edition of the Guide.

Compliance with the Practice Direction should ensure that trial witness statements are limited to the witness testimony that parties realistically could and would adduce from their witnesses if they examined them orally in chief. That should often mean that they are much shorter than had become typical before Practice Direction 57AC, and that where they are of substantial length that is justified by the content without the need for the blunt instrument of a presumptive page limit.

Parties should ensure that the contents of witness statements for interlocutory hearings are also appropriately limited. They should be confined to (a) matters of fact to be relied on in support of, or in resisting, the application, and (b) satisfying any specific requirements under a rule or Practice Direction stipulating that certain matters have to be stated in a witness statement. Argument should be left to be outlined in skeleton arguments and developed orally at the hearing. If the relevance or importance of the evidence set out in or exhibited to the witness statement(s) may not be obvious, consideration should be given to providing with the statement(s) an explanatory covering letter or provisional written submission. Guidance to this effect is included in the 11th edition of the Commercial Court Guide.

# 12. Managing the Courts' Business

## 12.1 Lead Times

“Lead times” are the time between the date a hearing is fixed and the date on which the hearing will take place.

The Court aims to keep the lead times within certain targets, helping it to provide rapid and efficient dispute resolution procedures for the business, trading and financial communities.

### 12.1.1 Commercial Court

Lead times vary over the year. The position as at 15 January 2026 was as follows:

#### Application/CMC Hearings:

Length of Hearing	Hearing dates available after
30 mins to half a day	Fridays from 6 February 2026
One day	6 and 21 May 2026 Then from June 2026
Over one day	From 5 October 2026

#### Trials:

Length of Trial	Trial dates available not before
One to three days	From November 2026
One week or longer	From January 2027

## 12.1.2 London Circuit Commercial Court

The position as at 15 January 2026 was as follows:

### Application/CMC Hearings:

Length of Hearing	Hearing dates available after
30 mins to one hour	Fridays from 23 January 2026
Up to half a day	Fridays from 6 February 2026
One day	From April 2026

### Trials:

Length of Hearing	Trial dates available not before
Up to three days	From November 2026
One week	Weeks of 16 and 30 November 2026 and then from February 2027
2 weeks or more	From February 2027

These dates are subject to change on a daily basis, up-to-date information can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/commercial-court-hearing-and-trial-dates> and here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/london-circuit-commercial-court-hearing-and-trial-dates>

As section F.3 of the Commercial Court Guide notes, the court will expedite the hearing of applications (including applications on notice) in cases of sufficient urgency and importance. Where a party wishes to make such an application, a request should be made to the Commercial Court Listing Office on notice to all other parties. Parties should note that expedition is available only in cases of sufficient urgency: see section 9 above.

## 12.2 CE-File

Since 2017, all documents in the Court are required to be filed electronically via the CE-File system. The system is also used extensively for applications on paper, ranging from consent orders, through applications for permission to serve out of the jurisdiction, and on occasion to contested applications where the parties are content to deal with the matter on the documents.

There are now many such applications, and this year in the region of 5,004 were processed across the four sub-divisions. It will readily be understood that this takes up much judicial time, with two Commercial Court judges dealing with CE-File applications each week in addition to their ordinary workload and the Judge in Charge of the London Circuit Commercial Court handling the paper applications made in that court.

It is important that applications made via CE File include all the relevant documents, and that those documents are appropriately labelled when uploaded to CE File. Non-compliant applications will be rejected, as was made clear by Popplewell J as Judge in Charge in 2018: <https://www.judiciary.uk/guidance-and-resources/electronic-filing-of-applications-to-be-dealt-with-without-a-hearing/>

The judges also deal with paper applications under the Arbitration Act 1996, with one judge each week acting as the duty judge in charge of section 67, 68 and 69 applications.

## 12.3 Listing Issues

Many expedition and other listing Issues are raised in correspondence lodged on CE-File. Some of these require to be referred to the Judge in Charge for consideration/determination.

It is very important that those raising such issues do so by way of **concise** written submissions. Unfortunately, many such applications comprise lengthy letters, often referring to other correspondence. This makes the task of deciding the listing issue more time-consuming and can result in a delay in making the decision, because of the need to find sufficient time to deal with the lengthy submissions and referenced correspondence.

Parties are therefore reminded that any submissions on listing issues should be:

- concise;
- self-contained; and
- focused on the issue which requires the judge's decision.

Submissions which do not meet these requirements may be referred back to the parties for resubmission or may result in the case being called in for an oral hearing in court before or after court hours.

