

Lateral
Partner
Moves
in
London



 March - April 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.

Unsurprisingly, in view of the unfolding Global economic *Götterdämmerung* unleashed by Covid-19, the number of partner moves in this edition (54) is down 28% on the same period last year and nearly a quarter lower than the statistical average for the past 5 years (71).

Nevertheless, at a time when many law firms are war-gaming truly dramatic falls in revenue and managing partners are grappling with cash conservation, hire freezes, furloughs and capital calls – not to mention that London, like New York and almost every other legal hub in the world, has been in lockdown – it is perhaps surprising that the market for lateral hires has remained as robust as it has. Indeed, whilst our records show that lateral recruitment for this period is the second slowest this decade, it is actually 8% higher than the same period in 2015.

The seeming resilience of the market - at least for transactional lawyers - is likely due, in large part, to a lag effect reflecting processes which were completed, or in very advanced stages, prior to the impact of Covid-19. It is likely that our next edition (May-June) will better reflect the current market froideur and record more significant year-on-year reductions in lateral recruitment as the combination of economic, and practical, problems caused by the current lockdown begin to feed through.

In the meantime, this edition of partner moves remains jam-packed with interesting hires. Of note, two firms - **DWF** and US headquartered **Orrick** - hired five-partners a-piece, the latter scooping up a four-partner energy sector team from **Watson Farley Williams**. Also, in a rare team hire for **Forsters**, the West End firm welcomed a three-lawyer real estate team into its partnership from **Orrick**.

Top partner recruiters in London March – April 2020

✦ DWF	5
✦ Orrick	5
✦ Forsters	3
✦ Morrison & Foerster	3

Also of note in this edition

- ✦ Five firms: **Ashurst**, **DLA**, **DWF**, **Greenberg Traurig** and **Mayer Brown**, hired laterals whose practices were primarily restructuring or insolvency related;
- ✦ 22% of all laterals were non-partners moving into partnership;
- ✦ A record 44% of the total moves we recorded were female.

Lateral hire market outlook

At the time of writing, many law firms have instigated formal or informal hiring freezes. However, whilst opportunistic hiring of transactional partners is unlikely to be of too much interest to law firm management in the short term, in the medium term, it is likely that an otherwise sharp drop in London lateral recruitment will be mitigated by two main factors:

- **An increase in Covid-induced workflow.** Most employment and property litigation specialists are already reporting skyrocketing utilization rates. More significantly, a cornucopia of matters - from fraud and anti-trust to complex refinancings, as well as a sharp and sustained elevation in English law governed disputes - are likely to arise from a combination of hastily drafted legislation allied to the foreseen and unforeseen impacts of Covid-19 on virtually every major economic actor in the Western world. More obviously, restructuring/insolvency partners - who were already finding themselves *de rigueur* prior to Covid-19 - are likely to become increasingly sought after as the lock-down induced economic shock waves increasingly find their mark. If law firms are unable to re-tool their existing resources in time to take advantage of the above, they will need to hire laterally;

- **Disruption induced voluntary and involuntary movement of partners/teams.** Whilst most law firm partners – even those who are likely to be very busy – will probably see their compensation fall over the next 12-24 months, in many instances busy, profitable, teams will not want to be tied to an underperforming law firm – particularly one which requires a significant increase in capital contributions. Equally, many law firms will themselves shed underperforming partners (and practices) who will resurface at new homes. Finally, and most dramatically, if the current global GDP projections prove accurate, it is probable that a number of mid-tier law firms may collapse and/or, in the case of some US headquartered law firms, close loss-making London operations over the next 12-24 months. This will inevitably enable other firms to opportunistically cherry-pick from the resulting flotsam and jetsam at a discount.

In absolute terms, full-service law firms are set to have a very challenging time. For most, revenue and profits will fall and certain practice areas will wither entirely - with potentially devastating consequences for thousands of individual lawyers and legal service personnel. Nevertheless, in relative terms, providing their clients remain solvent and are willing to pay, law firms are likely to whether the storm far better than most. As they say – “what doesn’t kill you ...”

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**

Two hires for Addleshaws this round-up. Dual English/French qualified data privacy and cyber security specialist **Dr Nathalie Moreno** arrives from Lewis Silkin. Moreno's client base encompasses household international names in TMT, retail, hospitality, financial services, life sciences and healthcare. In addition, structured finance lawyer **Rachel Kelly** arrives from US firm McDermott Will & Emery. Kelly's expertise includes securitisations, CLO's and debt capital markets.

✓ **Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld**

The US firm hires finance lawyer **Amy Kennedy** from Gibson Dunn & Crutcher. Kennedy advises private equity sponsors in leveraged buyouts, as well as a range of banks and other financial institutions, corporates and client portfolio companies.

✓ **Alston & Bird**

In its first lateral hire since the launch of its three partner London office in [September last year](#), the Atlanta based firm has hired finance lawyer **James Fisher** from Reed Smith. Fisher specialises in structured products, securitisation and derivatives.

