
CHAMBERS GLOBAL 2024

The Leading Lawyers and Law Firms Globally

United Arab Emirates



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UNITED ARAB EMIRATES: An Introduction

Contributed by Horizons & Co Law Firm

General Overview

The United Arab Emirates (UAE), a rapidly evolving nation on the Arabian Peninsula, has transformed remarkably since its establishment in 1971. This transformation reflects a harmonious fusion of tradition and modernity, solidifying the UAE's status as a significant global player where English is the primary language for business and commerce.

Comprising seven distinct emirates, with Abu Dhabi as the influential capital, the UAE showcases a rich tapestry of cultural diversity and uniqueness within each emirate. Economically, it has thrived by wisely investing its oil wealth, particularly in Dubai and Abu Dhabi, renowned for their skyscrapers, free zones and international connectivity.

The UAE has also emerged as a global leader in innovation and technology, excelling in fields such as renewable energy and space exploration, positioning the nation at the forefront of cutting-edge advancements. It is not only a hub for tourism but also a thriving centre for technology and business. World-class attractions and luxury experiences cater both to visitors seeking leisure and to entrepreneurs and professionals looking for growth opportunities. The emirates offer a rich cultural heritage preserved in museums and historic sites, alongside high-end shopping and dining, including Michelin-starred restaurants. The country's business-friendly environment and technological advancements make it an attractive destination for those seeking to invest and innovate.

The UAE has made substantial progress in promoting inclusivity and gender equality, and in embracing expatriates, fostering a cosmopolitan society where various nationalities and faiths coexist harmoniously. Politically, the UAE follows a federal system of governance, with dedicated leadership focused on ensuring the nation's prosperity and stability.

In recent months, the UAE has undertaken strategic initiatives to diversify its economy, enhance social welfare and bolster infrastructure. Notably, it achieved historic milestones in space exploration with the "Hope Probe" mission to Mars, and normalised diplomatic relations with Israel through the Abraham Accords. The UAE's official membership in the BRICS group underscores

its commitment to long-term economic prosperity and balanced global relations. The country has also introduced significant legislative reforms to enhance its appeal for foreign investment and expatriate living, aligning with global best practices and harnessing the impact of technology.

Economic Overview

As of today, the UAE maintains its position as the second-largest economy in the Middle East and North Africa. While successfully diversifying its economic landscape towards trade, logistics, banking, tourism, real estate and manufacturing, these efforts have significantly reduced its reliance on oil-based GDP.

The UAE actively presents itself as the "United Global Emirates", persistently seeking to attract foreign investment and talent. It continues to assert its role as one of the world's most dynamic, competitive and innovative business hubs, offering world-class capabilities, services, infrastructure, legal frameworks and resources to international investors, entrepreneurs and professionals. The country remains dedicated to becoming a preferred launch platform for entrepreneurs, start-ups and investors of various sizes and stages.

In the context of the ongoing global geopolitical situation, the UAE has maintained its focus on economic growth and diversification. The nation has navigated through challenges presented by global events, such as the situation in Ukraine, by strengthening its economic fundamentals and continuing to attract investments.

Regarding the situation in Gaza, the UAE has actively engaged in humanitarian efforts and aid initiatives to alleviate suffering and promote stability in the region. While the region's geopolitical dynamics remain complex, the UAE has consistently pursued a foreign policy that emphasises diplomacy, co-operation and humanitarian assistance.

The UAE has also expanded its international trade relationships by entering into new trade agreements with countries such as the United Kingdom, India and South Korea, fostering economic partnerships that enhance the country's trade capabilities and further diversify its economy.

Despite global economic challenges, the UAE's economy remains resilient and is expected to exhibit robust growth in key sectors, especially those core to Dubai. The hosting of the World Expo from October 2021 to March 2022 marked a significant milestone, with Dubai witnessing record hotel occupancy and a surge in real estate prices. In 2023, the expectation is for Dubai's economy to expand by over 6.5% within its core sectors, demonstrating its ongoing economic vitality.

Over the past 24 months, the UAE's economy has regained substantial positive momentum, driven by investor-friendly laws and regulations, strong oil prices, and the full easing of COVID-19 restrictions. This resilience in the face of global challenges underscores the UAE's commitment to sustainable economic growth and stability.

Doing Business and Investing in the UAE

As of today, the UAE remains a highly attractive destination for business and foreign direct investment (FDI). It currently ranks 16th out of 183 countries for the overall "ease of doing business" benchmark. Recent legislative developments have further enhanced the business environment in the UAE.

One significant change is that foreign nationals can now fully own and operate companies onshore. In addition to this, the UAE's famous "offshore" free trade zones still allow 100% foreign ownership. The country maintains a very minimal 5% VAT tax and imposes no income tax whatsoever. Its world-class infrastructure and highly favourable geographical location continue to make it a top choice for FDI and foreign investments.

However, it's important to note that the UAE has introduced new corporate tax rules. Under Federal Decree-Law No 47 of 2022 on the taxation of onshore corporations and businesses (the "Corporate Tax Law"), businesses will become subject to UAE corporate tax beginning with the first financial year that starts on or after 1 June 2023. It is important to be aware that free-zone companies are currently exempt from this taxation.

The UAE's attractiveness for FDI is further emphasised by the presence of many of the world's largest and most prominent companies. This has led to the country attracting a highly skilled workforce, which is employed by the rising number of international companies and financial institutions operating within its borders.

The legal framework in the UAE continues to support free trade zones, which are governed by independent regulatory authorities. Each free zone has its own industry-focused rules and regulations, tailored to specific sectors and designed to be pro-business.

The regulations for establishing and operating a business within these free zones are extremely straightforward. Businesses can be set up quickly, and the process is cost-effective compared to many other jurisdictions. The registration requirements are simple and similar across various free zones. The specific capital requirements may vary among the different free trade zones, so it is essential for businesses to research and choose the one that best suits their needs.

In summary, the UAE's business environment remains highly favourable both for local and for foreign investors, with recent changes such as the introduction of corporate tax rules signalling the country's commitment to maintaining its position as a hub for international business and investment.

Future Challenges and Opportunities

The UAE remains a global leader in business and innovation, known for its dynamic economy and modern outlook. Recent legislative reforms in commercial companies' law, onshore labour law and FDI regulations have further strengthened the country's business environment.

The COVID-19 pandemic posed significant challenges, impacting on the UAE's economy. However, as mentioned earlier, the nation is on a trajectory of recovery, with GDP growth expected to exceed 7% in 2023. Nonetheless, the domestic market faces persistent challenges, including subdued demand from businesses and local consumers, as well as a real estate market that has been negatively affected.

To better facilitate international stakeholders' access to the onshore legal system, the UAE government has taken significant steps. In specific cases, legal proceedings can now be conducted in the English language, a move that represents a significant step towards internationalising the traditionally Arabic-based onshore court structure. This development has been well-received by many international litigants.

International & Cross-Border Capabilities

International & Cross-Border Capabilities
Leading Firms
Allen & Overy LLP
Al Tamimi & Company
Baker McKenzie LLP
Clifford Chance LLP
Clyde & Co LLP
Dentons
DLA Piper Middle East LLP
Eversheds Sutherland (International) LLP
Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer
Hadef & Partners
Herbert Smith Freehills
King & Spalding LLP
Latham & Watkins LLP
Linklaters
Norton Rose Fulbright
Shearman & Sterling LLP
White & Case LLP
<i>Alphabetical order within each band. Band 1 is highest.</i>

Band 1

Allen & Overy LLP

What the team is known for Allen & Overy's UAE team, with offices in Abu Dhabi and Dubai, is recognised as one of the foremost practices in the jurisdiction. From its UAE base, the law firm offers cross-border support to a broad range of clients including global financial institutions, sovereign wealth funds and private equity funds. The UAE team is able to draw on the outstanding resources of the firm's in-house global network, and also maintains close ties to leading firms within the Middle East to handle multi-jurisdictional matters within the region.

From the UAE, the law firm excels in cross-border M&A transactions for a base of leading international and local clients. Its banking capabilities are among the strongest in the market, and its capital markets specialists are well equipped to handle complex multi-jurisdictional mandates. Clients seeking cross-border advice in relation to the real estate, TMT and construction spheres are expertly served by the group, which also offers considerable strength in disputes that are international in scope.

Strengths

"Allen & Overy have certainly one of the largest, if not most experienced, teams in the region."

"They are a diverse team which can draw on additional support from the firm's wide network of offices."

Al Tamimi & Company

What the team is known for Al Tamimi is widely regarded as a leading presence in the UAE. The law firm offers unparalleled coverage of the Middle East and Gulf states, adeptly handling significant multi-jurisdictional mandates spanning the region. The firm's full-service team in the UAE is made up of offices in Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Ras Al Khaimah and Sharjah, forming a crucial component of its international platform. The firm services the needs of a diverse client base, which

incorporates homegrown clients with overseas interests, international clients with operations in the region and also international law firms without a presence in the Middle East.

From the UAE, Al Tamimi is able to provide cross-border support to clients on a comprehensive range of issues. The law firm's corporate and commercial team is among the strongest in the jurisdiction, and offers extensive knowledge of international banking and finance matters. The team is also attuned to the needs of clients from the construction, TMT and energy sectors. With a leading practice in the DIFC courts, the group remains a highly popular choice for international clients facing contentious proceedings, while also bringing impressive capabilities in international arbitration.

