



LORD CHIEF JUSTICE
OF ENGLAND AND WALES

AMENDMENT NO. 4 TO THE CRIMINAL PRACTICE DIRECTIONS

Amendment No. 4 to the Criminal Practice Directions replaces two practice directions:

1. The practice direction on case management (CPD I General matters 3A Case management); and
2. The practice direction on jury irregularities (CPD VI Trial 39M Jury irregularity).

The replacement practice directions will take effect on different dates.

SUMMARY OF KEY CHANGES

Replacement of CPD I General matters 3A Case management

The replacement practice direction on case management will take effect from 5 October 2015 to coincide with the next iteration of the Criminal Procedure Rules 2015 coming into force.

The changes to the practice direction, and associated changes to the Criminal Procedure Rules, form part of the 'Better Case Management' initiative and implement some of the recommendations made by Sir Brian Leveson in his *Review of Efficiency in Criminal Proceedings*.

Better Case Management is a national scheme designed to elicit early guilty pleas and to reduce the number of hearings per case. The replacement practice direction:

- Emphasises the requirement for communication between the parties from the outset;
- Creates a timetable for listing the first hearing at the magistrates' court and (if appropriate) the first hearing at the Crown Court (to be known as the Plea and Trial Preparation hearing);
- Requires the prosecution to serve sufficient information for the defendant and the court to make informed decisions on plea, venue, case management and sentence (as appropriate) at the first hearing;
- Identifies the types of cases that might require a further case management hearing at the Crown Court (the starting point being there will be no such hearing in the majority of cases);

- Emphasises that that, as far as possible, case progression should be conducted using electronic communication.

Replacement of CPD VI Trial 39M Jury irregularity

The replacement practice direction on jury irregularities will take effect from 16 July 2015. It updates the procedures for dealing with jury irregularities in light of the new offences contained in sections 20A to 20D of the Juries Act 1974 (researching the case, sharing research, engaging in prohibited conduct and disclosing information about the jury's deliberations) and the associated repeal of section 8 of the Contempt of Court Act 1981 (confidentiality of jury's deliberations).

The Rt Hon The Lord Thomas of Cwmgiedd
Lord Chief Justice of England and Wales
16 July 2015