## **12.4 Long Vacation Sittings**

Judges of the Commercial Court sit regularly during the Long Vacation, which takes place from 1<sup>st</sup> August to 30<sup>th</sup> September.

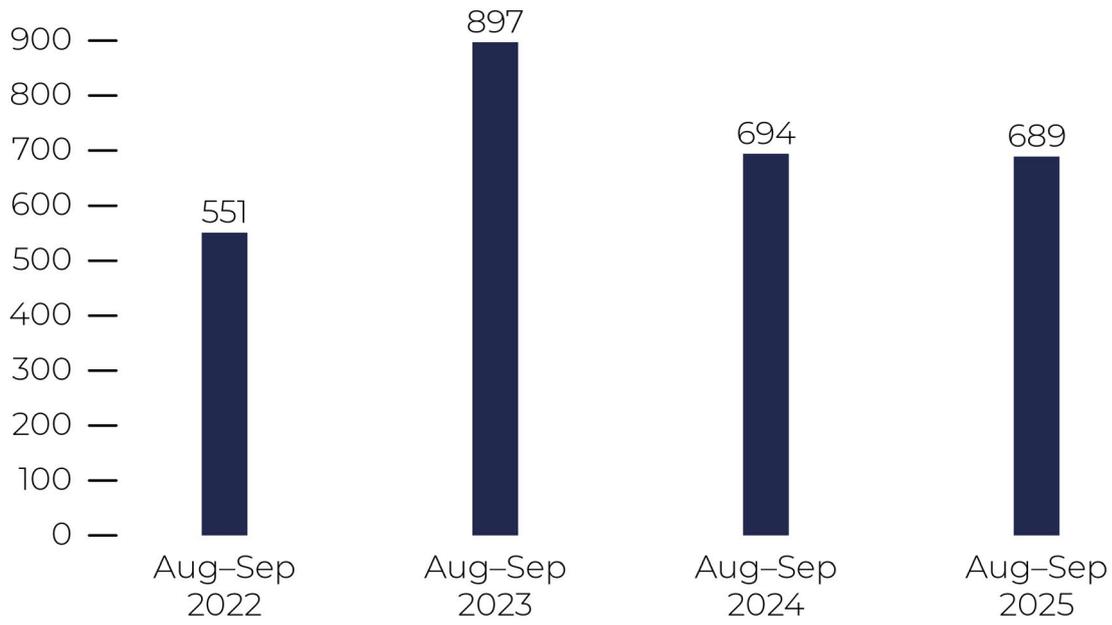
At least one judge sits in the Commercial Court at all times during this vacation period, to deal with both urgent business and regular business (such as applications). At least two judges sit in September.

### **12.4.1 Paper Applications during Long Vacation**

The number of paper applications processed during the long vacation this year is comparable to last year, decreasing by only 5 applications.

In August - September 2025 there were 689 paper applications processed for the Commercial, Admiralty and London Circuit Commercial Courts combined, compared to 694 in 2024, and 879 in 2023. Paper applications in the Long Vacation have fallen 23% since 2023. However, the number of such applications is nonetheless well above the 2022 level, as illustrated in the chart below:

**Paper Applications - Long vacation (Commercial, Admiralty and London Circuit Commercial Courts)**



■ Paper Applications – Long Vacation  
(Commercial, Admiralty and London Circuit Commercial Courts)

## 13. Use of Deputy Judges

A number of retired Commercial Court judges and King’s Counsel or other experienced practitioners who practice regularly in the Commercial Court are authorised to sit as Deputy High Court Judges in the Commercial Court.

Here is a list of retired Judges who have sat in the Court during 2024-2025, listed in order of the number of days sat:

- Dame Clare Moulder DBE
- Sir Nigel Teare
- Sir William Blair

Deputy High Court Judges who sat over the past year include:

- Lesley Anderson KC
- David Bailey KC
- Janet Bignell KC
- Simon Birt KC
- Simon Colton KC
- Nigel Cooper KC
- David Elvin KC
- Christopher Hancock KC
- Andrew Hochhauser KC
- Stephen Hofmeyr KC
- Charles Hollander KC
- Stephen Houseman KC
- Louise Hutton KC
- Peter MacDonald Eggers KC
- Philip Marshall KC
- Richard Millett KC

Sean O'Sullivan KC

Lionel Persey KC

Sue Prevezer KC

David Quest KC

David Railton KC

Simon Rainey KC

Stuart Ritchie KC

Richard Salter KC

Simon Salzedo KC

Sharif Shivji KC

Paul Stanley KC

Deputy judges are used for applications and trials to ensure that the targets for lead times can be maintained. Deputies will only be used either when the parties agree that the matter may be dealt with by a deputy, or when the Judge in Charge of the Commercial Court considers it suitable for the matter to be dealt with by a deputy.

