

Michael Coburn KC

SILK: 2010 | CALL: 1990

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Overview

Michael practises in all aspects of commercial law, usually with an international dimension, with particular emphasis on shipping, international sale of goods, and commodities.

He is a specialist in a broad cross-section of shipping and international trade issues including disputes arising out of charterparties, general average, commodities and shipbuilding contracts. He has acted in precedent setting cases such as *Spar v GCL* heard in the Court of Appeal concerning the obligation to pay hire.

Michael acts in English court and arbitration proceedings. He has acted as arbitrator in a number of references.

Professional memberships

- LMAA: Supporting Member

Education

- City University: Diploma in Law (1989)
- University of Oxford, Worcester College: *Literae Humaniores* (1988)

Example cases

- *Spar Shipping AS v Grand China Logistics Holding (Group) Co Ltd* [2015] EWHC 718 (Comm): shipping; whether obligation to pay hire a condition; guarantees; measure of damages.
- *Griffon Shipping LLC v Firodi Shipping Ltd (The Griffon)* [2013] EWCA Civ 1567; [2014] 1 All E.R. (Comm) 593; [2014] 1 Lloyd's Rep. 471: contract terms; deposits; interpretation; repudiation; sale of ships; shipping contracts; standard forms of contract.

- *Polestar Maritime Ltd v YHM Shipping Co Ltd (The Rewa)*[2012] EWCA Civ 153; [2012] 2 All ER (Comm) 447; [2012] 1 Lloyd's Rep 510; [2012] 1 CLC 381: bills of sale; certificates; contracts of sale; contract terms; detention; sale of ships.

Recommendations

Michael grasps complex legal issues quickly and communicates the salient points effectively. [Chambers UK Bar 2025](#)

Michael is highly responsive and takes a proactive and hands-on approach. [Chambers UK Bar 2025](#)

Michael is sharp with an impressive turnaround time in providing advice under urgent circumstances. He is able to break down complex issues into understandable points to clients whose English is not their first language. [The Legal 500 UK Bar 2025](#)

Michael is a highly erudite barrister who thinks meticulously about his cases. He has a calm style of advocacy that allows him to develop detailed points whilst maintaining the court's attention. [The Legal 500 UK Bar 2024](#)

He is a profound thinker with a charming court manner. [Chambers UK Bar 2024](#)

Michael grasps complex legal issues quickly and communicates the salient points effectively. [Chambers UK Bar 2024](#)

Michael is very experienced, clear thinking, user-friendly, calm and composed. [The Legal 500 UK Bar 2024](#)

Michael is highly responsive and takes a proactive and hands-on approach. [Chambers UK Bar 2024](#)

Very competent, well prepared, most helpful, and a deep thinker. [The Legal 500 UK Bar 2023](#)

Michael is exceptionally knowledgeable, even on areas of law that are not commonly encountered. [Chambers UK Bar 2022](#)

A very pleasant person to work with, he knows his commodities law extremely well and has a very strong intellect. [The Legal 500 UK Bar 2023](#)

Michael is phenomenally clever. [Chambers UK Bar 2023](#)

Michael is phenomenally clever. [Chambers UK Bar 2022](#)

A very clever and a very effective advocate. He gives careful thought to presenting his written arguments. [The Legal 500 UK Bar 2022](#)

Michael is exceptionally knowledgeable, even on areas of law that are not commonly encountered. [Chambers UK Bar 2022](#)

Calm, considered, patient and very thorough on the law, he gives realistic advice. [The Legal 500 UK Bar 2022](#)

He has a persuasive written style and is very eloquent orally. [Chambers UK Bar 2021](#)

A very commercial silk who always gets straight to the point. [The Legal 500 UK Bar 2021](#)

A very strategic thinker. [The Legal 500 UK Bar 2021](#)

He's top of my list to go to with more complex and difficult cases. He is second to none in cross-examination, very astute, user-friendly and responsive. [Chambers UK Bar 2020](#)

One of the best silks - very commercial and always to the point, he doesn't beat around the bush. [The Legal 500 UK Bar 2020](#)

A good all-rounder and a fantastic silk who is highly recommended for commodities cases. [The Legal 500 UK Bar 2018](#)

Mike is able, gifted and charming. You always know it will be a tough but fair fight. [Chambers UK Bar 2020](#)

Very commercial and always to the point. [The Legal 500 UK Bar 2020](#)

He will always pick up the phone and answer your query. [Chambers UK Bar 2020](#)

He is highly-rated. [The Legal 500 UK Bar 2018](#)

A very polished and smooth performer. [Chambers UK Bar 2019](#)

He's able and conscientious and gives you the feeling that he really cares. [Chambers UK 2018](#)

A strong advocate, who stays calm and clear throughout a case. [The Legal 500 UK Bar 2017](#)