



## And The Defense Wins

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### Manuel Saldana



Former DRI Aviation & Aerospace SLG chair [Manuel Saldana](#), a partner in the Los Angeles and Orange County offices of **Gordon & Rees LLP**, recently obtained a complete defense verdict after a seven-week jury trial, plus four days of jury deliberations, in the Superior Court for the County of Stockton in California. The case involved two plaintiffs who were injured when their motorcycles collided at high speed with a large commercial vehicle owned by a tree trimming contractor on a rural highway, State Route 4, near Farmington, California. The plaintiffs survived the crash but suffered catastrophic injuries, including alleged traumatic brain injuries. They requested in excess of \$30 million in damages.

The plaintiffs were middle-aged, responsible men, who had ridden their motorcycles at a charity event just before the accident. As such, there was much sympathy for their situation. Nevertheless, the jury ultimately ruled that the commercial driver was not negligent and rendered a complete defense verdict. A long time insurance representative who monitored the trial said of Mr. Saldana's closing argument: "it was one of the best I've seen and I've seen a lot in my 47 years in this business."

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