

Lateral
Partner
Moves
in
London



 July - August 2020

Welcome to the latest round-up of lateral partner moves in the legal market from Edwards Gibson, where we look back at announced partner-level recruitment activity in London over the past two months and give you a ‘who’s moved where’ update.

July to August is traditionally a quiet time for the announcement of lateral partner moves and whilst this edition is no exception, in view of the current economic shenanigans, it is perhaps surprising that the number of moves we recorded (51) is actually up 9% on the same period last year (47) and even slightly elevated on the statistical average for the same period over the past five years (50).

There has been much discussion in the legal press that survival strategies of COVID-racked law firms include “encouraging” underperforming partners, and even whole practice areas, to move on. Whilst undoubtedly a real phenomenon of the current market, and one which is sure to accelerate as COVID-induced economic shockwaves increasingly find their mark, in our view, the vast majority of hires outlined this round-up are comprised of anything but distressed émigrés. Indeed, this edition contains a disproportionate number of hires by uber profitable outfits not known for being trigger happy in the lateral partner market – of particular note - **Simpson Thacher**, fellow New Yorker **Cahill Gordon & Reindel** (which snared a brace of finance partners from Allen & Overy) and City blue-blood **Macfarlanes**.

In a likely portent of things to come, three firms launched restructuring & insolvency practices and fully 14% of all the hires we recorded were bankruptcy lawyers.

Firms hiring laterals whose practices were primarily restructuring or insolvency related

- ✓ **Addleshaw Goddard**
- ✓ **Boies Schiller Flexner**
- ✓ **Katten**
- ✓ **Pinsent Masons**
- ✓ **Seddons**
- ✓ **Shearman & Sterling**
- ✓ **Willkie Farr & Gallagher**

Just under 40% of all hires we recorded were disputes lawyers - which make up by far the highest proportion of movers in this edition. Given the inverse relationship between economic health and litigation, an elevation in the number of contentious laterals was inevitable – and a sustained spike in demand for contentious partners is certainly in line with our own anecdotal experience. For readers in the litigation-friendly United States - where disputes offerings tend to make up a far greater

proportion of Big Law's revenues - the "high" proportion of disputes laterals we recorded may not seem intrinsically unusual, but it is noteworthy that at no time over the past 10 years has Edwards Gibson recorded an occasion where the number of disputes hires outnumbered those of both corporate and finance combined.

Top partner recruiters in London July – August 2020

✓ DLA Piper	3
✓ Cahill Gordon & Reindel	2
✓ Clyde & Co	2
✓ DAC Beachcroft	2
✓ DWF	2
✓ Paul Hastings	2
✓ Seddons	2
✓ Shearman & Sterling	2
✓ Wiggin	2

Also of note in this edition

- ✓ 24% of all laterals were non-partners moving into partnership;
- ✓ Five firms hired partners from in-house;
- ✓ Only 7% of the laterals who moved were female (by way of comparison, the annual number of female laterals between 2017-2019 was 26%).

Market Prognosis

The lateral recruitment market has so far defied gravity seemingly buoyed by law firms using their natural ability to counter-cyclically hedge their businesses - as indicated by the very high proportion of disputes and restructuring hires recorded in this edition.

Whilst there is evidence that alternatively structured law firms, such as **Keystone**, have sharply increased hiring – likely aided in part by a number of conventional law firms nudging their underperforming partners out, so far at least, the inevitable disruption-induced involuntary movement of transactional partners is yet to be reflected in the hiring patterns of conventional law firms. ... unfortunately, it is only a matter of time.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you would like to discuss this article or any other aspect of the market in more depth.

[Please click here to understand our methodology for compiling Partner Moves](#)

✓ **Addleshaw Goddard**

Restructuring specialist and former Paul Hastings partner, **Karl Clowry**, joins from Pontos Advisory Limited. Clowry's practice focusses on cross-border corporate debt financing, restructuring, insolvency and special situations across a range of sectors including: automotive, real estate, energy, infrastructure, hospitality, sovereign, aviation, offshore and financial services.

✓ **Alston & Bird**

The Atlanta headquartered firm welcomes its fifth partner since opening its doors in London last year, with the hire of banking and financial services litigation specialist **Paul Morris**, from Norton Rose Fulbright. Morris' practice is predominately bank-led.

✓ **Baker McKenzie**

Disputes specialist **Marc Thorley** joins from Simmons & Simmons in Hong Kong where he headed the APAC dispute resolution team. Thorley has experience in litigation and investigations, with a focus on banking and finance clients.

✓ **Berkeley Rowe**

Litigator **Leonard Scudder** joins the West End firm from regional outfit Simmonds Austin Ryder Solicitors. Scudder focusses on civil fraud, enforcement litigation and corporate disputes.

✓ **Blake Morgan**

The corporate team at Blake Morgan adds **Dov Katz** to its ranks from Greenwoods GRM. Katz specialises in corporate finance and has particular expertise in AIM flotations.

✓ **Boies Schiller Flexner**

The US disputes boutique adds restructuring and insolvency disputes specialist **Neil Pigott** to its London outpost. According to his Linked-in profile, Pigott, who was formerly a counsel at the firm, joins from Fovete Libertatem Limited.

