

HD Transfer Window Asia: recent moves including Reed Smith, HSF and Clifford Chance

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The Transfer Window: Asia is a regular round-up of recent legal moves in Asia Pacific. Please send all announcements to: elizabeth.broomhall@legalweek.com

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In 2012 the **firm** hired partner Jason Toms and associate Joyce Cheung from Stephenson Harwood in **Hong Kong**, and later relocated associates Victoria Wei and Alex Brandt to the city from London.

The team now has 27 lawyers in **Hong Kong** who work alongside those in its recently launched Singapore office, where four partners handle shipping and commodities work.

Meanwhile, private client specialist **firm** Withers has ramped up its Asian wealth planning practice after the relocation one of its US qualified lawyers Wei Zhang from New York to **Hong Kong**.

Zhang joined Withers' New York office in 2010, and moved to the **firm's Hong Kong** office in February in response to more interest for US tax planning services from Asian based families.

She has experience working on a broad range of tax, **estate** planning and expatriation issues for international families with US connections.

At Herbert Smith Freehills, **Hong Kong**-based corporate energy partner David Clinch has recently been promoted to head of energy for Asia.

Based in the regional financial hub, he will lead a team of more than 25 specialist energy lawyers across offices in **China**, South East Asia, Seoul and Tokyo.

He has worked for Herbert Smith Freehills (HSF) for 20 years, joining the London office in 1994 and spending 16 years with the **firm** in Asia, located in **China**, Japan, Thailand and Singapore.

His practice covers acquisitions and disposals, off-take and supply, joint ventures, project development and project finance, in the oil and gas, mining, power, chemical, refinery and infrastructure sectors.

But in Singapore, a former senior associate Tom Platts from HSF has joined Stephenson Harwood as a partner.

Platts, who also focuses on dispute resolution, he has been based in Singapore for three years, and also worked in London and Paris.

King & Wood Mallesons (KWM) has at the same time boosted its Australian real **estate** and projects practice with the hire of Chris Mitchell from Ashurst's Sydney office.

Mitchell headed the Australian infrastructure practice at Ashurst, and has experience acting for a broad range of public and private sector clients on major transport infrastructure projects, PPP projects, large scale **residential** developments, urban redevelopment programs, **commercial** leasing and joint ventures.

He is the third lateral hire for KWM this year following the appointment of energy and resources partner Shuan McRobert from Norton Rose Fulbright and Michael Perez from Allens, both of whom joined the **firm** in January.

However, the **firm** has also seen the exit of an Australian partner this month. Energy and resources lawyer Paul Lingard is to join Clifford Chance (CC) in Perth, bringing the total number of partners at CC in Australia to 16.

He will move to CC in April, focusing on corporate, finance and litigation work in the mining, power and gas sectors.

He has been described as a rising star partner, having acted on BHP Billiton's operations work for more than a decade.

Also in Australia the Sydney office of K&L Gates has added Liz Gray as a partner in its investment management practice.

She arrives at K&L Gates from Henry Davis York, joined by senior associates Matthew Watts and Lisa Lautier, and lawyer Edward Vassie.

Gray, who advises on investment fund **transactions**, financial services regulatory projects and new product development, is the second investment management partner to join K&L Gates' Asia practice in 2014. The **firm** also recruited Greg Heaton in **Hong Kong** in January.

In Japan, K&L Gates has also nabbed finance partner Philip Hyde from Hogan Lovells.

Hyde will work out of both K&L Gates' Tokyo and **Hong Kong** offices in the hope of broadening the **firm's** debt capital markets and finance capabilities in Asia.

He has more than 20 years of experience in his field, advising on a mix of structured finance, restructuring, derivatives, and securitisation **transactions**.

Clyde & Co has also expanded its team in the Middle East, with the recruitment of corporate partners Barton Hoggard from Hadeef & Partners in Dubai and Lee Keane, senior legal counsel from the Al Tayer **Group** in Qatar.

It brings the total number of partners at Clydes in the Middle East to 37, and corporate partner numbers to 15 across the **firm's** five regional offices.

Hoggard has been in the region since the beginning of 2008 and specialises in domestic and cross-border M&A, corporate governance, structuring advice, principal agreements for private placements and joint ventures. He is now based with Clyde & Co in Dubai.

Keane was previously a senior associate with the UK **firm** for five years, but spent a year working in-house. He has re-joined the **firm** in Doha. He specialises in M&A **transactions**, franchise and distribution arrangements, with significant experience in the retail, food and beverage and healthcare sectors.

Also in February, Morrison & Foerster boosted its international restructuring practice with the addition of James Peck in the US as co-chair of its global business restructuring and insolvency **group**.

He was previously a US bankruptcy judge for the Southern District of New York, overseeing the chapter 11 and SIPA cases of Lehman Brothers and its affiliates, which collectively held \$600bn assets at the time of filing, making it the largest bankruptcy filing in US history.

The **firm** has at the same time brought back its former head of litigation Steven Kaufmann, after a four-year stint in the Obama Administration.

Kaufmann has rejoined the **firm** as partner resident in both Washington and Denver.

Before joining the US Government, Kaufmann spent more than 25 years at Morrison & Foerster and was managing partner of its Denver office.

He has extensive international litigation experience in financial services, telecommunications, energy, real **estate**, logistics and pharmaceuticals, and a strong background in financial services, securities and antitrust class action defense.

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CO clftrn : Clifford Chance LLP | incco : Ince & Co

IN i835 : Legal Services | ibcs : Business/Consumer Services

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