SQUIRE PATTON BOGGS

Wayne Barnes

Partner

London

wayne.barnes@squirepb.com

Languages spoken
English | French



About Wayne

Wayne Barnes is a partner in our Government Investigations & White Collar Practice, based in the London office. He is an experienced criminal barrister and trial advocate with more than two decades of experience conducting complex, internal and corporate investigations across multiple jurisdictions.

Wayne conducts investigations across an array of sectors into misconduct affecting corporations, including suspected fraud, corruption, theft of commercial data and false accounting. He has completed sensitive investigations across a variety of industries, including publishing, logistics, energy and natural resources, as well as infrastructure and he regularly completes governance reviews for corporations.

He has represented numerous individuals being investigated or prosecuted by law enforcement entities such as the National Crime Agency, the UK Serious Fraud Office and the US Department of Justice; and has conducted internal investigations across the globe as part of those instructions. He has also been instructed in some of the biggest UK public inquiries currently being conducted.

Wayne advises a growing number of corporate clients grappling with allegations of wrongdoing in the workplace, and other sensitive, business-critical matters. His advisory work extends beyond legal remedies into managing reputational issues and crisis planning.

Wayne is a former international rugby union referee and has presided over more International Rugby matches than anyone else in history, including the 2023 Rugby World Cup Final. He is currently a board member of the Rugby Football Union, and an independent member of the ECB's Finance, Audit and Risk Committee.

With his professional sporting background, his high-profile sport's governance roles and his specialist legal practice, Wayne is able to bridge the worlds of law and sport. He is regularly instructed by national governing bodies, professional sports organisations, commercial sponsors and rights holders on all aspects of sports law, governance, ethics and safeguarding. He has recently conducted investigations and reviews for a leading International Football Association, a Premier League football team, a Formula 1 racing team, the British Judo Association and the British Horseracing Authority.

Wayne is a well-established keynote speaker, often sharing his insight into leadership, facing adversity, dealing with pressure and building effective teams in international organisations.

Experience

- Led a review into the statutory obligations of the Greater London Authority to allow meaningful public engagement while persevering political fairness.
- Led an internal investigation into bullying within an Olympic sport, which included recommendations into improved governance and the performance programme.
- Led a sensitive investigation into a boardroom leak, highlighting the governance issues that may have caused the leak.
- Conducted an investigation and reconciliation piece of work leading to the improvement of a national governing body's disciplinary structure.
- Conducted internal investigations across Africa as part of a World Bank and SFO self-referral.
- Conducted in-house training for legal and compliance teams on matters relating to bribery and corruption, money laundering and the conducting of internal investigations.

Credentials

Education

- University of East Anglia, LL.B., 2000

Admissions

- England and Wales, 2002

Memberships & Affiliations

- Board Member, Rugby Football Union
- Finance, Audit and Risk Committee Member, ECB
- Member, Fraud Lawyers Association

Recognitions

- Named to the 2026 *Lawdragon 500 Leading Global Investigations Lawyers* guide

Expertise

Services

- Litigation
- Government Investigations & White Collar

Industries

- Sports & Entertainment

Publications & Speaking Engagements

- Speaker, Sports Investigation Forum, London, 29 February 2024.
- Speaker, "Reshaping the Culture of Rugby Union", Rugby Union and the Law Conference 2024, London, 19 February 2024.
- Author, *Throwing the Book*, Constable, 2023.
- Interviewed, "Wayne Barnes: Referees cannot accept abuse | 'VAR in football will get better'", Sky Sports, 15 November 2023.
- Interviewed, "Wayne Barnes: Rugby World Cup final referee on social media abuse he and family faced", BBC Sport, 8 November 2023.

About our firm

One of the world's strongest integrated law firms, providing insight at the point where law, business and government meet. We deliver commercially focused business solutions by combining our legal, lobbying and political capabilities and invaluable connections on the ground to a diverse mix of clients, from long-established leading corporations to emerging businesses, startup visionaries and sovereign nations. More than 1,500 lawyers in over 40 offices across four continents provide unrivaled access to expertise.