

Partner

Offices: London

Tel: +44 (0)20 7597 6617

Email: jennifer.mcdermott@withersworldwide.com

Education: University College London, LL.B Hons

Admitted: England and Wales, 1981

Languages spoken: French

Year joined: 2007

Year became partner: 2007



Overview

Jennifer McDermott is a Solicitor who has acted for many individuals and companies on reputation management issues. This involves taking pre-emptive action to prevent publication or broadcast of potentially damaging stories or, if instructed after publication, to obtain damages, corrections and apologies from the media or redress from the media regulators. Jennifer often works with clients' internal and external PR advisers and media lawyers in other jurisdictions.

Jennifer McDermott also advises companies, charities and individuals on the powers and duties of their regulators. If a client needs to challenge a regulatory decision, for example, on the grounds that it is beyond the regulator's powers, procedurally improper, unreasonable, disproportionate or in breach of human rights, she can advise on the most effective way to do this. Jennifer also advises governmental and regulatory authorities on the extent of their powers and duties and on their decision-making processes, so that their decisions are soundly based and legally robust.

Jennifer McDermott advises people how to make Freedom of Information Act ("FOIA") requests to obtain information about, for example, future government policy, competitors, lost tenders and other matters. She also advises public authorities and other bodies subject to FOIA on how to respond to requests and claim relevant exemptions, for example to prevent disclosure of confidential/commercially sensitive information.

Highlights

During her time as a Solicitor Jennifer McDermott has acted for many newspapers, including The Guardian and The Observer throughout the 'Spycatcher' confidentiality saga, contesting restraining orders imposed on those newspapers by the Government, not only before our national courts but also before the European Court of Human Rights. She acted for the Daily Star in successfully overturning Lord Archer's libel win against that newspaper and recovering £500,000 libel damages, plus costs and substantial compound interest from the disgraced peer.

She acts for Sir David Barclay and Sir Frederick Barclay, their companies and family on all their media disputes, obtaining numerous corrections and apologies and preventing the publication of private information.

Jennifer acted for Tube Lines, one of the private sector parties involved in the PPP to improve the London Underground, in successfully defeating the judicial review challenge brought by the Mayor of London and Transport for London to stop the PPP.

She currently advises the Spoliation Advisory Panel on its recommendations regarding works of art expropriated during the Nazi era, now in our UK museums and galleries.

Jennifer is also advisor to Sir David Barclay and Sir Frederick Barclay on the reform of the Channel Island of Sark's legislature, electoral system, inheritance, land and tax laws.

Publications and speaking engagements

- Jennifer co-authored the article [Conflicts Between U.S. and U.K Internet Defamation Law](#) which was published in the *New York Law Journal* with [Chaya F. Weinberg-Brod](#)
- She regularly writes for the UK Press Gazette; is on the Board of Communications Law and speaks at media conferences.
- Jennifer chaired JUSTICE's annual Human Rights Conference in November 2007, as she has done for many years.
- She often speaks at judicial review conferences.

Memberships

- Royal Television Society
- Society of Editors
- Media Society
- Administrative Law Bar Association
- JUSTICE
- Human Rights Lawyers' Association

On a personal note

Jennifer likes to go to the gym, swim, play tennis, read novels, as well as go to the theatre and cinema. She also likes to travel – preferably to a tropical beach with a bit of sightseeing – and she has recently learnt to ski.