Strengths

"The firm is comprised of people from different backgrounds and nationalities, which enables them to handle cases from different countries."

"The Al Tamimi team is comprised of a diverse team of English and Arabic qualified and bilingual members, leading to seamless communication with us which has been efficient and effective."

Baker McKenzie LLP

What the team is known for Baker McKenzie's UAE team is able to call on the unparalleled coverage of the law firm's wider network to support their clients' cross-border needs while offering robust support on regional and local matters. Combining its regional and global strength, the firm is well placed to advise on a broad range of inbound and outbound matters involving the UAE and Gulf region.

The UAE team performs highly in an array of international mandates, both contentious and non-contentious. The M&A team is well equipped to coordinate cross-border deals and also advise on the regional elements of global projects. Clients from sectors such as real estate, energy, financial services and manufacturing are all well served by the team. The group also offers extensive support on contentious mandates, helping clients navigate the UAE and DIFC courts, as well as bringing expertise to international arbitration proceedings.

Strengths

"Through Baker's well-established Dubai office, we had access to seamless international expertise across all relevant jurisdictions within Europe and the Americas."

"The firm has a good number of team members and an ability to tap into a global team."

Clifford Chance LLP

What the team is known for Clifford Chance's UAE team is consistently recognised as one of the strongest full-service offerings in the market. With bases in Abu Dhabi and Dubai, the UAE team works closely with colleagues situated in Saudi Arabia and Qatar and makes up a crucial element of the law firm's presence in the region. Clients will benefit from the excellent resources of Clifford Chance's broader integrated network, and

will be able to call on UAE specialists to coordinate cross-border activity throughout the Middle East and Gulf region.

The UAE team enjoys a leading reputation in key areas. It adeptly represents sovereign wealth funds and blue-chip corporations in a spectrum of transactional matters that have international elements. The team boasts leading cross-border M&A expertise, a pre-eminent banking group and market-leading capital markets capabilities. Alongside its transactional strength, the team provides clients with excellent dispute resolution support, counselling leading financial institutions and construction and energy clients on complex cross-border litigation and arbitration.

Clyde & Co LLP

What the team is known for Made up of offices in Abu Dhabi and Dubai, Clyde & Co's full-service UAE offering forms a key part of the law firm's impressive regional presence and wider international platform. As a longstanding and leading presence in the jurisdiction, the UAE group collaborates closely with strategically-situated teams in Qatar and Saudi Arabia to seamlessly advise clients on an array of cross-border matters, leveraging the expertise of the firm's wider global network.

The team capably handles cross-border M&A deals, supporting both homegrown clients expanding their operations regionally as well as organisations looking to increase their presence in the GCC and wider Levant. The law firm maintains its leading reputation for both contentious and non-contentious insurance work that is multi-jurisdictional, and offers clients excellent IP expertise. The team's disputes specialists also sit at the top of the market, advising on major pieces of litigation and arbitration that have international components, particularly those arising out of the construction, real estate and insurance spheres.

Strengths

"Clyde & Co has a strong team of experts who always work from various angles to provide the best solution to a matter. Further, their global network is another addition to their expertise."

Dentons

What the team is known for Dentons has firmly rooted itself as a prominent player within the UAE and Middle East. A team made up of practitioners in both Dubai and Abu Dhabi forms a focal point for the law firm's activity in the region, which also includes teams strategically placed in Saudi Arabia, Oman, Qatar, Jordan, Lebanon and Egypt. Overseas and local clients are able to call on the full-service capabilities of the UAE team, leveraging the firm's expansive network to handle an array of cross-border projects.

From the UAE, Dentons is well equipped to provide cross-border support to clients on a full suite of issues. M&A specialists routinely advise on both inbound and outbound deals relating to a broad scope of industry sectors. The firm has an accomplished banking group, which acts for both local and international banks on multi-ju-

risdictional mandates. The team's disputes caseload is also international in scope, and frequently includes cross-border litigation and arbitration proceedings.

Strengths

"They were professional and clear in their opinion as well as answering any questions we had in a timely manner while collaborating with external-jurisdiction sources for extra information when needed."
"They have very good connectivity with their network."

DLA Piper Middle East LLP

What the team is known for DLA Piper's UAE team stands out for its international approach and outlook. Comprising offices in Dubai and Abu Dhabi, the team is sought out by both homegrown and international clients to advise on transnational and regional matters. Entities with operations throughout the Middle East and Gulf region will benefit from the UAE group's close links to teams situated in Bahrain, Oman and Qatar as well as the law firm's wider global platform.

Clients seeking cross-border advice involving the UAE will benefit from several strong practice groups which perform highly on the international stage. The team's corporate investigations specialists are viewed as among the strongest in the jurisdiction, while the firm's sector focus is demonstrated in the expert advice it provides to TMT, real estate and construction clients. The group's corporate and commercial practice is also highly attuned to the international needs of a diverse clientele.

Eversheds Sutherland (International) LLP

What the team is known for Eversheds Sutherland is a highly regarded presence in the UAE and Middle East. The UAE team plays a leading role in the law firm's activity in the region, combining effectively with colleagues in Qatar, as well as associate practices in Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Iraq. Large corporations as well as SMEs benefit from the firm's full-service offering in the UAE, as well as the resources of its broader international footprint.

The law firm has cultivated a strong reputation for combining international and local expertise. It performs highly on corporate and commercial projects that are cross-border, and is routinely sought out by TMT clients for support on multi-jurisdictional matters. The team's disputes practitioners also provide strong support in international proceedings, particularly those involving the construction and energy sectors.

Strengths

"The team at Eversheds have excellent knowledge of the different court processes, especially relating to jurisdictional issues and the appeals process."

Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer

What the team is known for Freshfields' Dubai and Abu Dhabi offices are key to the firm's presence in the Middle East. The team is well equipped to advise on a wealth of complex, cross-border mandates involving the UAE and wider region. The law firm's client base in the UAE and Gulf region comprises multinational corporations, regional

champions and major financial institutions, which are expertly served on both inbound and outbound cross-border matters.

The team's international banking and M&A practices rank among the strongest in the region. Specialists demonstrate an excellent track record of acting for major banks, corporations and private equity houses on a full scope of international matters. The team's disputes practice is equally impressive, with leading specialists offering comprehensive cross-border support on litigation, arbitration and investigations.

Strengths

"The cross-border aspects of our matter were handled with precision and expertise. The firm demonstrated a deep understanding of international laws and regulations and efficiently coordinated with foreign associates when necessary. We felt they had a global outlook, making the cross-border process smooth and efficient."

"The firm brought knowledge of all of the jurisdictions covered."

Hadef & Partners

What the team is known for A homegrown law firm with a strong reputation for its international approach, Hadef & Partners capably advises on a broad range of multi-jurisdictional matters. The law firm is held in high regard for its ability to act on the UAE and regional elements of broader international projects. The team maintains strong links to leading independent firms throughout the Middle East and Gulf region, collaborating seamlessly with foreign practices to service the regional demands of its international client base. The firm's Abu Dhabi and Dubai groups are well equipped to advise on a range of complex areas for overseas and local clients. The team has an excellent track record of acting as co-counsel on international disputes, while its transactional lawyers are accustomed to working on international projects. Specialists skilfully advise on M&A deals that are cross-border, as well as project finance deals and matters relating to the TMT, real estate and construction sectors.

Herbert Smith Freehills

What the team is known for Herbert Smith Freehills' Dubai office acts a springboard for the firm's cross-border activity in the Middle East. Working closely with the firm's Riyadh office, the team is sought out by both local and international clients for guidance on a range of cross-border issues. UAE specialists bring strong expertise to matters relating to the Middle East and Gulf region, and are able to leverage the resources of the firm's broader global network.

From Dubai, Herbert Smith Freehills is well equipped to advise on an array of cross-border M&A and investment funds matters. Clients looking to expand into the region as well as those expanding into other territories are well served by transactional specialists. Additionally, the team performs highly in a range of multi-jurisdictional disputes, notably litigation and arbitration proceedings arising out of the financial services, construction and energy sectors.

Strengths

"I was really impressed by how they managed the

matter collaboratively by utilising resources from multiple global locations."

King & Spalding LLP

What the team is known for King & Spalding's Abu Dhabi and Dubai offices collaborate closely with the law firm's Riyadh team to form a strong and integrated offering in the Middle East. The team skilfully advises Middle Eastern clients who are looking to expand their operations internationally, as well as multinationals with interests within the Gulf region. The UAE group forms a key part of the firm's broader international platform and is capable of providing comprehensive cross-border support on a range of issues.

From the UAE, the team has developed a particularly strong reputation for handling cross-border mandates relating to the construction, real estate and energy spheres. The firm's banking practice is also highly international, offering high-profile clients support on a range of cross-border issues, including project and Islamic finance issues.

Latham & Watkins LLP

What the team is known for Latham & Watkins' Dubai office acts as a key centre of gravity for the law firm's work throughout the Middle East and Africa. The UAE team is accustomed to coordinating on complex cross-border projects for a diverse range of clients, including major players originating in the Middle East, as well as multinationals with interests in the region.

The UAE team performs highly across a range of transactional areas of law. Its M&A specialists are highly attuned to the international requirements of clients, acting for both public and private entities across a range of industry sectors. The team is frequently sought out by some of the Middle East's major financial institutions for support on cross-border deals spanning financing, capital markets and restructuring mandates.