✓ **Cadwalader Wickersham & Taft**

Leading structured finance lawyer **Matthew Duncan** joins the New York firm from Morgan Lewis. Duncan's practice focusses on structured finance, securitisations and debt capital markets.

✓ **Cahill Gordon & Reindel**

The conservative New York thoroughbred nabs Allen & Overy finance duo **Jonathan Brownson** and **Jake Keaveny**. Brownson, a bank-led leverage finance specialist, headed the leverage finance team at Allen & Overy, whilst US qualified **Keaveny**, who is returning to his former firm after six years, specialises in US high yield and debt capital markets transactions.

✓ **Clyde & Co**

Two new hires for Clyde & Co this edition; cyber head **Ian Birdsey** joins from Pinsent Masons and intellectual property lawyer **Chris Williams** joins from Blake Morgan. Birdsey focusses on cyber and TMT disputes, specialising in data protection. Williams, a soft IP litigator, specialises in trademark infringement actions and copyright disputes.

✓ **Curtis, Mallet-Prevost, Colt & Mosle**

The GAR ranked New York firm recruits **Milo Molfa** from Cleary Gottlieb, where he was counsel. Molfa's practice focusses on high-profile international commercial and investment treaty arbitration, and transnational litigation matters.

✓ **DAC Beachcroft**

A pair of insurance hires for DAC Beachcroft this roundup; **John Palmer** and **David Weir** join from DWF. Palmer practises in employers' and public liability claims, whilst Weir, who was a director at DWF, advises on clinical negligence with a focus on pharmacists.

✓ **DLA Piper**

A trio of hires for DLA this edition; litigator **Jane Childs** is set to head up the firm's international financial lines insurance disputes group, whilst

Piero Carbone and **Jonathan Earle** expand the corporate and private equity practice. Childs, who joins from Mayer Brown, works in insurance and reinsurance litigation, whilst Carbone, who arrives from McDermott Will & Emery, advises on private equity and cross-border corporate transactions. Earle, who left Gibson Dunn at the start of 2020, focusses on M&A across public takeovers and capital markets.

✦ **DWF**

The listed law firm welcomes two new insurance partners; former global head of insurance **Kiran Soar** joins from Ince, specialising in insurance coverage and subrogation work, whilst **Vicki Swanson**, a healthcare and clinical negligence specialist and former head of the healthcare practice, joins from BLM.

✦ **Enyo Law**

The specialist disputes firm hires **Boris Telyatnikov** from Taylor Wessing, where he was senior counsel. Telyatnikov advises on both litigation and arbitration proceedings, across the financial services, natural resources and TMT sectors.

✦ **Eversheds Sutherland**

Philip James, former head of the data practice at media technology boutique Sheridans, joins the global data privacy and cybersecurity practice at the international firm. James has expertise in cloud computing, digital media, data and cybersecurity.

✦ **Fox Williams**

A former London managing partner at US firm Orrick returns to Fox Williams after almost a decade. Technology lawyer **Kolvin Stone**, who practices at the intersection of data, technology and regulatory matters, re-joins the commercial and technology department at his old firm.

✦ **Gibson Dunn & Crutcher**

An all-American move for finance lawyer **Ben Myers**, who joins from fellow US firm Kirkland & Ellis. Myers advises funds, sponsors and financial institutions on corporate finance, leveraged finance and restructuring issues.

✦ **Greenberg Traurig**

The US firm boosts its finance offering with corporate trust-led structured products lawyer **Helena Nathanson**. Nathanson joins from Dorsey & Whitney, where she was co-head of banking.

✦ **Greenwoods GRM**

Chi Collins is recruited to head up the national firm's property disputes team. Collins arrives from West End real estate firm Collins Benson Goldhill LLP.

✦ **Harrison Clark Rickerbys**

The national firm adds technology specialist **Dan Hyde** to its ranks. Hyde, whose practice focusses on cybersecurity and risk, joins from Pennington Manches.

✦ **Herbert Smith Freehills**

Private equity lawyer **David D'Souza** joins from Kirkland & Ellis, where he had been a partner since 2018. D'Souza advises private equity clients, pension funds and sovereign wealth funds on mergers and acquisitions.

✦ **Hill Dickinson**

Employment lawyer **Fiona McLellan** moves to the health team at Hill Dickinson. McLellan, former head of Hempton's health employment team, advises at board and senior executive level for the NHS, private providers, Royal Colleges, and membership bodies.