## 14. Judicial Assistants and Pupils

### 14.1 Judicial Assistants

The Judicial Assistant scheme is now fully established in the Court.

Following an earlier pilot scheme this has been in place since October 2019 across all the three divisions of the High Court. The scheme offers placements specifically to the Commercial Court where the applicant specifies a preference to sit in the Court and is selected for that role.

The role of JA offers those in the early years of their professional practice a ringside view of the trial process and first instance decision-making from the perspective of the judge, for the most complex, high value and often high-profile cases. It enables the JA to gain a privileged understanding of the type of advocacy which most assists the court in complex litigation.

They assist the judges(s) to whom they are allocated, for example by carrying out legal research, discussing important issues in cases before the court, drafting factual summaries, and providing general support for the judge(s) in the organisation of their work and hearings.

Aimed primarily at barristers, pupil barristers and solicitors in the early stages of their legal career, but open to all with suitable qualifications and skills, applications are invited from those able to demonstrate an outstanding intellectual ability, excellent organisational skills and the ability to manage large and complicated workloads, as well as a high level of professional integrity.

Based on last year's timetable, the advertisement for the 2026 competition will be published in or around March 2026. Those applicants who are invited for interview will be interviewed in or around May 2026 and informed of the outcome in June 2026. Successful candidates can opt for a placement of two or four legal terms.

Information on last year's scheme can be found here: <https://www.judiciary.uk/the-high-court-judicial-assistant-scheme-2025-2026/> and <https://www.judiciary.uk/launch-of-the-high-court-judicial-assistant-scheme-2025-2026/>.

During the year, the Commercial Court has between four and five JAs sitting with judges both in court and at virtual hearings.

## **14.2 Pupils in Court Scheme**

The pupils in court scheme was introduced to the Commercial Court in October 2020 by the then Judge in Charge.

The scheme allows pupils to sit in with judges (on the Judge's bench) on live hearings for a day, enabling the pupil to ask the Judge questions about the trial process and the life of a commercial judge.

This scheme continued into 2024 (in which we hosted 13 pupils). For the court year 2025-2026, the scheme is operating in two "blocks" each term, being the first fortnight of each half of the term. The feedback from the pupils has been extremely positive; it is a unique and privileged experience to learn about court craft from the perspective of both the Judge and of the advocates.

## 15. The Registry and the Listing Office

The Court depends on the very close and beneficial relationship it enjoys with the Listing Office, which is led by Michael Tame, and the Issue Team, led by Paul Farron. A list of current staff is at:

[APPENDIX 2 - The Staff of the Court as at 1 October 2025.](#)

The Issue Team process claim forms and other statements of case. It also handles general correspondence and deals with Office Copy requests.

The Listing Office provides essential assistance to the Court, dealing with incoming applications and correspondence between parties, solicitors and counsel.

Both the Listing and Issue Teams deal with all documents filed by CE File. They have a daily meeting to address issues, mainly CE File pending alerts, but also outstanding work etc. That ensures that all CE File filings are dealt with promptly.

The court receives a very high volume of emails each month. Users are asked to reflect before calling or sending chaser emails, as this ultimately delays the processing of applications and requests. Users should also be sure that the information they seek is not already available in the Commercial Court Guide or on the Commercial Court's website.

The Listing Office will check whether parties have complied with the timetable set by the Court at the CMC, ensuring that cases are prepared and ready for hearing/trial. The Listing Office and the Issue Team also deal with applications under the Arbitration Act 1996.

The work of the Listing Office and of the Issue Team is invaluable to the smooth operation of the Court, and the efficient disposal of the Court's work. All the Judges and users of the Court are grateful to them.

## **15.1 Lawyer for the Commercial Court**

Francesca Girardot provides invaluable assistance to the Judges by, among other things, checking paper applications to ensure that all required documents and information have been received and assisting with the monthly triage of cases commenced in the Commercial Court. She also works with the Commercial Court Guide editorial team and on other projects, including the checklist intended to reduce the number of incomplete applications received and on work to speed up the time for processing applications for foreign service.