Linklaters

What the team is known for Linklaters' UAE team, which comprises offices in Abu Dhabi and Dubai, functions as an important focal point for the law firm's work throughout the GCC, the wider Middle East and Africa. The UAE team frequently collaborates with the law firm's wider network to handle sophisticated cross-border mandates for both leading regional powerhouses and foreign entities with interests in the region.

The UAE group offers clients outstanding transactional capabilities. Its M&A practice ranks among the strongest in the jurisdiction, while the team's banking and capital markets specialists are also regarded as leaders in complex international projects. Prominent financial institutions, multinational corporates and sovereign entities all routinely engage the team for its international prowess.

Norton Rose Fulbright

What the team is known for Norton Rose Fulbright is praised for its broad knowledge of multiple jurisdictions and active involvement in complex cross-border work. The firm has a longstanding office in Dubai alongside impressive global reach in Europe, the Americas, Asia and Africa. The

firm's client base is composed of high-profile international and Middle-Eastern entities.

From the UAE, Norton Rose offers expertise in a wide range of fields including corporate investigations, dispute resolution, and banking and finance. The contentious team is well equipped to handle high-profile cases, with practitioners experienced in cross-border matters. On the transactional side, the firm has strong experience in financing matters, as well as insurance-related mandates.

Strengths

"We can always rely on their advice and responsiveness, regardless of jurisdictions. They strike the right balance between commerciality and technical knowledge."

"We have used Norton Rose teams based in multiple jurisdictions, with the UAE team acting as the main conduit. We are impressed by their seamless cross-border execution and consistent service levels."

Shearman & Sterling LLP

What the team is known for Shearman & Sterling's UAE offering acts as the epicentre of the law firm's activity within the Middle East. Forming part of the law firm's integrated global network, the UAE team acts on a broad spectrum of complex and high-value cross-border mandates. Specialists are well equipped to counsel foreign investors moving into the region, as well as prominent Middle Eastern entities seeking multi-jurisdictional support.

The team's M&A practitioners are well versed in a range of transnational deals, particularly those involving the oil and gas industry. Its banking and finance practice is also international in scope, with specialists routinely engaged by prominent financial institutions and sovereign wealth funds on a range of cross-border projects. Additionally, construction projects that have international elements are well handled by the group.

White & Case LLP

What the team is known for White & Case's UAE platform, made up of Dubai and Abu Dhabi offices, plays a key role in the law firm's strategy throughout the Middle East. The team forms part of the firm's integrated and comprehensive global network, which gives it excellent resources on an international level. Clients with interests in the region, as well as local entities seeking advice overseas, are expertly served by specialists.

Clients seeking cross-border support across a range of transactional areas are also expertly advised by the UAE team. M&A specialists adeptly advise on cross-border deals spanning a range of industry sectors, including energy, healthcare and technology. The team also brings considerable expertise to cross-border financing and capital markets matters.

Strengths

"We had great access to the global team and network at White & Case, which helps in cross-border transactions."

Banking & Finance

Banking & Finance
Leading Firms
Band 1
Allen & Overy LLP
Clifford Chance LLP
Linklaters
Band 2
Addleshaw Goddard LLP
Al Tamimi & Company
Dentons
Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer
Norton Rose Fulbright
Band 3
DLA Piper Middle East LLP
Latham & Watkins LLP
White & Case LLP
Band 4
Afridi & Angell
Ashurst
Baker McKenzie LLP
Eversheds Sutherland (International) LLP
Hadef & Partners
Pinsent Masons LLP
Watson Farley & Williams LLP
* Indicates individual with profile.
◇ (ORL) = Other Ranked Lawyer.
Alphabetical order within each band. Band 1 is highest.

Band 1

Allen & Overy LLP

What the team is known for Allen & Overy has long been one of the foremost law firms in the Middle East, with deep experience in various aspects of commercial lending. In 2024 the firm

Banking & Finance
Senior Statespeople & Eminent Practitioners
Senior Statespeople: distinguished older partners
Khan Amjad Ali Afridi & Angell
Eminent Practitioners
Hourani Husam Al Tamimi & Company
Jarvis Paul Dentons
Leading Individuals
Band 1
Meyer Hanif Haris Allen & Overy LLP*
Zaman Kieron Linklaters
Band 2
Brewer Graham Clifford Chance LLP
Hickman Robin Addleshaw Goddard LLP
Knight Stephen Dentons
Matheson Kirton Claire White & Case LLP
Waugh Jody Al Tamimi & Company
Band 3
Charlier David Ashurst
Escritt Matthew Pinsent Masons LLP
McViety Paul DLA Piper Middle East LLP*
Puri Sandeep Addleshaw Goddard LLP
Reader Nicola Clifford Chance LLP
Robinson Nicholas Norton Rose Fulbright
Band 4
Ahmed Shibeer Greenberg Traurig Limited (ORL) ◇
Al Sayegh Reem Linklaters
Brown Mark Al Tamimi & Company
Dempsey Clint Eversheds Sutherland (International) LLP
Khan Mamoon Al Tamimi & Company
Rodgers Alan N Hadef & Partners*
Traboulsi Anthony Allen & Overy LLP*
Up-and-coming individuals
Chalmers Philip Addleshaw Goddard LLP
Dar Rahat Afridi & Angell

Banking & Finance: Islamic Finance
Leading Individuals
Ahmad Bilal Allen & Overy LLP*
Ahmed Shibeer Greenberg Traurig Limited (ORL) ◇
Ali Rahail Hogan Lovells (Middle East) LLP (ORL) ◇
Aslam Qasim Dentons
Hussain Adil Baker McKenzie LLP
Kanji Rizwan H Akin (ORL) ◇
Khaleq Ayman A Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP (ORL) ◇
Latif Qudeer Clifford Chance LLP
McViety Paul DLA Piper Middle East LLP*
Mesquita Wlazlo Victoria Addleshaw Goddard LLP
Mohammed Anzal Allen & Overy LLP*
Paracha Mohammed Norton Rose Fulbright

Foreign Desks

Banking & Finance

Based in United Arab Emirates with expertise in countries listed below
Oman Allen & Overy LLP

Foreign Experts

Banking & Finance

Based in United Arab Emirates with expertise in countries listed below
France **Hamilton** Marc Norton Rose Fulbright

Qatar **Hickman** Robin Addleshaw Goddard LLP

Saudi Arabia **Cousin** Antoine White & Case LLP

is set to expand significantly through its merger with US law firm Shearman & Sterling, adding an even greater international dimension to its UAE finance practice. The team has an excellent reputation for project finance, with expertise in power, renewable energy and infrastructure. Its lawyers

also represent blue-chip clients, both domestic and international, in major restructuring and financing matters. Other areas of expertise include asset and Islamic finance. The firm is noted for its ability to assist with transactions originating across the region, with particular expertise relating to Saudi Arabia and Oman.

Strengths

"The team are very proactive and hands-on. Their legal knowledge is outstanding and they have what is required in terms of acumen and technical skills to lead on the biggest financial transactions."

"Allen & Overy's client service is always great and they score top marks for commercial awareness."

Work highlights Allen & Overy advised the lenders, including Emirates NBD, on a AED17 billion financing provided to the property developer Nakheel.

Notable practitioners

Haris Meyer Hanif (see p.2989) is a highly proficient lawyer who is widely considered to be a market leader in restructuring and insolvency, acquisition finance and alternative lending. He has extensive experience representing international and domestic financial institutions. He recently joined the firm after leaving Freshfields.

Strengths: *"Haris Meyer Hanif is highly effective and commercial and has a good grasp of a client's needs."* **Anthony Traboulsi** (see p.2990) is an experienced Dubai-based partner. He acts on behalf of high-profile international and regional clients, offering finance advice across the full spectrum of conventional and Shari'a-compliant lending. **Strengths:** *"Anthony Traboulsi is very hands-on and has the right attitude and legal acumen to lead on transactions."* **Bilal Ahmad** (see p.2984) is highly regarded for his capabilities in sukuk, often acting on Tier 1 issuances containing dual Islamic and conventional structures. He is equally experienced in acting for issuers and underwriters. He is particularly adept at advising major regional financial institutions on debut issuances. **Anzal Mohammed** (see p.2989) is widely regarded as a leading Islamic finance lawyer, most significantly in the field of sukuk. He is much esteemed for his work advising issuers, arrangers and dealers on Tier 1 issuances.

Clifford Chance LLP

What the team is known for Clifford Chance has an impressive team with robust offices in Dubai and Abu Dhabi that continue to lead the market for professional legal services in banking and finance. The firm advises on a broad spectrum of finance matters and possesses complementary expertise in capital markets and corporate/M&A. It is also noted for its dedicated Islamic finance practice and extensive experience in aviation finance, where it often works in conjunction with the firm's highly rated asset finance practice in London. It is equally highly esteemed for restructuring and insolvency mandates, in which area the firm fields a highly experienced bench of lawyers. The firm also has a dedicated regulatory team, which has become increasingly active in growing

areas such as fintech.

Work highlights Clifford Chance acted for a syndicate of international lenders led by HSBC Middle East on the provision of a USD325 million multi-tranche finance facility to Egypt's Cheiron Finance.

Notable practitioners

Graham Brewer is a talented lawyer who has acted on bilateral facilities provided to market-leading domestic clients. He frequently represents syndicates of leading international lenders and is also experienced in debt restructuring and acquisition finance. **Strengths:** *"Graham Brewer is absolutely brilliant. He is incredibly commercial and is liked by everyone."* Abu Dhabi-based **Nicola Reader** is a well-regarded lawyer who has worked with a diverse range of clients in the UAE and across the Middle East on both conventional and Islamic finance products. She is also held in particularly high esteem for her restructuring work.

