

Article Summaries

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Serious Work, Properly Done: Why Professionalism Still Matters

The Peter Taylor Memorial Address For the Professional Negligence Bar Association 02 June 2026

The Lady Carr of Walton-on-the-Hill, Lady Chief Justice

The Lady Carr of Walton-on-the-Hill, Lady Chief Justice delivered the Peter Taylor Memorial Address 2026 to the Professional Negligence Bar Association on 2 June 2026.

In this lecture, the Lady Chief Justice examines the interplay between professionalism and professional liability. In particular, she explores how professionalism goes beyond what the law requires where professional liability is concerned. She begins by considering where the law has reached in terms of professional liability, then examines what an enduring notion of professionalism adds to that. Finally, she turns to consider professionalism and the judiciary, including the judiciary's use of AI.

Solving the 'parent company problem': Should parent companies be held directly or vicariously liable for the torts of their subsidiaries?

Paula Giliker

This article examines what it terms 'the parent company problem' – that is, how to deal with claims against parent companies by victims injured due to torts for which their subsidiaries are primarily responsible. The article posits that there are a number of good and valid reasons why claimants target well-resourced parent companies instead of their subsidiaries even when the torts occur overseas. The article notes that the courts in England and Wales are facing a rising number of claims which rely on tortious liability. The question for the courts is whether tort law should provide a remedy against the parent company and if so, on what basis. The article critically evaluates two possible options – direct and secondary/vicarious liability – in the context of recent case-law and ongoing academic debate.

It submits that the current position cannot be understood without examining company law and the wider regulatory framework, not least pressures arising from corporate due diligence measures requiring parent companies to take a more detailed interest in their subsidiaries and corporate supply chain. The article asserts that it is direct rather than vicarious liability that is the most appropriate response to the parent company problem.