

Michael E. Ruck

Partner

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OVERVIEW

Michael Ruck is a partner in the firm's White Collar Defense and Investigations practice group. Michael has a broad range of experience including advisory, regulatory liaison and large-scale, complex multi-jurisdictional investigations. Throughout his career, including previously working in the FCA's Enforcement Division, he has led financial services regulatory projects, investigations and proceedings for a range of institutions, including asset and fund managers, insurance businesses and banks. His experience spans various regulatory issues and he has worked closely with a number of UK and foreign regulators, including the FCA, SFO, ICO, DOJ and IRS.

Michael also leads our European and UK sanctions team which is part of our Global Sanctions Practice. Michael has advised on various sanctions related issues, including financial and trade sanctions, along with obtaining specific licences and export authorisations. He has also led a variety of sanctions related investigations, including cross-border matters and those requiring interaction with various sanctions enforcement bodies, including the UK Office of Financial Sanctions Implementation and the US Office of Foreign Assets Control.

Michael has a deep understanding of a wide range of regulatory issues and procedures, making him a trusted adviser to his clients, often at board level. *The Legal 500*'s 2024 directory describes Michael as “by far one of the leading regulatory defence lawyers for FCA enforcement investigations and both civil and criminal proceedings,” a “first-class advisor” on multi-jurisdictional criminal investigations and bringing “his FCA “in house” experience to his clients.” The team are also described as a “strong team with real experience of white-collar trial work,” which has “exceptional financial regulation experience and expertise.”

Michael is also Director – Regulatory and Government Engagement for ILAG (Insurance & Life Assurance Group) and was previously the Chair of ILAG's Financial Crime Practitioner Group.

PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND

Prior to joining the firm Michael served as a partner in the London office of a UK firm, where he was a member of the financial services team. Through this role Michael supported clients on sensitive reputational matters and investigations. Michael has a broad range of experience including advisory, regulatory, and large-scale, complex multi-jurisdictional investigations.

Michael also previously spent six years in the Financial Conduct Authority's Enforcement and Market Oversight Division, leading on a variety of regulatory and market related investigations.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Recognised by *Lexology Index: Investigations 2026* as Tier 3: Highly Recommended
- Recognised by *The Legal 500 United Kingdom* as a Recommended Lawyer in London
  - Fraud: White-Collar Crime (Advice to Individuals), 2024-2027
  - Regulatory Investigations and Corporate Crime (Advice to Corporates), 2024-2027
- Recognised by *Doyle's Guide* as a Leading White Collar Crime & Regulatory Investigations Lawyer in London, 2026

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

- Speaker, “Private Banking and Wealth Management Conference,” Goodacre UK, 5 March 2025
- Speaker, “Sanctions: How to Sleep at Night,” Airline Economics Growth Frontiers Global - Dublin, 15 January 2025
- Chair and Speaker, “Essential Compliance Update,” Goodacre UK, 14 December 2023
- Presenter, “Regulation of Cryptoassets in the UK – What's Next for FCA Authorised Firms?” MBL, 21 November 2023
- Speaker, “2023 Sanctions Masterclass Series – OFAC or OFSI? Who you gonna call? – Understanding your disclosure obligations under international sanctions requirements," School of International Financial Services, 8 November 2023
- Speaker, “Failure to Prevent Fraud Offence Webinar," ILAG, 12 October 2023
- Presenter, "How to Engage with Regulators Successfully," MBL, 25 September 2023
- Speaker, “Essential Compliance Update,” Goodacre UK, 26 July 2023
- Presenter, “Regulation of Cryptoassets in the UK – What's Next for FCA Authorised Firms?” MBL, 4 May 2023
- Presenter, "How to Engage with Regulators Successfully," MBL, 30 March 2023
- Presenter, “Regulation of Cryptoassets in the UK – What's Next for FCA Authorised Firms?” MBL, 13 October 2022
- Presenter, "How to Engage with Regulators Successfully," MBL, 15 September 2022
- Speaker, "Wealth Management Forum: Why UK Sanctions Keep Me Up at Night," Goodacre UK, 14 July 2022