✓ **Ashurst**

In a rare departure of a serving partner from Slaughter & May, Ashurst has secured **Richard de Carle** who it is understood was due to retire from his old firm this year. Although primarily badged as a corporate restructuring and insolvency specialist, de Carle also has extensive corporate experience. Also joining Ashurst is corporate lawyer **Jonathan Cohen** from Clyde & Co, where he was a legal director. Cohen advises on private M&A, fundraisings, private equity restructuring, and general corporate and commercial matters.

✓ **BLM**

Employment lawyer **Julian Cox** joins from iLaw where he was the head of employment. Cox

advises on all aspects of employment law and will lead BLM's employment practice.

✓ **Boodle Hatfield**

Construction lawyer **Navpreet Atwal** joins from Blake Morgan where she was a legal director. Atwal specialises in non-contentious constructional law across a broad range of construction and engineering projects. Also joining the firm is employment lawyer **Simon Gorham**, who was formerly counsel at Weil, Gotshal & Manges.

✓ **Charles Russell Speechlys**

Corporate lawyer **Helen Wong** joins from Clarke Wilmott. Wong, who has a niche in buying and selling dental practices, also has experience in cross-border in-bound investment transactions from Hong Kong and China into the UK.

✓ **CMS**

Equity capital markets lawyer **Charles Howarth** joins from Herbert Smith Freehills where he was head of the capital markets practice. Howarth advises underwriters and issuers on IPOs and other public offerings.

✓ **Cooley**

The California-based firm hires corporate lawyer **Ben Shribman** from Jones Day. Shribman advises on a range of corporate matters, with a focus on private equity transactions.

✓ **Covington & Burling**

Competition lawyer **James Marshall** joins the Washington DC headquartered firm from Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner. Marshall advises on merger control, investigations, commercial deals, abuse of dominance and compliance.

✓ **DLA Piper**

David Manson joins the restructuring group from Paul Hastings. Manson has experience in special situations financings and restructurings in the energy, maritime and offshore sectors.

✦ **Duane Morris**

The US firm has hired construction litigation lawyer **Vijay Bange** from Trowers & Hamlin's Birmingham office.

✦ **DWF**

A quintet of hires for DWF in this edition. Privacy lawyer **James Drury-Smith** joins from PwC where he was a director and UK head of non-contentious data protection. Drury-Smith joins as UK head of privacy and cyber security. Also joining the firm is finance lawyer **Ted Harrison** from CMS, who advises on domestic and cross-border debt finance transactions across several sectors. Restructuring lawyer **Natasha Atkinson** joins from Weightmans and advises on insolvency-related litigation and transactional matters. Financial services specialist **James Gee** joins from Ernst & Young where he was an executive director. Gee will work alongside the firm's corporate, banking and real estate practices to assist fund managers in transactional and regulatory mandates. Finally, restructuring lawyer **Stewart Anderson** joins from Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner where he was an associate director advising financial institutions dealing with restructuring issues and disposals.

✦ **EIP**

Dual qualified solicitor and patent attorney, **Monika Rai**, joins the IP boutique from fellow IP boutique Mathys & Squire. Rai, a life sciences specialist, represents innovators in the field of cancer immunotherapy and microbiome therapeutics.

✦ **Eversheds Sutherland**

Contentious financial services regulatory lawyer **Kari McCormick** joins from Burges Salmon's Bristol office where she was head of the financial services group. McCormick is tasked with expanding the accountancy investigations unit at her new firm.

✦ **Forsters**

A three-partner real estate team joins the West End firm from Orrick led by the US firm's former London partner-in-charge, and head of real estate, **Anne O'Neill**. O'Neill joins alongside **Andrew Denye** and **Sarah Branch**, who was of counsel at Orrick. The team primarily focuses on domestic real estate with niches in shopping centres, social housing, hotels and healthcare development.

✦ **Goodwin Procter**

Financial disputes lawyer **Oliver Glynn-Jones** joins the US firm from Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner. Glynn-Jones' practice has a particular focus on investment banking and structured finance litigation.

✦ **Greenberg Traurig**

The US firm hires restructuring lawyer **Ian Jack** from Baker McKenzie. Jack, formerly co-head of Baker's global insolvency and restructuring practice, advises on a broad range of transactions.

✦ **Harbottle & Lewis**

The West End firm hires private client lawyer **Marianne Kafena** from Farrer & Co. Kafena advises family offices and high-net-worth individuals.

✦ **Irwin Mitchell**

Private client lawyer **Nicola Bushby** joins the national firm from Wilsons Solicitors. Bushby acts for high-net-worth individuals on private wealth disputes.

✦ **Marriott Harrison**

Andrew Ross joins the West End firm from US firm Arnold & Porter where he was a senior associate. Ross focuses on private equity-backed transactions, M&A, joint ventures and restructurings.