## 16. Sources of Information about the Court

### 16.1 Reports of cases

Reports of material decisions of the Commercial and Admiralty Courts are published online on the following sites:

- The National Archive, judgments section - <https://caselaw.nationalarchives.gov.uk/>
- This site includes unreported cases and is free to access.
- BAILII (the British and Irish Legal Information Institute) - <https://www.bailii.org/>
- This site also includes unreported cases and is free to access.

In addition, the Commercial Court pages of the Business and Property Courts's website include regularly updated summaries of Commercial Court judgments (<https://www.judiciary.uk/courts-and-tribunals/business-and-property-courts/commercial-court/about-the-commercial-court/judgment-summaries-for-the-commercial-court/>).

### 16.2 The Commercial Court Guide

The 11th edition of the Commercial Court Guide was published in February 2022. It can be found here: <https://www.judiciary.uk/courts-and-tribunals/business-and-property-courts/commercial-court/litigating-in-the-commercial-court/commercial-court-guide/>. The Guide sets out detailed information on the practice of the Court within the context of the full Civil Procedure Rules and should be referred to by parties when involved in commercial claims. We are very grateful to everyone who has contributed to its development, and to Andrew Baker J, Francesca Girardot, Laura Feldman and Conall Patton KC for drafting and finalising the Guide.

Suggestions for improvements to the Guide, which are welcomed, can be emailed to the Commercial Court Listing Office on [comct.listing@justice.gov.uk](mailto:comct.listing@justice.gov.uk)

## **16.3 The Commercial Court User Group**

The Commercial Court User Group continues to be an invaluable opportunity for two-way discussions between the Commercial Court judges and users.

These meetings are held virtually using Microsoft Teams, and invitees have included counsel and solicitor representatives, representatives from bodies such as the LMAA (London Maritime Arbitrators' Association) and the judges of the Commercial Court.

The most recent meeting was on 3 December 2025. The topics covered included an update on court statistics, developments in the London Circuit Commercial Court, the terms on which draft judgments are embargoed, the ongoing disclosure review in the B&PC and an update on SIFoCC.

The minutes of the meeting in July and December 2025 can be found [here](#) and [here](#).

## **16.4 The London Circuit Commercial Court Users' Committee**

The London Circuit Commercial Court Users' Committee aims to meet at least three times a year, or once a term. Its most recent meeting was held on 27 November 2025. The next meeting will take place on a date to be fixed in 2026.

HHJ Pelling KC, has issued guidance on draft orders in the London Circuit Commercial Court. The message can be found here: <https://www.combar.com/news/message-from-the-london-circuit-commercial-court/>.

## 16.5 The Admiralty Court Users' Committee

The Admiralty Court Users' Committee last met on 19 November 2024. The next meeting is scheduled for 24 March 2026.

The Users Committee provided helpful input and feedback in relation to updates to the website information concerning the Admiralty Court available via [judiciary.uk](https://www.judiciary.uk). It also assisted Andrew Baker J with information for the purpose of updating the Practice Note (Admiralty: Assessors' Remuneration), the last version of which had been issued on 30 July 2021. A new version of the Practice Note was then issued on 16 January 2024, taking effect so as to apply to all actions and appeals the hearing of which began on or after 1 January 2024.

The Users Committee also assisted the Admiralty Registrar with introductory training for Deputy Admiralty Registrar Brown following his appointment, reviewed Claim Statistics for the Admiralty Court prepared by the Admiralty Marshal, and gave support to Snowden LJ in relation to a Judicial Insolvency Network project on the interaction between cross-border corporate insolvency proceedings and vessel arrests.

## 17. **Standing International Forum of Commercial Courts (SIFoCC)**

SIFoCC is the global forum of the world's commercial (and appellate) judiciaries. It has three objectives. First, to share best practice. Second, to assist courts to work together to make a stronger contribution to the rule of law. Third, to support countries - often from emerging market jurisdictions - that are developing their work on resolving commercial disputes. These objectives are particularly important as the world, and business, face new contexts.

The judiciaries of more than 60 jurisdictions are now members, from six continents, and from common law and civil law and mixed traditions. The judiciaries of Ethiopia, Montenegro, Nepal and Thailand are among those to join most recently.

In this year, SIFoCC held its first "continent-specific" meeting, in partnership with the Africa Chief Justices ADR Forum. The judiciaries of 21 countries in Africa sent delegations to a two day roundtable in Kampala, Uganda on "Effective Commercial Dispute Resolution in Africa". Sir Geoffrey Vos MR and Sir William Blair attended, as did Mr Justice Robin Knowles.