- Chair and speaker, "Sanctions & Russia: Understanding the Impact," ILAG, 12 July 2022
- Chair and speaker, "Sanctions & Russia: Understanding the Impact," Goodacre UK, 12 May 2022
- Chair and panel member, "6th White Collar Crime Forum," Opentext, 11 May 2022
- Speaker, "Understanding the implications of the Russia-Ukraine crisis," K&L Gates, 5 and 7 April 2022
- Speaker, "Aviation Disputes Webinar," K&L Gates, 5 April 2022
- Presenter, "How to Engage with Regulators Successfully," MBL, 23 February 2022
- Speaker, "Investigations in the UK - Best Practice and How to Avoid the Pitfalls," Mondaq, 30 September 2021
- Speaker, "Update on FCA and PRA Enforcement action in the UK," Goodacre UK, 26 August 2021

EDUCATION

- Diploma of Legal Practice, University of Sheffield, 1999
- B.A., University of Sheffield, 1998 *(Hons)*

ADMISSIONS

- Solicitor of the Senior Courts of England and Wales

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP *POWERED BY HUB*

- June 2026, April, May, and June 2026 Accolades
- 6 July 2026, FCA Identifies Key Compliance Issues in Its Sanctions Systems and Controls Report (May 2026)
- 6 May 2026, UK Government's Fraud Strategy Framework: 2026 to 2029
- 28 April 2026, UK Government's Strategic Approach to Sanctions Enforcement
- 13 February 2026, OFSI Announces Major Reforms to Enforcement Process Following Consultation
- 11 February 2026, OFSI Fines the Bank of Scotland for Sanctions Breach: Key Compliance Lessons
- 16 December 2025 , SFO Publishes New Guidance on Evaluating Corporate Compliance Programmes
- 16 December 2025, FCA Publishes Findings on Firms' Risk Assessments and Criticises Poor Practice
- 11 November 2025, European Union Adopts 19th Package of Sanctions Against Russia
- 20 October 2025, Increased Risk of UK Sanctions Enforcement–An Analysis of Recent Sanctions Enforcement Action in the United Kingdom

- 28 August 2025, UK CPS and SFO Issue Updated Corporate Prosecution Guidance: What Corporates Need to Know
- 1 August 2025, Europe: UK FCA Confirms the Circumstances in Which it May Make Public Announcements About Live Investigations
- 28 July 2025, European Union Adopts 18th Sanctions Package Against Russia
- 28 July 2025, UK Office for Financial Sanctions Implementation Crypto-Assets Threat Assessment (July 2025): Key Lessons for Sanctions Compliance
- 28 July 2025, OFSI's Enforcement Playbook Is Being Redrafted: What This Potential Reform Means for You
- 21 July 2025, Key Takeaways: Secondary Sanctions—United Kingdom Issues Sanctions Guidance for Non-UK Businesses
- 18 July 2025, Key Lessons: The Latest UK Office for Financial Sanctions Implementation Art Market Participants and High Value Dealers Threat Assessment
- 15 July 2025, The FCA's Developing Approach to Nonfinancial Misconduct by Individuals in the Financial Services Sector
- 14 July 2025, What You Need to Know About the United Kingdom Issuing Sanctions Guidance for Non-UK Businesses
- 8 July 2025, Key Lessons From the Latest UK Office for Financial Sanctions Implementation Art Market Participants and High Value Dealers Threat Assessment (June 2025)
- 20 June 2025, Key Takeaways From the UK Financial Conduct Authority's Revised Enforcement Guide
- 29 May 2025, UK Cross-Government Review of Sanctions Implementation and Enforcement
- 28 May 2025, Key Compliance Tips on How to Respond to Information Requests From Ofsi
- 7 May 2025, European Union Adopts 16th Package of Sanctions Against Russia
- 5 May 2025, The Serious Fraud Office's Guidance on How to Best Avoid Prosecution
- 23 April 2025, The Latest OFSI Property and Related Services Threat Assessment
- 15 April 2025, What Legal Services Providers Need to Learn From OFSI's Legal Services Threat Assessment
- 8 April 2025, FCA Backpedals: "Name and Shame" and Diversity and Inclusion Requirements Axed, and Non-financial Misconduct Rules Delayed
- 8 April 2025, Europe: UK's FCA Axes Proposed "Name and Shame" and D&I Requirements, and Delays Non-Financial Misconduct Rules
- 31 March 2025, Europe: UK Sanctions Regulator Highlights Compliance Failures
- 26 March 2025, New Office of Financial Sanctions Implementation Financial Services Threat Assessment