- ✦ **Mayer Brown**
 Finance and restructuring specialist **Trevor Borthwick** joins from Allen & Overy where he was head of global corporate lending. Borthwick has experience advising banks and borrowers on large scale structured financings and restructurings, including syndicated lending and real estate finance.
- ✦ **McDermott Will & Emery**
 Structured finance lawyer **Ranajoy Basu** joins from Reed Smith where he was co-chair of the firm's India group. Basu advises on structured finance, securitisations, derivatives, debt capital markets and debt restructurings.
- ✦ **McGuireWoods**
 The Virginia-based firm hires white collar crime lawyer **Francesca Titus** from Fieldfisher. Titus has experience in corporate crime, investigations and extradition matters.
- ✦ **Mishcon de Reya**
 Two hires for Mishcon this round-up. Commercial international arbitration specialist **Louis Flannery QC** joins from Stephenson Harwood, where he was the head of international arbitration, and **Madalina Dumitrescu** joins the private client team from US antitrust boutique Constantine Cannon. Dumitrescu represents high net worth individuals and family offices in contentious and non-contentious matters.
- ✦ **Morrison & Foerster**
 A quartet of hires for the West Coast US firm this edition. White collar crime duo **Gareth Rees QC** and **Hayley Ichilcik** join from King & Spalding - where Ichilcik was counsel. Tax lawyer **Sophie Allen** joins from Ernst & Young. US qualified finance and high yield lawyer, **Matthew Dunlap**, joins from Latham & Watkins where he was an associate. Rees and Ichilcik specialise in corporate and financial regulatory defence and investigations. Allen, formerly a partner at Kirkland & Ellis, advises on private equity tax.
- Dunlap advises on high yield debt offerings, acquisition financings and liability management.
- ✦ **Orrick**
 The US firm makes five hires this round-up. A four-partner energy sector team joins from Watson Farley Williams headed by WFW's former head of global energy & infrastructure **Evan Stergoulis**. Joining alongside Stergoulis, who will co-head the global renewables practice at Orrick, are energy and infrastructure lawyers **Simon Aley** and **Ravinder Sandhu**, together with real estate specialist **Simon Folley**. Financial services regulatory lawyer **Marco Boldini** also arrives from PwC, where he was director and head of the legal services financial regulatory practice. Boldini will divide his time between London and Milan.
- ✦ **Payne Hicks Beach**
 The West End firm has hired private client lawyer **Jessica Henson** from Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner where she was a senior associate. Henson specialises in contentious trusts and estates work.
- ✦ **Pinsent Masons**
 Competition/antitrust lawyer Dr **Totis Kotsonis** joins from Eversheds Sutherland, where he was the head of state aid and public procurement. Also joining the firm is privacy lawyer **Jonathan Kirsop** from Stephenson Harwood. Kirsop has experience acting for financial services institutions.
- ✦ **Proskauer Rose**
 The New York firm has launched its City litigation practice with the hire of **Dorothy Murray** from Hong Kong headquarteredverein, King & Wood Mallesons. Murray has experience advising clients in international investment and commercial disputes.
- ✦ **Seladore Legal**
Simon Bushell, from Signature Litigation, joins new disputes boutique, Seladore Legal, as a

founding partner alongside **Gareth Keillor**, who was of counsel at Herbert Smith. Bushell, the former London chair of litigation at Latham & Watkins, specialises in commercial litigation and arbitration, including civil fraud and asset tracing.

✦ **Stewarts Law**

Media lawyer **Emily Cox** joins litigation boutique Stewarts Law from Which? where she was the head of media law and strategic litigation. Cox specialises in collective redress, consumer rights and public law.

✦ **Taylor Wessing**

Helen Farr joins the employment practice from Fox Williams. Farr focuses on workplace discrimination, equal pay, team moves and boardroom disputes.

✦ **TLT**

Litigation lawyer **Craig Thompson** joins the Bristol headquartered firm from Wallace. Thompson's practice focusses on technology disputes, professional negligence claims, civil fraud and competition litigation.

✦ **Wedlake Bell**

Private client specialist **Antoaneta Proctor** joins from Taylor Wessing. Proctor advises on international tax and evaluation of tax risk, cross-border succession, structuring for wealth preservation and family governance.

✦ **White & Case**

Corporate lawyer **Sandra Rafferty** joins from CMS where she was the co-head of infrastructure/projects. Rafferty advises private companies and public entities, funds and investors on mergers and acquisitions, as well as integrations and restructurings in the energy and infrastructure sectors.

✦ **Winston & Strawn**

Finance lawyer **Monica Barton** joins the Chicago headquartered firm from Reed Smith. Barton specialises in acquisition and leveraged finance as well as financial restructuring.

Related links:

- ✔ [Edwards Gibson Partner Round-Up - Our Methodology](#)
- ✔ [Previous editions of Lateral Partner Moves in London](#)
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- ✔ [Specimen partner business plan template](#)
- ✔ [The Partnership Track and Moving for Immediate Partnership](#)
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✔ **The Specialist Partner Team**



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