✦ **Katten**

The Chicago headquartered firm launches its London bankruptcy practice with leading contentious restructuring & insolvency lawyer

- Prav Reddy**, from Charles Russell Speechlys. Reddy acts for creditors, debtors, banks and distressed companies and has a specialism in office-holder contentious work encompassing fraud, undervalue, preference, misfeasance and section 423 actions.
- ✦ **Kirkland & Ellis**
Private equity funds specialist **Tarsis Goncalves** joins the investment funds team from fellow US firm Paul Hastings, where he was a senior associate. Goncalves has a particular focus on the infrastructure and energy sectors.
 - ✦ **Latham & Watkins**
Corporate infrastructure lawyer **John Guccione** arrives from Omers Infrastructure, where he was legal managing director. Guccione advises on corporate and financing matters, notably transactions involving regulated utilities, energy, and transportation assets.
 - ✦ **Lee & Thompson**
The media, technology and creative industries firm recruits **James Baker** as its new head of employment. Baker, formerly head of employment at Teacher Stern, straddles contentious and non-contentious employment law.
 - ✦ **Macfarlanes**
Debt finance specialist **Malcolm Hitching** joins the blue-blood City firm from Ropes & Gray. Hitching advises on alternative credit, leveraged finance, speciality finance and private equity.
 - ✦ **McGuire Woods**
The US firm welcomes disputes lawyer **Simon Hems** from Ince, where he was head of the energy and infrastructure group. Hems primarily acts for contractors and service companies on engineering and construction disputes within the energy sector.
 - ✦ **Paul Hastings**
The US firm bags a brace of finance practitioners this edition; **Peter Hayes** joins from Shearman & Sterling, where he was head of the EMEA finance practice, and energy & infrastructure finance specialist **Derwin Jenkinson** joins from Ashurst. Hayes counsels on loans, acquisitions and leveraged finance matters, along with associated restructurings. Jenkinson has a focus on loan and capital markets across infrastructure M&A and project finance.
 - ✦ **Pinsent Masons**
Restructuring specialist **Charles Maunder** joins the banking & restructuring practice from Exeter headquartered firm Michelmores, where he was head of banking and restructuring.
 - ✦ **Quinn Emanuel**
The US disputes boutique hires Fried Frank's London head of disputes, **Justin Michaelson**. Michaelson represents individuals and corporates in cross-border disputes involving commercial litigation and international arbitration.
 - ✦ **Rosenblatt**
Former head of Womble Bond Dickinson's London employment practice, **Michelle Chance** joins the listed firm. Chance specialises in employment law, partnership law and contentious partnership issues.
 - ✦ **Seddons Solicitors**
The West End firm hires two partners from US firms this round-up; **Ilan Kotkis** joins from King & Spalding, as the new head of corporate, alongside restructuring and recovery specialist **Ben Klinger**, who joins from Brown Rudnick. Kotkis specialises in cross-border M&A and corporate finance transactions. Klinger's work has an emphasis on the security and insolvency law aspects of arranging commercial, structured and leveraged finance transactions.

✦ **Shearman & Sterling**

Two hires for the New York firm to bolster its restructuring and international arbitration practices; **Alex Wood** and **Garreth Wong** arrive from Weil, Gotshal & Manges and Bird & Bird respectively. Wood advises corporates, sponsors and creditors on cross-border restructurings and insolvencies. Wong, who also sits as an arbitrator, specialises in commercial and investment treaty arbitrations in the energy and construction sectors.

✦ **Simpson Thacher**

The normally conservative white-shoe firm nabs its second lateral this year with the hire of private equity lawyer **James Howe** from fellow US outfit Gibson Dunn & Crutcher. Howe's focus is on leveraged buyouts, mergers and acquisitions and corporate finance transactions.

✦ **Stephenson Harwood**

International arbitration and disputes specialist **Emma Skakle** joins from Clyde & Co, where she was a senior associate. Skakle resolves claims for clients across the shipping, trading and natural resources sectors.

✦ **Stewarts Law**

The sizable litigation boutique welcomes wills and probate disputes specialist **Geoffrey Kertesz** from BDB Pitmans. Kertesz deals with inheritance disputes, contested estates and Inheritance Act claims.

✦ **Watson Farley & Williams**

Maritime and shipping lawyer **Marcus Dodds** joins WFW's disputes practice from Reed Smith. Dodds is a former ship captain and previously headed the LNG and offshore groups at Reed Smith. His expertise includes dry-shipping, offshore and admiralty matters.

✦ **White & Case**

International trade specialist **Iain MacVay** joins the global trade practice from fellow US firm King & Spalding. MacVay advises on the impact of Brexit, bilateral trade agreements, customs, export control, sanctions and WTO matters.

✦ **Wiggin**

The media boutique welcomes two partners from in-house this round-up; former Barclays global intellectual property head **Calum Smyth** joins alongside media litigation lawyer **Julian Darrall**, who was deputy head of editorial legal at Associated Newspapers. Smyth advises on both contentious and non-contentious IP, whilst Darrall advises on libel, privacy, IP and data issues.

✦ **Willkie Farr & Gallagher**

Willkie's business reorganization and restructuring team welcomes **Edward Downer** from fellow US firm Morrison & Foerster, where he was an associate. Downer adds expertise in financial restructuring, distressed debt investment and stressed and distressed financings.

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✔ **The Specialist Partner Team**



Scott Gibson

Director

scott.gibson@edwardsgibson.com



Sloane Poulton

Director

sloane.poulton@edwardsgibson.com



Mark Coates

Senior Consultant

mark.coates@edwardsgibson.com

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