- 13 March 2025, European Union Adopts 16th Package of Sanctions Against Russia, Further Impacting the Aviation Industry
- 10 February 2025, January 2025 Accolades
- 4 February 2025, EU Sanctions—Article 8a "Best Efforts" Explained
- 21 January 2025, Europe: Are the UK FCA's Revised "Name and Shame" Proposals an Improvement?
- 14 January 2025, Conversations About Race and Diversity: Jenny Lay-Flurrie
- 8 January 2025, The FCA's Part 2 of Its "Name and Shame" Proposals: What You Need to Know
- 8 January 2025, Article 8a "Best Efforts" Explained
- December 2024, Conversations About Race and Diversity – International Day of Persons with Disabilities
- 18 November 2024, Guidance to Organisations on the Offence of Failure to Prevent Fraud
- 18 November 2024, Top Tips for Sanctions Compliance and Preventing Sanctions Evasion
- 18 November 2024, UK Office of Trade Sanctions Implementation New Enforcement Powers and Increased Reporting Obligations
- 12 November 2024, Sweeping Changes to Company Registration in the United Kingdom to Increase Transparency of Companies and the Integrity of the Register
- 4 November 2024, Lessons on Effective Financial Crime Controls: The Starling Bank Example
- 23 October 2024, Top Tips for Sanctions Compliance and Preventing Sanctions Evasion
- 11 October 2024, UK Office of Trade Sanctions Implementation New Enforcement Powers and Increased Reporting Obligations
- 8 August 2024, EU and UK Sanctions Briefing: The Luxury Goods Sector
- 22 July 2024, European Union Adopts New Sanctions Against Russia and Belarus
- 22 July 2024, How the Serious Fraud Office's Ambitious Five-Year Strategy Will Impact Businesses
- 12 June 2024, The Year Ahead: The Financial Conduct Authority's Ambitious Enforcement Plans for 2024/2025
- 11 April 2024, UK and EU Sanctions Update–April 2024
- 20 February 2024, Why Corporations in the United Kingdom are Now More Likely to Face Criminal Prosecution for their Employees' Actions
- 28 November 2023, New Government Guidance and UK High Court Seeks to Settle Disarray in UK Sanctions Law
- 21 November 2023, Europe: Significant Expansion to Corporate Criminal Liability in the United Kingdom