Qudeer Latif heads Clifford Chance's Islamic finance practice from Dubai and is widely considered to be a leading lawyer in that field. He excels in murabaha and Shari'a-compliant project finance, and is also highly commended for sukuk, acting on debut issuances as well as Shari'a-compliant derivatives.

Linklaters

What the team is known for The Dubai office of Linklaters features an esteemed bench of lawyers who advise leading investment banks on the full spectrum of finance matters. The department is notable for its experience of development and structured finance and also widely recognised for its advice on syndicated loans and debt restructuring. The team's other areas of expertise include acquisition finance, real estate finance and banking regulatory matters. Linklaters is equally well known for its Islamic finance expertise, with several major transactions featuring a Shari'a-compliant tranche. The firm is a popular choice as lenders' counsel, while also very experienced acting for borrowers.

Strengths

"Linklaters has an excellent banking practice, one of the best in the region."

"Linklaters are very competent. They are able to deliver sound legal advice and they are pragmatic."

Work highlights Linklaters assisted Blue Apple Property Management with the AED487.5 million refinancing arrangements relating to construction and development of Reem Hospital.

Notable practitioners

Kieron Zaman leads Linklaters' regional banking practice from Dubai and is accomplished in advising lenders and financiers on conventional and Islamic financings. He is also esteemed for his work on behalf of major regional clients in connection with restructuring matters. **Strengths:** *"He's an extremely talented lawyer."* **Reem Al Sayegh** offers expertise in handling a wide range of regulatory banking and transactional matters, acting for both borrowers and lenders. She also advises major banks and financial institutions on the full range of conventional and Islamic financings. She is well versed in syndicated and sustainability-linked lending. **Strengths:** *"Reem Al Sayegh is a pleasure to work with and delivers top-quality*

work." *"She provides very good solutions and we always go back to Reem for her expertise."*

Band 2

Addleshaw Goddard LLP

What the team is known for The Dubai office of Addleshaw Goddard acts for a host of international financial institutions and regional corporate clients on both lender and borrower-side mandates. The firm offers an expanding finance practice and is noted for its complementary expertise in restructuring and insolvency mandates. The firm also benefits from expertise in Islamic finance, with lawyers advising on matters throughout the region.

Strengths

"They are always quick to respond and manage our expectations well in terms of delivery timings. The service levels are consistently excellent."

"They are very responsive, very knowledgeable, know the market and are good at finalising the documentation."

Work highlights Addleshaw Goddard advised KCH Healthcare on the AED300 million financing provided by Emirates Development Bank and Commercial Bank of Dubai for the expansion of King's College Hospital Dubai.

Notable practitioners

Robin Hickman has accrued a significant reputation for his high-quality advice to major international and regional banking clients. Highly rated for his debt restructuring practice, he also regularly acts for financial institutions on general bank lending. **Strengths:** *"Robin Hickman is an exceptional lawyer with superbly developed commercial and legal skills who is a genuine pleasure to work with."* *"He is very knowledgeable about the market. He knows what will work commercially - his experience is his strength."*

Sandeep Puri is seasoned in a broad range of finance matters, including project and real estate finance. He is equally capable in conventional and Shari'a-compliant finance and well versed in acting for big-name financial institutions. He recently joined Addleshaw Goddard after leaving Baker McKenzie. **Strengths:** *"Sandeep Puri offers excellent commercial and technical skills and is highly responsive."* **Philip Chalmers** advises an enviable range of regional and international clients on development, acquisition and project financing mandates. He also has commendable experience assisting with restructuring and insolvency files. **Strengths:** *"Philip Chalmers is very responsive and proactive."* **Victoria Mesquita Wlazlo** adeptly advises clients on the full spectrum of Shari'a-compliant finance instruments, in addition to being well versed in hybrid structures. Her expertise ranges from finance facilities to sukuk and high-yield capital markets products.

Al Tamimi & Company

What the team is known for Al Tamimi is acknowledged for its strong regional presence and broad expertise in all aspects of banking and finance. The firm is particularly noted for its local law capability. Its lawyers are adept at assisting both lenders and developers with project finance mat-

ters. The team is also notable for its standout regulatory practice and the respect in which it is held by financial regulatory bodies. Al Tamimi's breadth of practice is reflected in the firm's client list, which includes major regional and international banks.

Strengths

"The team at Al Tamimi always provides clear and concise advice."

Work highlights Al Tamimi was local counsel to the Central Bank of the UAE regarding its pilot initiative for digital currencies.

Notable practitioners

Husam Hourani is a senior partner based in Al Tamimi's Dubai office. He is a longstanding lawyer who is highly respected for his skills in conventional and Shari'a-compliant finance. He is particularly esteemed for his strengths in banking regulatory matters and equity capital markets.

Strengths: *"Husam Hourani is a real pioneer of banking regulations in the UAE. If you need regulatory advice he is the guru."*

Jody Waugh is Al Tamimi's head of banking and finance, in addition to acting as managing partner. He commands a formidable reputation for his handling of high-profile financings and is a well-established adviser to several regional and international banks.

Strengths: *"The good thing about Jody Waugh is that you can call him and he is able to give answers right away. He is really flexible."*

Mark Brown has considerable experience advising financial institutions and corporate entities on transactional lending. His recent work includes a variety of real estate, trade and acquisition finance matters. He is based in Abu Dhabi.

Mamoon Khan has a strong practice in aviation financing, advising a range of international clients on the sale and leaseback of portfolios of aircraft.

Strengths: *"Mamoon Khan is very open-minded and good at coming up with solutions for bespoke structures."*

"He works through all the practicalities and is very good commercially."

"He's a very thorough professional and his attitude towards any legal query is very good."

Dentons

What the team is known for Dentons is a respected law firm offering significant banking expertise from its Dubai and Abu Dhabi offices. Particularly eminent in Islamic finance, the team often advises on Shari'a-compliant financings, sukuk and hybrid conventional/Islamic facilities. Its lawyers are regularly mandated on cross-border matters in territories including Oman, Qatar and Saudi Arabia. The firm also assists domestic and international entities with project financing, refinancing and restructuring. Dentons possesses further expertise in trade and asset finance, with syndicated finance a prominent feature of its workload too. Its clients include financial institutions, corporations and multilaterals.

Strengths

"They are amazing at deal structuring and getting the requirements right."

"Dentons always show a great depth of understanding and provide great technical advice."

Work highlights Dentons acted for Abu Dhabi Islamic Bank, as the arranger, on a USD135 million Shari'a-compliant financing for the construction of two gas carriers.

Notable practitioners

Paul Jarvis is a highly distinguished banking lawyer who is best known for his considerable prowess in asset finance. With skills in both shipping and aviation finance, he also has strong expertise in Islamic as well as conventional financings. He is the firm's CEO for the UK, Ireland and Middle East, and is based in Abu Dhabi.

Stephen Knight is a prominent finance lawyer based in Abu Dhabi who is especially well versed in project and acquisition finance. He is also skilled in acting on behalf of lenders and sponsors on high-profile infrastructure projects.

Strengths: *"He is incredibly creative in the way he solves problems and is an absolute go-to person for finance."*

Qasim Aslam is a market leader in Islamic finance. He is especially acclaimed for his experience in murabaha facilities and conventional/Islamic hybrid transactions.

Strengths: *"Qasim Aslam offers excellent client service and provides pragmatic and commercial solutions."*

Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer

What the team is known for Freshfields offers a compact practice with a strong reputation in the Dubai market. The firm has particular experience acting on leveraged and acquisition finance matters, providing invaluable support to the firm's top-tier M&A group. In this regard the finance team regularly acts for some of the Middle East's leading private equity houses. Its clientele also includes corporate borrowers from across the MENA region as well as leading Shari'a-compliant banks.

Strengths

"Freshfields are very practical and commercially sensible."

Work highlights Freshfields acted for Metito Holdings on its USD120 million sustainability-linked credit facilities.

Notable practitioners

Anna Nersesian is a key contact.

Norton Rose Fulbright

What the team is known for Norton Rose Fulbright's Dubai-based banking and finance team is a respected name with a strong regional reputation for both conventional and Shari'a-compliant financing. The firm has a long history in Islamic finance and is often sought out to advise on Shari'a regulatory issues. Its lawyers act for a blue-chip roster of international clients, including major investment banks and high-profile borrowers. The team regularly assists with cross-border syndicated financings. Norton Rose also demonstrates an extensive project finance practice.

Strengths

"Norton Rose offers excellent quality and service with a strong ability to tailor services to clients' requirements."

Work highlights Norton Rose Fulbright represented HSBC in a USD1.1 billion dual-tranche murabaha financing provided to Al Ahli United Bank.

Notable practitioners

Nicholas Robinson is an experienced partner in Norton Rose's Dubai team. His client roster features several leading regional and international banks and financial institutions. He handles a

range of financings undertaken on both a conventional and Shari'a-compliant basis.

Strengths: *"Nicholas Robinson shows excellent knowledge and responsiveness."*

Marc Hamilton is noted asset finance lawyer who relocated to Dubai from the Paris office during the course of 2023. He is well known in the French market.

