Engineers Could Testify as Experts in Stage Collapse Prosecution



Just before a concert by the band Radiohead at Downsview Park in Toronto, the outdoor stage collapsed, killing a drum technician. As a result, the concert promotion company was charged with various OHS violations. At trial, the Crown wants to introduce the expert testimony of two engineers on why the stage collapsed. The defendant objected, arguing that the engineers weren't qualified experts. The court disagreed. Both witnesses are well-qualified civil engineers with experience investigating safety incidents. They were also involved in the investigation of this stage collapse, which doesn't preclude their testimony as experts. Moreover, the cause of the collapse is a key issue for which technical evidence is needed. Thus, the court concluded that the engineers met the threshold requirements to testify as experts [*R. v. Live Nation Canada Inc.*, [2016] O.J. No. 2046, April 21, 2016].