- 20 November 2023, Why Corporates Are Now More Likely to Face Criminal Prosecution for the Actions of Their Employees
- 2 November 2023, UK Sanctions Law in Disarray? What You Need to Know
- 27 September 2023, FCA Publishes Outcome of Its Review of Firms' Compliance With Sanction Controls
- 25 September 2023, Europe: UK's FCA Challenges Firms to Improve Sanction Screening Processes
- 10 August 2023, UK Real Estate Ownership and the Implications of the Economic Crime (Transparency and Enforcement) Act
- 1 August 2023, Corporate Criminal Liability–What is Next for the United Kingdom?
- 31 July 2023, UK Sanctions Update–July 2023
- 3 July 2023, UK Sanctions Update–June 2023
- 16 June 2023, PRA Enforcement Changes - The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly
- 6 June 2023, Russia-Related Export Controls Continue to Escalate
- 11 April 2023, Europe: Significant Changes Proposed to Market Abuse Regulation in the UK
- 23 March 2023, Cryptoasset Regulatory Update: HM Treasury Publishes Consultation Paper on the Future of the Financial Services Regulatory Regime for Cryptoassets
- 21 March 2023, PSJC v Mint – A Road Map for Litigation Involving Sanctioned Individuals or Entities?
- 6 February 2023, Sanctions Update—January 2023
- 6 February 2023, OFSI Annual Review: April 2021 to August 2022
- 14 November 2022, Where the United States Goes, the FCA Will Inevitably Follow: Regulatory Action Against the Use of Personal Mobile Devices
- 12 July 2022, Challenges for Challengers – the FCA Shares Its Expectations for Financial Crime Controls at Disruptor Banks and Provides Lessons for All
- 12 July 2022, Lessons to be Learned – FCA Fines JLT Specialty Limited £7.8 Million for Financial Crime Control Failings
- 10 June 2022, FCA Calls for Sanctions Evasion Reporting
- 25 May 2022, UK Sanctions Update - Ban on Services and Prevention of Disinformation
- 23 May 2022 , Timber Briefing: U.S. Lumber Prices Could Be Affected By Sanctions on Russia
- 19 April 2022, Between a Rock and a Hard Place: The Sanctions Climate for Foreign Investment in Russia - Part I of II

- 8 April 2022, The Economic Crime (Transparency and Enforcement) Act 2022 – Impact on UK Sanctions Regime
- 5 April 2022, Looking Forward: The FCA Enforcement Trends Firms Can Expect in 2022 Part 1
- 24 March 2022, Real Estate Ownership and the Implications of the Economic Crime (Transparency and Enforcement) Act
- 18 March 2022, Cryptocurrency – Russia's Sanctions Loophole?
- 10 March 2022, Foreign Ownership of UK Real Estate Under Scrutiny
- 25 February 2022, Sanctions Update: Monetary Penalty Imposed by OFSI
- 25 February 2022, UK Imposes Further Sanctions in Response to Russia's Invasion of Ukraine
- 2 November 2021, Lessons Learned from the OFSI Annual Review: 2020 - 2021
- 21 May 2021, UK Government Anti-Corruption Plan – It's Global

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

- "Cos. Must Monitor Sanctions Regime As Law Remains Unclear," *Law360,* 15 December 2023
- "FCA's changing approach to enforcement: recent developments and emerging trends," *Thomson Reuters Regulatory Intelligence*, 17 October 2023

NEWS & EVENTS

- 13 October 2026, Regulatory Investigations and D&O Protections-Practical Considerations for the Funds Industry
- 12 May 2025 - 14 May 2025, 2025 Mini-MBA: Europe and Middle East
- 19 November 2024, EU Sanctions and Enforcement Masterclass, Hosted by Lexology
- 15 November 2024, K&L Gates Named Among the Top 30 Investigations Firms Worldwide by *Global Investigations Review*
- 7 December 2021, Financial Crime Enforcement and Supervision, hosted by ILAG
- 6 October 2021, 2021 Investment Management Conference
- 9 March 2021, K&L Gates Expands Asset Management and Investigations Practices With London Partner Additions

MEDIA MENTIONS

- 8 July 2026, *Lexology Pro* | SFO's use of forced interviews plummets

- 24 April 2026, *The Guardian* | Revealed: UK oil refinery owner moved Russian loans to offshore subsidiary where sanctions did not apply