Mohammed Paracha is a highly distinguished lawyer in Islamic finance. He regularly acts for clients in the real estate sector on Shari'a-compliant facilities, as well as advising on regulatory matters.

Band 3

DLA Piper Middle East LLP

What the team is known for DLA Piper is an esteemed international law firm noted for its strong regional offering. Its Dubai-based team advises both borrowers and lenders on a range of matters, including acquisition and project finance.

The firm also offers a dedicated restructuring and insolvency team which is especially skilled in project-related restructurings. It has further expertise in financial regulation and derivatives, as well as trade and Islamic finance.

Notable practitioners

Paul McViety heads the firm's Islamic finance practice from Dubai and is capable of advising on conventional and Shari'a-compliant transactions. He is an especially well-regarded lawyer for syndicated finance, project finance and sukuk.

Latham & Watkins LLP

What the team is known for Latham & Watkins is a highly regarded presence in the Dubai market that frequently assists with the finance aspects of energy and infrastructure projects. The team has considerable expertise in Islamic finance. It advises on a variety of matters including real estate finance and sovereign sukuk. Its lawyers cater for a range of clients including corporate borrowers, project sponsors, private equity houses and financial institutions. Latham & Watkins regularly advises on major transactions in Saudi Arabia. The firm is prolific in restructuring and insolvency mandates, both within the UAE and across the region.

Work highlights Latham & Watkins assisted payment solutions provider Tamara with its receipt of a USD150 million receivables warehouse facility.

Notable practitioners

Christian Adams is a key contact.

White & Case LLP

What the team is known for White & Case is a respected name with well-established offices in Dubai and Abu Dhabi. The firm has a strong regional reputation for both conventional and Shari'a-compliant financing. It acts for a blue-chip roster of international clients, including major investment banks and high-profile borrowers. The firm maintains a formidable project finance practice capable of handling construction, oil and gas, and development finance matters. Its lawyers are well versed in all forms of corporate financing, including syndicated and asset finance. The team's further areas of expertise include Islamic finance, derivatives and structured finance, while

it is also widely respected for its capabilities in debt restructuring.

Strengths

"All members of the White & Case team are highly knowledgeable and they are always quick to respond and provide consistently high levels of service."

"They are amazing at managing requests and the team understands very well our business needs."

Work highlights White & Case advised Dubai Electricity & Water Authority on a AED10 billion pre-IPO financing.

Notable practitioners

Claire Matheson Kirton has a considerable track record when it comes to advising well-known international and regional banks, in addition to government entities, on high-value finance transactions. She is especially skilled in regard to revolving facilities and Shari'a-compliant finance. **Strengths:** *"Claire Matheson Kirton is superb. She is extremely commercial and very focused on deal execution."* *"She is highly knowledgeable across all financing matters and is very attentive to her clients."* *"She is a super-commercial lawyer who is just a joy to work with."* *"Claire is superb at supporting her clients through complex issues."* **Antoine Cousin** is based in Abu Dhabi and operates a broad project finance practice largely focused upon Saudi Arabia. He is proficient at advising borrowers on the financing arrangements for energy projects and major infrastructure PPPs. He is further noted for his strength in Shari'a-compliant facilities.

Band 4

Afridi & Angell

What the team is known for Afridi & Angell is a well-established UAE-headquartered law firm with considerable experience across the full spectrum of banking and finance. The firm often advises large international clients on regulatory matters and facility agreements. The team is highly skilled in restructuring loan facilities on behalf of both domestic and multinational financial institutions. Its lawyers are also prominent in project finance and syndicated finance, as well as Islamic finance.

Strengths

"The lawyers at Afridi & Angell are masters of this field and are a very knowledgeable and experienced team."

"They are very well informed and innovative as well as super-fast and timely."

Work highlights Afridi & Angell assisted a consortium of developers with the financing for the Delta Blue Carbon project in Pakistan.

Notable practitioners

Amjad Ali Khan is a longstanding lawyer who has vast experience across both conventional and Islamic finance. He is based in Dubai and continues to act on major derivatives matters as well as advising clients on syndicated facilities. **Rahat Dar** has garnered a strong reputation among clients for his advice on project finance and cross-border loan facilities. He is also experienced in providing regulatory advice on both conventional and Shari'a-compliant transactions. **Strengths:** *"Rahat Dar is an excellent lawyer who has a very*

good understanding of matters. He provides very good clarity, is very sharp in understanding his client's viewpoint and provides advice which helps prompt decision-making." *"Rahat is a strong all-rounder who is very available."*

Ashurst

What the team is known for Ashurst maintains a notable profile in project finance across the region. The firm advises an impressive list of international and regional lenders on major energy and infrastructure projects throughout the Middle East, with notable expertise regarding projects located in Saudi Arabia. Its lawyers' other areas of expertise include the restructuring of project finance facilities and advising on Shari'a-compliant finance matters.

Strengths

"The team at Ashurst are super-commercial and deal-focused."

Work highlights Ashurst assisted the project consortium with the project financing for the construction of three new schools in Abu Dhabi.

Notable practitioners

David Charlier leads Ashurst's regional banking practice from Dubai and is highly experienced in project finance, most notably in the energy and infrastructure sectors. He is highly experienced acting for borrowers, as well as acting for lenders on a range of transactional and regulatory mandates.

Baker McKenzie LLP

What the team is known for Baker McKenzie is widely noted as a solid presence in both the transactional and regulatory arenas. Its Dubai office regularly advises on Islamic financing facilities and has experience representing both lenders and borrowers. Other areas of expertise include trade and real estate finance, as well as fintech.

Strengths

"Baker McKenzie's ability to handle complex and sophisticated matters is exceptional. They consistently demonstrate a deep understanding of intricate legal issues and provide strategic solutions."

"The team's interdisciplinary approach, encompassing both legal mastery and a broad understanding of the industry, ensures that every aspect of our files is adeptly addressed."

Notable practitioners

Adil Hussain is global head of Islamic finance and is based in Dubai. He frequently acts for borrowers on murabaha as well as assisting lenders with cross-border financings and refinancings. He is also well versed in acquisition finance and syndicated lending. He joined Baker McKenzie from Clyde & Co in September 2023.

Eversheds Sutherland (International) LLP

What the team is known for Eversheds Sutherland has a robust team with a considerable aptitude for project finance. Lawyers from its Dubai office can be seen acting for clients on the financings for major energy projects throughout the region. Its lawyers are also highly active in trade finance, where the firm maintains an impressive roster of investment banks as clients. Eversheds also demonstrates a notable prowess in

Shari'a-compliant project finance facilities.

Strengths

"The Eversheds team has a vast ability to handle complex matters."

Work highlights Eversheds Sutherland assisted Dukhan Bank with the provision of a commodities murabaha facility to Oryx Corniche Development.

Notable practitioners

Clint Dempsey is increasingly respected for his aptitude in both conventional and Islamic project finance. With expertise in acting for borrowers and lenders, he is also well versed in real estate and acquisition finance.

Hadef & Partners

What the team is known for Hadef & Partners is a respected, independent UAE law firm with a noteworthy finance practice. The team's lawyers frequently act as domestic counsel alongside international law firms on major cross-border transactions. Hadef has noteworthy project finance expertise, encompassing the financing of IWPPs and renewable energy projects. It is equally capable of advising on Shari'a-compliant transactions and banking regulatory matters.

Strengths

"The team at Hadef & Partners is made up of very knowledgeable lawyers."

Work highlights Hadef & Partners acted for international sponsors on the local law aspects of the financing for an undersea high-voltage pipeline.

Notable practitioners

Alan Rodgers (see p.2989) is well recognised for his skills in project finance. He regularly represents lenders and borrowers in regard to IWPPs and renewable energy projects, with further strength in debt restructuring.

Pinsent Masons LLP

What the team is known for Pinsent Masons maintains a reputable banking practice from its Dubai office, assisting a number of leading regional and international banks and financial institutions with cross-border transactions. Its client roster is active in sectors such as real estate, energy and infrastructure. The firm is also well regarded for its financial regulation expertise and its advice on project finance matters across the GCC.

Strengths

"Pinsent Masons are creative, cooperative and a real pleasure to work with."

Work highlights Pinsent Masons acted for the senior lenders on the senior debt financing of the Al Wakra and Al Wukair sewage treatment plant PPP project located in Qatar.

Notable practitioners

Matthew Escritt is adept at cross-border financing and project finance. He is experienced in acting for both domestic and international banking institutions.

Watson Farley & Williams LLP

What the team is known for Watson Farley & Williams offers clients a strong international practice with a focus on asset and project finance. Lawyers in the team frequently act for lenders and borrowers on the financing and refinancing of marine assets. The firm also acts on the financing of energy projects including solar farms.

Strengths

“Watson Farley & Williams are very practical and they take commercial decisions.”

Notable practitioners

Michael Savva is a key contact.

Other Ranked Lawyers

Shibeer Ahmed is a highly regarded lawyer who excels in both conventional and Islamic finance, often advising borrowers on hybrid structures. He frequently acts on financings in the real estate and oil and gas sectors, with notable capabilities in project and acquisition finance. He joined

Greenberg Traurig in 2023 as one of the founding partners of its Dubai office, having left Squire Patton Boggs.

Strengths:

“Shibeer Ahmed has a good sense of the law, which is coupled with a commercial understanding.”

Rahail Ali is managing partner of Hogan Lovells' Dubai office and a highly esteemed lawyer in Islamic finance. He demonstrates particular strengths in Shari'a-compliant project finance, including for IPPs and IWPs.