At other points in the year, subject-focussed online roundtables were held, including on maritime litigation and on commercial insolvency. Each drew a wide global judicial audience.

A further edition of SIFoCC's Judicial Observation and Study Programme was held in London, with the support of ROLE UK, with judges nominated by Cambodia, The Gambia, Montenegro, Ukraine and Vietnam. SIFoCC also undertook "in country" work to support The Gambia in launching its Commercial Division, Sri Lanka with its work to develop its commercial dispute resolution capability and South Africa with its focus on handling commercial cases about corruption.

SIFoCC was represented at London International Disputes Week, Paris Arbitration Week, and Armenia Arbitration Week. It contributed to the Asian Development Bank Institute joint roundtable on ADR with Japan, and to Montenegro's conference on arbitration.

SIFoCC continues its collaboration with others including ADB (Asian Development Bank), CMJA (the Commonwealth Magistrates and Judges Association), IBA (the International Bar Association), Ciarb (the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators) and ICCA (the International Council

for Commercial Arbitration), together with the Commercial Litigators Forum (CLF). As part of Pro Bono Week, CLF, GC100 (the association of General Counsel of FTSE 100 companies), SIFoCC and the National Pro Bono Centre took part in a round table breakfast with the Judges of the Commercial Court.

The year also saw work with India towards SIFoCC's 6th Full Meeting in New Delhi in November 2025, and on a 3rd edition of SIFoCC's Multilateral Memorandum on Enforcement of Commercial Judgments for Money.

England & Wales play their full part in SIFoCC. The Secretariat is based in London. Lord Thomas (former Lord Chief Justice) chairs the international Steering Group, on which Sir Geoffrey Vos (the Master of the Rolls and Head of Civil Justice) also sits, as does Sir William Blair (former Judge in Charge of the Commercial Court). Mr Justice Robin Knowles is the judge with day-to-day responsibility for SIFoCC, working with Nike Adewale as Head of Secretariat. Other judges of the Commercial Court and the Business and Property Courts more generally, and the appellate courts, are also involved.

SIFoCC is grateful for the support it receives from the City of London, the Judicial Office and the Ministry of Justice and the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office. Support from the City of London included hosting a reception at the Guildhall, focussed on business and the rule of law, and which drew senior attendance from across the business and legal sectors. The judiciary of Ukraine were among the guests.

## 18. Visitors to the Commercial Court

The Court welcomed international colleagues including from Albania, Australia, Cambodia, The Gambia, India, Japan, Nepal, Pakistan, Malaysia, Montenegro, Singapore, Thailand, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Ukraine, United States and Vietnam.

The topics discussed included the business of commercial courts, case management, judging, mediation and arbitration, procedure, SIFoCC, technology (in court and in disputes), judicial cooperation and working with the profession.

On 8 July 2025, the Commercial Court held an online roundtable with judges from the Singapore International Commercial Court. The participating judges from England and Wales were Sir Geoffrey Vos MR, Mr Justice Henshaw (Judge in Charge of the Commercial Court), Mrs Justice Cockerill and Lord Justice Foxton. The participating judges from Singapore were Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon, Justice Philip Jeyaretnam (Judge in Charge of the Singapore International Commercial Court), Justice Ang Cheng Hock, Justice Andre Maniam and Justice Valerie Thean. The topics covered were: (i) the Increasing Complexity and Size of International Commercial Disputes, and the Challenges of Managing Them; (ii) Court Support for International Arbitration: Is the Right Balance Being Achieved? and (iii) Preparing the Next Generation of Commercial Advocates.

## 19. Social mobility and diversity initiatives

Judges from the Commercial Court continued to participate in a number of social mobility and diversity initiatives.

Mr Justice Jacobs addressed Mossbourne Community Academy in Hackney Downs, London, as part of their programme entitled “Government, Justice and Our Rights” on 6 November 2024.

Between 25 and 29 November 2024, Mr Justice Henshaw, the Judge in Charge of the Commercial Court, participated in the High Court and Court of Appeal internship programming organised together with Bridging the Bar, a charity founded in 2020 which aims to support aspiring barristers from groups that are underrepresented at the bar.

Mr Justice Henshaw gave the keynote address at the COMBAR Mentoring Scheme for Under-represented Groups workshop on 14 January 2025.

