

Determination by Consent Decision

Name of regulated person and call date

Alexander Paul Riddiford called 28 July 2011 to the Inner Temple

Case Reference

2025/3045/DC

Charges

Charge 1

Statement of Offence

Professional Misconduct contrary to Core Duty 5 of the Code of Conduct (Part 2 of the Bar Standards Board Handbook Version 4.8)

Particulars of offence

Alexander Paul Riddiford, a barrister and BSB regulated individual, behaved in way which is likely to diminish the trust and confidence which the public places in him or in the profession, in that, on 27 September 2025 he drove a motor vehicle in a public place after consuming so much alcohol that the proportion of it in his breath, namely 65 micrograms of alcohol in 100 millilitres of breath, exceeding the prescribed limit of 35 microgrammes, for which he was convicted of an offence under section 5(1)(a) of the Road Traffic Act 1988 and Schedule 2 of the Road Traffic Offenders Act 1988 at Croydon Magistrates Court on 13 October 2025.

Statement of Facts

1. On 27 September 2025, Mr Riddiford was charged by Sutton Police for driving a motor vehicle after consuming so much alcohol that the proportion of it in his breath, namely 65 micrograms of alcohol in 100 millilitres of breath, exceeding the prescribed limit of 35 microgrammes, contrary to section 5(1)(a) of the Road Traffic Act 1988 and Schedule 2 to the Road Traffic Offenders Act 1988.
2. At Croydon Magistrates Court on 13 October 2025, Mr Riddiford pleaded guilty to the above charges. Mr Riddiford was sentenced to pay a fine of £8,309, £2,000 surcharge, and costs of £85. Mr Riddiford was also disqualified from driving for 18 months (to be reduced by 18 weeks upon completion of an Aspire Drink Drive Awareness Course).
3. Mr Riddiford reported the conduct to the BSB on 27 September 2025.
4. Shortly after Mr Riddiford reported his conduct to the BSB, he also reported receipt of a Fixed Penalty Notice in relation to an unsuitable tyre under Regulation 27(1)(a) of the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986 on the same date (27 September 2025). Mr Riddiford received 3 points and paid a £100 fine.

5. In his response to the BSB's allegations, Mr Riddiford admitted in full that he had breached Core Duty 5 of the BSB handbook by driving a motor vehicle whilst over the prescribed limit of alcohol in breath.
6. Mr Riddiford stated in his response to the allegations that he deeply regrets his actions relating to the charges. He further stated that he accepts full responsibility for his error of judgment in this regard and acknowledges with remorse and contrition that his conduct on 27 September 2025 and subsequent conviction constituted a breach of Core Duty 5.

Previous disciplinary findings

7. Mr Riddiford has not had any previous findings of professional misconduct.

Plea and Mitigation

1. Mr Riddiford admits the charges.
2. Mr Riddiford states that he has no further material to submit by way of mitigation.

Decision of the IDP

Charges found proved: Charge 1

Reasons for the decision on why charges are proved/ not proved

The Panel considered all the evidence in the BSB's bundle, including:

- Mr Riddiford's self-report to the BSB on 27 September 2025
- The Certificate of Conviction dated 13 October 2025;
- Mr Riddiford's Notice of Financial Penalty;
- Mr Riddiford's responses and admission to the charges.

Also, in reaching its decision, the Panel considered Regulation rE169 of the Disciplinary Tribunal Regulations, which states:

rE169

"In proceedings before a Disciplinary Tribunal which involve the decision of a court or tribunal in previous proceedings to which the respondent was a party, or where a wasted costs order was made against the respondent, the following Regulations shall apply:"

1. a copy of the certificate or memorandum of conviction relating to the offence shall be conclusive proof that the respondent committed the offence;
2. any court record of the findings of fact upon which the conviction was based (which may include any document prepared by the sentencing judge or a transcript of the relevant proceedings) shall be proof of those facts, unless proved to be inaccurate.

The Panel noted that Mr Riddiford had collided with a roundabout whilst driving under the influence of alcohol. This had led to debris coming off his vehicle. Mr Riddiford had continued to drive it. The evidence demonstrated that the vehicle was damaged, with three of the four wheels being driven on the rim with sparks forming. Mr Riddiford reported the

matter to the BSB on the same day that it occurred and admits the allegation. The Panel had regard to this.

Charge 1

In relation to Charge 1, the Panel decided that the facts of the allegation were made out on the balance of probabilities. The Panel noted that the allegation concerned a criminal conviction that was aggravated by erratic driving on damaged tyres. The Panel considered that a criminal conviction for an offence of this nature was something which could reasonably be seen by the public to diminish the trust and confidence which the public places in the profession.

Accordingly, the Panel found sufficient evidence of a breach of CD5 serious enough to amount to professional misconduct. The Panel determined that as the matter was admitted and Mr Riddiford had submitted to the jurisdiction of the Panel, it was in the public interest to resolve this matter by the Determination by Consent procedure.

Sanction

In deciding the appropriate sanction, the Panel had regard to the Bar Tribunals & Adjudication Service (BTAS) Sanctions Guidance version 6 (the Guidance).

The Panel determined that Mr Riddiford's conduct fell within 'Misconduct Group: E – Criminal Convictions' of the Guidance.

Aggravating and Mitigating Factors

In deciding on the appropriate level of fine, the Panel took into account relevant aggravating and mitigating factors. The Panel noted that there were aggravating factors and mitigating factors in this case. The aggravating factors were that Mr Riddiford:

- drove the car on rims with significant tyre damage;
- whilst no harm occurred there was risk of this in a demonstrably dangerous situation;
- the number of people/organisations who were adversely affected by the conduct seen driving erratically by a member of the public and police attendance was required;
- the reading of alcohol was high (65mg) rather than at the lower level, almost twice the legal limit.

The mitigating factors considered by the Panel were that Mr Riddiford:

- had personal circumstances
- reported the matter to the BSB on the same day
- co-operated with the criminal and regulatory investigation
- admitted all the facts from the outset
- entered a guilty plea to the offence
- completed a drink drive rehabilitation course
- has no previous regulatory history

Fine imposed

The Panel concluded that a fine was proportionate and in the public interest to reflect the seriousness of Mr Riddiford's conduct.

The Panel noted that no financial information had been provided by Mr Riddiford. The Panel recognised that any sanction ought not to be punitive in nature.

Considering all the above, the Panel concluded that a low-level fine (up to £5,000) would be appropriate. It considered that aggravating and mitigating features of the case balanced each other and that, weighing these up, a fine of £2,500 would be proportionate. The Panel, therefore, having found Charge 1 proved, order that Mr Riddiford pay a fine of £2,500 to the Bar Standards Board.

Confidential mitigation considered (Not for publication)

This section has been redacted as the original content is confidential