Rizwan Kanji is a highly skilled lawyer based in Akin's Dubai office who is active on both conventional and Shari'a-compliant DCM work. He is especially well respected for his sukuk practice,

which sees him advise many major regional financial institutions.

Strengths:

“Rizwan Kanji is very commercially aware as well as very good technically.”

Ayman Khaleq of Morgan, Lewis & Bockius is a highly experienced Islamic finance lawyer who is especially adept at sukuk. He is also capable of acting on murabaha and Islamic investment funds. He splits his time between Dubai and Los Angeles.

Strengths:

“Ayman Khaleq always has super, tailor-made solutions.”

Capital Markets

Capital Markets
Leading Firms
Band 1
Allen & Overy LLP
Clifford Chance LLP
Band 2
Dentons
Ibrahim & Partners
Latham & Watkins LLP
Linklaters
White & Case LLP
Band 3
Akin
Al Tamimi & Company
Hadef & Partners
Simmons & Simmons
<small>* Indicates individual with profile.</small>
<small>◇ (ORL) = Other Ranked Lawyer.</small>
<small>Alphabetical order within each band. Band 1 is highest.</small>

Band 1**Allen & Overy LLP**

What the team is known for At the time of writing, Allen & Overy is set to merge with Shearman & Sterling in the first half of 2024. The merger enhances an already-impressive practice, which is noted for its deep bench of distinguished lawyers across both Dubai and Abu Dhabi. It is regularly highlighted for its sukuk work and possesses equally significant hybrid securities expertise. The firm frequently advises clients on debut issuances, and has a very strong equity capital markets group which represents major investment banks in market-leading regional IPOs. The team is very experienced acting for issuers as well as underwriters, and represents a client base active in the energy and real estate industries, among others.

Strengths

“They are the best in the industry by far.”

Work highlights Allen & Overy acted as under-

Capital Markets: Debt
Leading Individuals
Band 1
Ahmad Bilal <i>Allen & Overy LLP*</i>
Fried Jonathan A <i>Linklaters</i>
Mohammed Anzal <i>Allen & Overy LLP*</i>
Ure Stuart <i>Clifford Chance LLP</i>
Band 2
Dey Debashis <i>White & Case LLP</i>
Irvine Lee <i>Simmons & Simmons</i>
Kanji Rizwan H <i>Akin</i>
Raja Nomaan <i>Latham & Watkins LLP</i>
Roussos Alex <i>Dentons</i>
Band 3
Al-Jafari Basil <i>Latham & Watkins LLP</i>
Jaffer Rafiq <i>Al Tamimi & Company</i>
Man Gregory <i>Bird & Bird (MEA) LLP (ORL) ◇</i>
Up-and-coming individuals
Afzal Hamed <i>Norton Rose Fulbright (ORL) ◇</i>
Nammari Dalia <i>Linklaters</i>

writers' counsel on the USD2.5 billion IPO of ADNOC Gas on the Abu Dhabi Securities Exchange.

Notable practitioners

Bilal Ahmad (see p.2984) is widely recognised as a market leader in sukuk, both within the UAE and in Saudi Arabia. He is equally skilled at acting for issuers and arrangers, and his clientele includes real estate companies as well as domestic and international financial institutions. He is particularly experienced in acting on debut sukuk issuances. **Khalid Garousha** is a distinguished lawyer in equity capital markets who is held in high esteem for his work representing underwriters. Based in Abu Dhabi, he is experienced overseeing market-leading IPOs and other international equity offerings. In mid-2023 he assumed the role of Allen & Overy's interim global managing partner, overseeing the firm's merger with Shearman & Sterling. **Anzal Mohammed** (see p.2989) demonstrates a broad range of expertise

Capital Markets: Equity
Leading Individuals
Band 1
Garousha Khalid <i>Allen & Overy LLP*</i>
Ibrahim Ahmed <i>Ibrahim & Partners</i>
Band 2
Campbell Scott <i>Linklaters</i>
Elaraby Marwan <i>Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP (ORL) ◇*</i>
Tarback Andrew <i>Al Tamimi & Company</i>
Band 3
Al-Jafari Basil <i>Latham & Watkins LLP</i>
Hourani Husam <i>Al Tamimi & Company</i>
Omar Yasser <i>Hadef & Partners*</i>
Up-and-coming individuals
Soumrany Ibrahim <i>Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher (ORL) ◇*</i>
Szaja Pawel J <i>Shearman & Sterling LLP (ORL) ◇*</i>

in Islamic and conventional debt capital markets. A highly acclaimed lawyer in Dubai, he often acts on Tier 1 issuances and sukuk programmes; on such matters he regularly advises lead managers and arrangers, as well as issuers.

Clifford Chance LLP

What the team is known for Clifford Chance maintains a pre-eminent practice in the UAE, with particularly strong capabilities in debt capital markets. Its lawyers have deep experience in sukuk and sovereign bonds, demonstrating particular strength in Rule 144A offerings. The firm also has considerable experience assisting with securities regulatory issues and hybrid transactions, in addition to securitisation and Islamic derivatives. Clifford Chance acts for a diverse array of clients both locally and throughout the GCC.

Strengths

“It's a very solid team at the forefront of the industry.”

“Everyone in the team is reachable at any time and puts in all the required effort to keep up with extra-tight time lines.”

Foreign Experts Capital Markets: Debt
Based in United Arab Emirates with expertise in countries listed below
Saudi Arabia Ahmad Bilal <i>Allen & Overy LLP</i> *
Saudi Arabia Dey Debashis <i>White & Case LLP</i>
Saudi Arabia Fried Jonathan A <i>Linklaters</i>
Saudi Arabia Irvine Lee <i>Simmons & Simmons</i>
Saudi Arabia Jaffer Rafiq <i>Al Tamimi & Company</i>
Saudi Arabia Raja Nomaan <i>Latham & Watkins LLP</i>
Saudi Arabia Ure Stuart <i>Clifford Chance LLP</i>
* Indicates individual with profile.
◇ (ORL) = Other Ranked Lawyer.

Foreign Experts Capital Markets: Equity
Based in United Arab Emirates with expertise in countries listed below
Egypt Elaraby Marwan <i>Gibson (ORL)</i> ◇ *
Saudi Arabia Al-Louzi Sami <i>White & Case LLP</i>
United Arab Emirates expertise based in countries listed below
USA Shaikley Ali <i>Sidley Austin LLP (ORL)</i> ◇ *

Work highlights Clifford Chance counselled Egypt's Ministry of Finance on the establishment of a USD5 billion sovereign sukuk programme, as well as providing guidance on the country's debut USD1.5 billion issuance thereunder.

Notable practitioners

Stuart Ure is accomplished at advising on conventional and Islamic debt capital markets. He often advises on sukuk, acting for high-profile regional issuers and government entities, and has notable expertise in Rule 144A issuances. He is also acclaimed for structured finance and securitisation work, as well as for his regular handling of Saudi-related matters. **Strengths:** "Stuart is a very competent professional who values the client relationship and is a very reliable adviser. I would definitely recommend him to others."

Band 2

Dentons

What the team is known for The Dubai office of Dentons maintains a respected capital markets practice with robust capabilities in the UAE and throughout the MENA region. The firm is especially notable for its debt work and is also regularly sought out for its oft-praised knowledge of various Shari'a-compliant instruments, most notably sukuk. Its lawyers act for a wide range of clients including issuers, underwriters and arrangers. Dentons additionally has a solid bond restructuring practice.

Work highlights Dentons advised the Islamic Development Bank on a USD1.7 billion sukuk issuance.

Notable practitioners

Alex Roussos is a highly accomplished lawyer in the sukuk arena, where he often advises joint lead managers and issuers. He is also experienced representing major regional banks in conventional debt issuances. He is Dentons' Dubai managing partner and also co-heads its Middle East banking and finance practice. **Strengths:** "Alex is very responsive and always helpful."

Ibrahim & Partners

What the team is known for Ibrahim & Partners is a highly respected Dubai-based law firm which has fast established itself as one of the UAE's leading lights for domestic equity work. The firm regularly acts for regional banks – as well as clients in the healthcare, real estate and insurance sectors – on rights issuances, capital restructurings and capital increases. Its lawyers have a for-

midable track record in domestic IPOs.

Strengths

"Their entire team is hands-on, brilliant and efficient. They have the best set of associates in the market."

"Their ability to communicate issues to the regulator has helped get us over the line. The team has also always met the set deadlines."

Work highlights Ibrahim & Partners was issuer's counsel to TECOM on its AED20 billion IPO and conversion from a fully government-owned entity to a public joint stock company.

Notable practitioners

Ahmed Ibrahim is a go-to figure for domestic equity capital markets matters. He regularly advises clients on rights issues, with further expertise concerning capital restructurings and M&A transactions involving publicly listed companies. **Strengths:** "Ahmed is knowledgeable, super-responsive and personable." "I thoroughly enjoy working with Ahmed due to his high level of professionalism, timely responses, practical advice, and his proactive mind set for working out solutions."

Latham & Watkins LLP

What the team is known for Latham & Watkins offers an experienced team in Dubai which is active on cross-border matters throughout the Middle East. The firm has a particular reputation for its expertise in Saudi transactions and also has strong experience of working with sovereign and quasi-sovereign entities. Its lawyers are well versed in major sukuk transactions, complemented by their wider skills in Islamic finance and Shari'a-compliant products. Latham is also adept at equity matters, often representing underwriters in IPOs. In addition to transactional work, the firm frequently provides regulatory advice to domestic and international clients, and assists with liability management and restructuring issues.

