



Manuel Saldana

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RELATED SERVICES

- Product Liability
- Trial Practice
- Aviation
- Automotive Litigation & Autonomous Vehicles
- International Law
- Commercial Litigation
- Class Action Defense

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- San Diego

OVERVIEW

Manuel Saldaña, is Co-Managing Partner in the Orange County office of GRSM and a nationally-recognized trial attorney and litigator. Manuel's clients include Fortune 500 companies and other large institutions and corporations. He has tried to verdict and successfully handled several complex matters, including those related to aviation, utilities, automobile, playground equipment, elevators, industrial equipment, consumer goods and food products. He has handled claims for general negligence, premises liability, products liability, wrongful death, commercial litigation, contractual indemnity, elder abuse, employee benefit plans and insurance, in individual and class action suits.

Manuel's civil and commercial litigation practice is diverse. He has defended consumer products and industrial equipment in products liability suits. He has litigated numerous matters involving contractual and indemnity disputes in various industries, including those related to security, construction and utilities. He has represented both utilities and their contractors in litigation related to electrocutions, fires, business interruptions, property damage and automobile collisions involving catastrophic injuries.

Manuel has experience litigating aviation matters for over 25 years. He has defended aviation actions ranging from product liability matters relating to engine, fuel and electronic systems, air frame and avionics to negligence claims relating to pilot error, maintenance, air traffic control, and weather. Those matters involved both fixed wing and rotor aircraft. He is versed in FAR Parts 61, 91, 121, and 135.

Manuel has successfully handled several class action matters involving alleged misrepresentations on product labels and advertisements, unfair business practices and consumer protection laws. He has either defeated class certification and/or has brought successful resolution to those matters.

Manuel quite literally grew up in the food industry, given that his family owned several restaurants during his childhood. He has now parlayed that background into a food industry practice. He represents some of the largest food manufacturers, packagers, suppliers, distributors, wholesalers and retailers in the industry. He has handled matters ranging from national FDA food recall cases to international supplier dispute to local contractual, collection and employment matters.

Manuel has handled matters venued in different parts of the United States, including California, Texas, Florida, South Carolina, Colorado and Tennessee, as well as Latin America. In addition to his legal practice, Manuel is an Adjunct Professor at Whittier College teaching Business Law and Healthcare Law.

REPRESENTATIVE EXPERIENCE

- Attained defense verdict in action alleging misrepresentations relating to aircraft maintenance programs against the administrator of the programs and manufacturer of aircraft.
- Defeated class certification in action alleging premature decomposition of rubber playground surfacing brought by several municipal entities against the surfacing manufacturer and installer. Included analysis of polymers and weather conditions.
- Successfully defended an executive jet manufacturer against a wrongful death lawsuit brought by survivors of a pastor and pilot involved in traveling religious ministry, whose aircraft crashed shortly after take-off. Included asserting defenses under the General Aviation Revitalization Act of 1994, and analysis of pilot error and failure to properly maintain aircraft.
- Successfully resolved wrongful death action brought against an executive jet manufacturer by survivors of a Latin American music artist, who died in a crash in Mexico. Included analysis of aircraft directional control systems and pilot error, as well as the General Aviation Revitalization Act of 1994.

- Secured a defense verdict after a seven-week trial in a catastrophic injury matter involving two motorcyclists severely injured in an accident with an industrial truck owned by our client, an American utility support company.
- Successfully handled class action suit against manufacturer of vitamin-infused water, alleging misrepresentations about health benefits of same. Included analysis of vitamins and perceived impact on health.
- Successfully handled wrongful death lawsuit against after-market supplier of seat belts for transit buses. Included crash analysis of bus v. tow truck collision, rotational ejection of bus driver and application of Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS), 209 and 302.
- Favorably resolved elder abuse lawsuit alleged against in-home assistive care service. Included analysis of elderly fall prevention procedures and new regulations applicable to those services.
- Handled several products liability matters for an American manufacturer of executive jets, including certain matters involving crashes in Latin America, and in some cases high profile celebrities incurring severe injuries or death. Issues were related to both electronic and mechanical aircraft systems. One matter went to trial with the result of a defense verdict for manufacturer.
- Favorably resolved a products liability matter for a German automobile manufacturer involving its super-car wherein a wealthy individual was killed. Both electronic and mechanical systems were implicated. The matter was resolved after downloading of vehicle event recorder revealed that the decedent's oversteering, and not the car's systems, caused the accident.
- Handled several products liability matters for American manufacturer of disposable cigarette lighters involving fires causing either injury or damage to property. One matter regarding a child resistant feature in the lighter went to trial and resulted in a defense verdict.
- Handled several products liability matters for American manufacturer of playground equipment involving injuries to children. Allegations included design and manufacturer defects, and one class action matter. One matter went to trial resulting in a verdict in manufacturer's favor.
- Favorably resolved a products liability matter for American manufacturer of exhaust fans alleged to have caused fires resulting in substantial property damage. After inspection of the exhaust fan showed that there was no defect in the fan that caused the fire, the matter was resolved.
- Successfully resolved a negligence matter for one of the largest engineering and construction companies in the world involving a severe fall injury to one of its subsidiary's workers while working at the Los Angeles Convention Center. Issues involved defense to contractor liability under California law known as Privette, cellular phone antennae technology, and fall protection and procedures. Resolution was in client's favor when third party suit was settled in combination with workers' compensation benefits.
- Handled several premises liability matters for American utility support company involving injuries to individuals or significant property damage from contacts with power lines. Successful motion based upon Privette. One trial resulted in defense verdict.

- Successfully tried several cases to verdict in warranty suits defending a Japanese automobile manufacturer against consumers claiming assorted defects in their vehicles.

PRESENTATIONS

Manuel speaks regularly on a wide range of legal topics, including:

- Speaker, Healthcare Law, Adjunct Professor, Whittier College, 2017
- Speaker, Business Law, Adjunct Professor, Whittier College, 2014-2016

CREDENTIALS

Admissions

- California

Memberships

- DRI – The Voice of the Defense Bar, current Program Vice Chair of Aviation Law Committee; former Chair of the Aviation and Aerospace SLG
- American Bar Association, former Chair-Elect of the ABA Automobile Law Committee
- Los Angeles County Bar Association
- Mexican-American Bar Association
- Hispanic National Bar Association

Education

- J.D., University of California, Hastings College of the Law
- Editor, *Hastings Law Journal*
- B.A., Stanford University (also attended the Universidad de Salamanca, Spain)

Externship

- California Supreme Court Justice John Arguelles

Honors

- Top Rated Lawyer-AV® Preeminent™, Martindale-Hubbell
- *Super Lawyers*® distinction in the fields of Civil Litigation Defense, International, and Personal Injury Defense-Products (2007-2009, *Law & Politics*)

Languages

- Spanish