Lord Justice Foxton spoke to pupils at King Solomon Academy, London W2, on 23 January 2025.

The Commercial Court once again participated in the Sutton Trust’s Pathways to Law programme, welcoming ten students in February 2025.

The Commercial Court hosted a number of sixth form interns in July 2025, under their programme with IntoUniversity, a charity which supports education and learning with a view to helping young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods attain their chosen aspiration including further and higher education and employment.

## **20. Appendix 1**

# **The Court as at 1 October 2025**

### **20.1 Judges – Commercial Court**

The Judges who sit predominantly in the Commercial Court as at 1 October 2025, listed in order of seniority, are:

- Mr Justice Robin Knowles CBE;
- Mr Justice Picken;
- Mr Justice Andrew Baker (Admiralty Judge);
- Mr Justice Bryan;
- Mrs Justice Cockerill;
- Mr Justice Butcher;
- Mr Justice Jacobs;
- Mr Justice Waksman;
- Mr Justice Henshaw (Judge in Charge of the Commercial Court);
- Lord Justice Foxton;
- Mr Justice Calver;
- Mr Justice Bright;
- Mrs Justice Dias;

With effect from November 2025, Mr Justice Birt is also a judge of the Commercial Court.

In addition:

- Mr Justice Michael Green;
- Mrs Justice O’Farrell
- Mr Justice Saini; and
- Mr Justice Trower

sit from time-to-time in the Commercial Court in addition to their other judicial duties.

## **20.2 London Circuit Commercial Court**

His Honour Judge Pelling KC was Judge in Charge of the London Circuit Commercial Court to 23 January 2026, when he retired from full-time judicial office. His Honour Judge Nigel Bird took over as interim Judge in Charge pending a Judicial Appointments Commission process to recruit two new judges (including a lead judge to act as Judge in Charge) for the court.

## **20.3 Admiralty Registrar**

Master Richard Davison.

The Deputy Admiralty Registrar is Master Simon Brown.

## 21. APPENDIX 2

### The Staff of the Court as at 1 October 2025

<b>Court Manager</b>	Wilf Lusty
<b>Operations Manager</b>	Mo Uddin
<b>Senior Listing Officer</b>	Michael Tame
<b>Listing Officer</b>	Gina Hitchman
<b>Listing Clerk</b>	Ian Dawson
<b>Listing Clerk</b>	Shafia Chowdhury
<b>Listing Clerk</b>	Jade Kasanga
<b>Listing Clerk</b>	Noorani Kadir
<b>Listing Clerk</b>	Kav Reki
<b>Master Davison's Clerk</b>	Shafia Chowdhury
<b>Admiralty Marshal</b>	Paul Farren
<b>Registry Team Leader</b>	Abdul Musa
<b>Lawyer</b>	Francesca Girardot

**Issue Office**

<b>Delivery Manager</b>	Paul Farren
<b>Team Leader</b>	Abdul Musa
<b>Issue Clerk</b>	Patsy Moynihan
<b>Issue Clerk</b>	Teklay Egziabher
<b>Issue Clerk</b>	Riddy Kamiende
<b>Issue Clerk</b>	Sumaira Pathan
<b>Issue Clerk</b>	Faye North
<b>Issue Clerk</b>	David Lomax
<b>Issue Clerk</b>	Shaquille Miller
<b>Issue Clerk</b>	Francine Kouassi
<b>Issue Clerk</b>	Bolu Aganna
<b>Issue Clerk</b>	Patrick Dick

**Judge's Clerks as at January 2026**

<b>Clerk to Andrew Baker J</b>	Janet Amoroso
<b>Clerk to Birt J</b>	Shannon Riordan
<b>Clerk to Bright J</b>	Mandy Torrens
<b>Clerk to Bryan J</b>	Sandra Appiah
<b>Clerk to Butcher J</b>	Eilidh Rowan
<b>Clerk to Calver J</b>	Michaela Childs
<b>Clerk to Dias J</b>	Róisín Spragg
<b>Clerk to Henshaw J</b>	Jay Howard
<b>Clerk to Jacobs J</b>	Deborah Coverley
<b>Clerk to Robin Knowles J</b>	Alex McGovern
<b>Clerk to Picken J</b>	Christopher Palin
<b>Clerk to Waksman J</b>	Elvis Moore

Clerks' contact details can be found here at: <https://www.judiciary.uk/courts-and-tribunals/business-and-property-courts/commercial-court/about-the-commercial-court/the-commercial-courts-judges/>



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