Strengths

"The quality of their work is excellent, and they have an ability to focus on details without losing sight of the big picture."

"Latham & Watkins bring together commercial awareness and excellent legal skills to help clients take pragmatic decisions when balancing commercial interests and legal risk."

Work highlights Latham & Watkins advised Saudi Arabia's Public Investment Fund on its establishment of a medium-term note programme and a related USD3 billion debt issuance across three tranches, including the first-ever 'century' green bond, with a maturity date of 2122.

Notable practitioners

Nomaan Raja is Latham & Watkins' managing partner for the UAE. He is highly skilled in conventional as well as Shari'a-compliant debt issuances,

and has experience advising on matters across the region. He regularly acts for clients in the real estate and oil and gas sectors, in addition to advising government entities. A substantial part of his work relates to Saudi Arabia. **Strengths:** "In terms of strategic thinking, Nomaan is top of the tree." "Nomaan is brilliant at understanding a client's main concerns, bringing his vast experience to bear, summarising and assessing a situation quickly and thoroughly, and then finding a pragmatic solution." **Basil Al-Jafari** is widely acknowledged for his in-depth understanding of debt matters. He is well versed in representing arrangers and dealers, and also has a wealth of experience concerning sovereign issuances. In addition to his debt work he is increasingly involved in equity issuances. **Strengths:** "Basil is a very constructive, solution-oriented lawyer. He also has excellent networking and business development skills, and always takes care of his clients' needs." "Basil has great attention to detail and is excellent at handling communications during the process. He is also very thorough and methodical."

Linklaters

What the team is known for Linklaters' capital markets team in Dubai regularly assists with high-profile transactions. The firm is frequently noted for its strength in debt capital markets and advises various entities on bond issuances and sukuk structures. Its lawyers are often mandated by financial institutions and have further experience representing issuers in the insurance and property sectors. The team regularly advises on sovereign sukuk issuances by states throughout the Middle East and further afield. The firm's enviable capabilities in debt capital markets is complemented by a robust equity practice.

Strengths

"The attention to detail and persistence in getting things done are outstanding."

"They are considered one of the best legal service providers active in the region. We have a long-lasting relationship with Linklaters and we are happy with their services."

Work highlights Linklaters lawyers based in Dubai and London acted as international counsel to Abraj Energy Services on its approximately USD237 million IPO on the Muscat Stock Exchange.

Notable practitioners

Jonathan Fried is a prominent lawyer with considerable expertise in Tier 1 capital securities and sovereign debt issuances. He is also adept at sukuk and debt/equity hybrid issuances, and is notable for his extensive experience advising a variety of high-profile issuers and underwriters.

Strengths: "I receive outstanding work and service from Jonathan." **Scott Campbell** is a leading M&A lawyer who is also regularly instructed on equity capital markets matters. He has experience advising clients on numerous high-value IPOs, often acting for issuers. **Dalia Nammari** was promoted to partner at Linklaters in May 2023 and is widely considered to be a rising star within this practice area. She has advised on a number of sovereign sukuk issuances, with experience acting for issuers as well as lead managers. **Strengths:** "Dalia is very professional, very knowledgeable and

offers a high level of responsiveness.”

White & Case LLP

What the team is known for White & Case is highly acclaimed for its capital markets expertise. It regularly assists with conventional and Shari’a-compliant transactions, including sukuk and sovereign bonds. The team’s major clients include Abu Dhabi and Dubai state-owned entities, as well as longstanding regional giants such as Saudi Aramco. Alongside its enviable debt practice, the firm also has a strong track record overseeing IPOs and other equity mandates.

Work highlights White & Case acted for the arrangers on the establishment of a USD4 billion trust certificate issuance programme by Al Rajhi Banking & Investment Corporation, as well as counselling the managers on Al Rajhi’s debut USD1 billion issuance under the programme.

Notable practitioners

Debashis Dey has extensive experience in debt issuances and is most notably active on matters within the UAE and Saudi Arabia. He is highly esteemed in the sukuk sphere and has experience representing managers, arrangers and issuers. He divides his time between Dubai and London.

Strengths: “Debashis is knowledgeable, available and very good to work with.” “He is very much aware of clients’ needs.” **Sami Al-Louzi** frequently acts on equity capital markets transactions originating in Saudi Arabia. He possesses a wealth of expertise in rights issuances and IPOs, and has a strong track record of acting for issuer clients in the oil and gas sector, including Saudi Aramco.

Band 3

Akin

What the team is known for Akin Gump’s Dubai-based capital markets team has rapidly established itself as a major player for debt issuances. It is especially renowned for sukuk, in which field the team represents numerous Islamic banks. Its lawyers have further expertise in Shari’a regulatory matters. Of late the firm has advised on a number of capital markets issuances originating in Turkey.

Work highlights Akin advised Kuveyt Türk Katılım Bankası on its USD350 million issuance of Tier 2 Shari’a-compliant trust certificates.

Notable practitioners

Rizwan Kanji is a highly skilled lawyer who is active on conventional and Shari’a-compliant debt work. He is especially well respected for his sukuk practice, which sees him advise several major regional financial institutions.

Al Tamimi & Company

What the team is known for Al Tamimi & Company is a highly regarded regional law firm with a robust capital markets team based in Dubai. It offers a full-service practice with strong capabilities in both equity and debt capital markets. The firm regularly assists with IPOs and rights issuances, as well as bond issuances, securitisation and sukuk. Al Tamimi represents issuer clients hailing from a range of sectors, and is also well versed in acting for underwriters.

Strengths

“Al Tamimi are well informed, have a good understanding of the regulations and are both user-friendly and commercial.”

“They are precise, and remain highly responsive under tight time lines.”

Work highlights Al Tamimi & Company advised ADNOC Gas on the local law aspects of its USD2.5 billion IPO.

Notable practitioners

Andrew Tarbuck heads Al Tamimi’s capital markets practice in Dubai and is well regarded for his considerable prowess in equity capital markets. His broad-ranging expertise covers IPOs in addition to buy-backs and securities regulatory matters. **Strengths:** “We give all of our complex capital markets work to Andrew. He is an outstanding lawyer in his field.” “He is very collaborative, responsive, commercial in his understanding of the issues, and good to work with. He’s a great team player who is well liked by his clients.” “Andrew is an experienced practitioner with deep commercial and technical knowledge relating to the country and the region.”

Husam Hourani is a prominent capital markets lawyer in the UAE. He is highly experienced advising clients on high-value equity transactions, including numerous IPOs.

Strengths: “Husam is a very strong lawyer who has good knowledge of capital markets and commercial law.” **Rafiq Jaffer** is an accomplished banking and debt capital markets lawyer who divides his time between the UAE, Saudi Arabia and Bahrain. He has significant experience advising on sukuk issuances, acting for issuers from across the Middle East.

Hadeef & Partners

What the team is known for Hadeef & Partners is an independent Emirati law firm with offices in both Abu Dhabi and Dubai. It has an experienced capital markets team that advises a wide range of local and regional clients on IPOs and follow-on offerings, with complementary expertise in public M&A.

Strengths

“When it comes to capital markets, Hadeef & Partners know their stuff inside-out. They are very capable, reliable, and pragmatic.”

“Hadeef & Partners are good people to work with, with a good understanding of the law. They are steeped in their understanding of regulations, and therefore understand the local context well.”

Work highlights Hadeef & Partners advised Pre-sight Al on its USD496 million IPO on the Abu Dhabi Securities Exchange.

Notable practitioners

Simmons & Simmons

What the team is known for The Dubai office of Simmons & Simmons fields a dedicated capital markets team with an emphasis on both conventional debt and sukuk. Its lawyers are adept at advising regional and international banks, and the team as a whole is best known for its cross-border work in the Middle East covering jurisdictions such as Qatar and Saudi Arabia.

Strengths

“They provide very good service. The team is sharp, helpful and commercial in terms of their approach.”

“Simmons & Simmons are responsive, personable, and professionally sound.”

Work highlights Simmons & Simmons advised Qatar Islamic Bank on an update to its USD5 billion trust certificate issuance programme.

Notable practitioners

Lee Irvine is a well-regarded lawyer who possesses a considerable reputation for conventional and Shari’a-compliant debt capital markets. Based in Dubai, he is highly experienced advising on matters in the UAE and Saudi Arabia. **Strengths:** “Lee is very approachable, and always happy to support us and provide guidance.”

Other Ranked Lawyers

Hamed Afzal is an accomplished debt capital markets lawyer based at Norton Rose Fulbright. He is a frequent adviser on sukuk issuances, typically acting for high-profile Emirati and Saudi clients, and has further experience assisting with equity matters.

Strengths:

“I see him as a leading lawyer in Islamic finance within his generation. He has unique experience and skills.”

“Hamed is a professional with strong knowledge of regulations in the UAE. He is extremely helpful to us in suggesting solutions to different problems.”

Marwan Elaraby is a highly experienced lawyer who excels in IPOs and other equity matters. He acts for many major regional clients, with experience as both issuers’ and underwriters’ counsel, and is especially noted for his handling of Egypt-related transactions. He recently joined Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher in Dubai after leaving Shearman & Sterling.

Strengths:

“Marwan is an exceptional lawyer who is very sophisticated and solution-oriented, with a unique ability to negotiate the most challenging of topics.”