OTHER MEDIA MENTIONS

- Quoted, "Crackdown on Criminal Assets at the Fore of New UK and EU Drive," *Thomson Reuters Regulatory Intelligence*, 20 January 2025
- Quoted, "OUTLOOK 2025: Historic U.S. AML overhaul to land in hands of Trump administration, UK firms prepare for economic crime law challenges," *Thomson Reuters*, 15 January 2025
- Quoted, "UK regulator reframes 'naming and shaming' plan following industry backlash," *Thomson Reuters*, 28 November 2024
- Quoted, "Questions Surround EU's New Russia-Related Due Diligence Rules, Lawyers Say," *Export Compliance Daily*, 22 November 2024
- Quoted, "UK government faces enforcement challenge with new maritime sanctions," *Thomson Reuters Regulatory Intelligence*, 17 October 2024
- Quoted, "UK sanctions regime faces two-fold shake up," *Thomson Reuters Regulatory Intelligence*, 19 September 2024
- Quoted, "OUTLOOK 2024-Bribery and corruption high on law enforcement agenda in UK, U.S.," *Thomson Reuters Regulatory Intelligence*, 30 January 2024
- Quoted, "Banks to face greater scrutiny as PRA fines ex-Wyelands chief," *Global Trade Review*, 24 January 2024

AREAS OF FOCUS

- White Collar Defense and Investigations
- Anti-Bribery and Anti-Corruption
- Anti-Money Laundering (AML)
- Internal Investigations
- International Trade, Investment Controls, and National Security
- Securities Enforcement / Financial Regulatory Enforcement

INDUSTRIES

- Consumer Goods and Services
- Critical Minerals

- Energy
- Financial Services
- Household Goods

REPRESENTATIVE EXPERIENCE

- Conducted an internal investigation into allegations of board-level misconduct, including bullying, harassment, and intimidation, for a global entertainment provider. Involved allegations against senior individuals who were decision makers within the business but not permitted to be part of the investigation process. This created a high degree of complexity in providing the client an investigation report actionable by senior members of the business but without some of those senior members prejudicing the report's findings. This included a multijurisdictional process of interviews, exercise of legal privilege, and judicious use of anonymity within the findings.
- Advised on the application of various sanctions regimes (including US, EU, and UK) in relation to the application of financial sanctions and AML requirements. This has included complex and time-sensitive advice due to the potential risks and quickly developing sanctions restrictions. We have been instructed to conduct a sanctions and AML review of various entities, including those in the United States, European Union, Caribbean, and Middle East.
- Instructed by a former CFO in connection with his alleged criminal conduct whilst working at a FTSE-listed UK IT service provider, in the accounting periods leading up to the 2016 interim and year-end results. Our client faced 11 charges, broadly in relation to fraud, the falsification of internal records, the falsification and supply of particular accounting records to auditors, and the joint making of false statements to the financial markets and investors. This includes one of the Financial Conduct Authority's first-ever prosecutions under s.89 Financial Services Act 2012, making the work on this matter pioneering and especially complex. In 2023, also advised the client on confiscation and costs proceedings at Southwark Crown Court. This involved preparation of his defence and successfully reducing the total payment sought by the FCA by approximately 50%. The advice also involved preparation for a criminal trial at Southwark Crown Court lasting approximately four months, following a four-year investigation and ongoing post-trial matters.
- Defended the former director of a UK wealth management company from investigation and subsequent regulatory sanction by the Financial Conduct Authority for alleged failures relating to defined benefit pension transfers made by an independent financial adviser for whom our client had legal supervision responsibilities. In 2023, the FCA concluded its investigation and issued a warning notice against our client summarising the proposed sanction for his alleged failings. The team advised our client in relation to his options, response, and represented him in an appeal of the warning notice before the Regulatory Decisions Committee (an enforcement review of the FCA). After this hearing, the FCA issued a decision notice - this details the sanction the FCA intend to make public. We conducted a detailed analysis and assessment of the claims in the decision notice, and with the support of counsel advised our client on their strength and on his options to block the publication of the notice and appeal the decision. In January 2024, issued an appeal on behalf of our client to the Upper Tribunal and prepared his defence.