Gregory Man of Bird & Bird possesses strong expertise in sukuk and conventional debt transactions, and is also widely respected for his strengths in securitisations and structured products. He regularly acts for Middle Eastern clients on their transactions outside the region.

Ibrahim Soumrany (see p.2990) is an ever-more noteworthy Dubai-based lawyer who has advised clients on several major equity mandates, acting for underwriters as well as big-name issuer companies. He recently joined Gibson Dunn after leaving White & Case.

Strengths:

“Ibrahim is a great lawyer who is commercial, driven, hard-working and experienced.”

Pawel Szaja (see p.2990) assists underwriters, as well as corporate issuers active in sectors such as real estate and oil and gas, with a variety of IPO transactions. He has experience counselling on listings on both the Dubai and Abu Dhabi exchanges.

Foreign Experts (Based Abroad)

Ali Shaikley is an adept equity lawyer whose experience encompasses acting for REITs on proposed de-listings. He now divides his time between the London and New York offices of

Sidley Austin, having previously been based at White & Case in Dubai, and has extensive experience advising on IPOs on the Dubai Financial Market.

Strengths:

“Ali is one of the best lawyers within the equity capital markets space in the UAE.”

Commercial Contracts

Commercial Contracts
Leading Firms
Band 1
Al Tamimi & Company
Clyde & Co LLP
Band 2
Akin
Baker Botts L.L.P.
Baker McKenzie LLP
Eversheds Sutherland (International) LLP
Hadef & Partners
Band 3
Afridi & Angell
Bracewell LLP
Dentons
DLA Piper Middle East LLP
Norton Rose Fulbright
Pinsent Masons LLP
Band 4
HFW
Hogan Lovells (Middle East) LLP
Band 5
Addleshaw Goddard LLP
AMERELLER
Ashurst
Bird & Bird (MEA) LLP
Curtis, Mallet-Prevost, Colt & Mosle LLP
Gowling WLG
Ince & Co Middle East
Mayer Brown LLP
Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP
Trowers & Hamlin

Band 1

Al Tamimi & Company

What the team is known for Al Tamimi is a distinguished regional law firm with several offices located across the UAE, providing an enviable depth of resources and expertise. The firm is widely acknowledged for its strong track record interacting with regulators and government authorities in the Middle East, and offers significant capabilities in a variety of corporate and commercial matters including franchising, commercial contracts and joint venture agreements. The team is also noted for its expertise in matters relating to the UAE’s foreign direct investment law.

Strengths

“The firm provides quick response times as well as

Commercial Contracts
Senior Statespeople & Eminent Practitioners
Senior Statespeople: distinguished older partners
Laubach Charles S Afridi & Angell *
Eminent Practitioners
Ahnish Faraj A Hadef & Partners *
Jafar Sadiq Hadef & Partners *
Qudah Samer Al Tamimi & Company
Leading Individuals
Band 1
Ahern Geraldine Eversheds Sutherland (International)
Bisch Mark E Baker Botts L.L.P.*
Momany Omar Squire Patton Boggs (ORL) ◇
Williams Christopher Bracewell LLP *
Band 2
Jabsheh Wael Akin
O’Riordan Philip Clyde & Co LLP
Smith Ben Clyde & Co LLP
Band 3
Bainbridge Steven Greenberg Traurig Limited (ORL) ◇
Holland Alastair Ince & Co Middle East
Idir Adjou Ait Ben Norton Rose Fulbright
Llwyd Lowri Addleshaw Goddard LLP
Miocevic Jeremy Curtis, Mallet-Prevost, Colt & Mosle LLP
Sioufi Chris P EY Law (ORL) ◇
Tbaishat Mohammad Pinsent Masons LLP
Woods Victoria Hadef & Partners *
Band 4
Al Semaani Jansen Rita Ince & Co Middle East
Gilligan Mark Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP
Murray Melissa Bird & Bird (MEA) LLP
Reid Alexander Charles Russell Speechlys (ORL) ◇
Salloum Chadi A Clyde & Co LLP
Thraya Tom Mayer Brown LLP *
Up-and-coming individuals
Naja Hani Baker McKenzie LLP

accurate and transparent communication.”

“Al Tamimi offers excellent service, a high quality of drafting and great legal advice.”

Work highlights An Al Tamimi team advised fashion company Steven Madden on the establishment of a joint venture with the Apparel Group.

Notable practitioners

Samer Qudah is Al Tamimi’s managing partner and leads its corporate structuring team from Dubai. He commands a formidable reputation as a result of his strong track record in group restructurings, acting for domestic, regional and international clients alike. He also has significant experience in drafting free zone regulations and foreign direct investment laws.

Foreign Desks
Commercial Contracts
Based in United Arab Emirates with expertise in countries listed below
Kuwait Ashurst

Foreign Experts
Commercial Contracts
Based in United Arab Emirates with expertise in countries listed below
Italy De Leo Marco BonelliErede (ORL) ◇

Clyde & Co LLP

What the team is known for Clyde & Co maintains an impressive corporate and commercial practice across its Dubai and Abu Dhabi offices. It offers a considerable depth of resources and is proficient in large-scale domestic and cross-border mandates. Its lawyers demonstrate market-leading expertise regarding group restructurings, distribution agreements, joint ventures and compliance issues. The firm has a dedicated FDI team which advises international corporations establishing themselves both ‘onshore’ and in the UAE’s free zones.

Strengths

“The Clyde & Co team are always responsive, and their level of assistance is always appropriate and to the point.”

“The team are very commercial and aware of client concerns and objectives.”

Work highlights A Clyde & Co team advised the Select Group on the establishment of a joint venture with a prominent UAE family group.

Notable practitioners

Philip O’Riordan is a longstanding lawyer who covers a variety of mandates, most often acting for clients in the hospitality and energy sectors. His experience ranges from corporate structuring and governance issues to negotiating contracts and shareholder agreements. **Ben Smith** is a widely respected lawyer who is best known for his skills in FDI projects and corporate structuring. He is based in Dubai and is particularly adept at acting for international clients in the energy and technology sectors. **Strengths:** *“Ben looks at deals from a very pragmatic perspective and is always looking for a solution.” “Ben is incredibly helpful. He’s always willing and available to assist. He is experienced, very responsive and generous with his time and knowledge.”* **Chadi Salloum** is a seasoned commercial contracts lawyer who wins acclaim for his skills in shareholder agreements. He is also well versed in joint ventures

and advising on M&A matters. He splits his time between Dubai and Riyadh.

Band 2

Akin

What the team is known for Akin is a major player in Abu Dhabi, demonstrating considerable strengths across a broad range of sectors and providing assistance with an array of commercial regulatory matters. Its lawyers are particularly acclaimed for their expertise in advising government entities on joint ventures and investments. Beyond commercial contracts, the firm is also highly regarded for its capabilities in M&A and corporate restructuring.

Strengths

"Akin are consistently responsive, pragmatic and well informed."

"The team are very customer service focused and good at anticipating clients' needs, being proactive and dealing with things before we ask them to."

Notable practitioners

Wael Jabsheh heads the firm's Middle East corporate department. He is an adept lawyer who is well reputed for his capabilities in joint ventures and corporate restructurings. Although particularly noted for his work advising sovereign wealth funds and other government entities, he has further experience acting for international corporations. **Strengths:** *"He thinks strategically on complex deals and works in a collaborative manner with clients."* *"Wael is very organised, and the way he thinks through and discusses issues is very structured."*

Baker Botts L.L.P.

What the team is known for Baker Botts's highly experienced corporate and commercial practice typically represents major international clients in high-value joint ventures and significant commercial agreements such as distribution contracts. The firm often advises high-profile global entities on regulatory matters across the region. It is known for representing international investors alongside its strong reputation among domestic and family-owned businesses. The team is also widely recognised for its specific capabilities in the defence and oil and gas sectors and has further expertise in technology.

Strengths

"They respond promptly and keep me abreast of progress along the way."

"The team are incredibly knowledgeable about the region. They are great at navigating unfamiliar processes and they have a good way of establishing rapport with business clients."

Work highlights A Baker Botts team advised World Wide Technology on the establishment of a subsidiary in Abu Dhabi.

Notable practitioners

Mark Bisch (see p.2985) is a distinguished Dubai-based lawyer who has expertise in a range of matters including joint ventures, commercial agreements and corporate governance. He is accomplished in acting for multinationals as well as leading domestic and regional companies, with an especially strong client following in the

defence sector. **Strengths:** *"Mark's longevity in the region gives him a very deep perspective. One of his key attributes is his ability to advise not only on the law but on its practical application. He is a fastidious lawyer who always fights very hard for his clients' positions."* *"Mark is an excellent all-around lawyer and strategic thinker."*

Baker McKenzie LLP

What the team is known for Lawyers in the UAE offices of Baker McKenzie have broad expertise covering a range of high-value commercial matters. The firm remains a regular adviser to several household-name corporates as well as government entities. It offers clients seamless advice across its global network, and is especially well versed in advising government entities on commercial agreements. The team has notable experience in group restructuring, with further expertise in joint ventures, franchising and major contracts. It is also able to advise on corporate governance as well as compliance, regulatory and commercial agency matters.

Strengths

"They are very skilful, with a clear commercial understanding that makes the proposed solutions feel tailored to our business."

"The team are very knowledgeable, pragmatic and able to translate complex questions into layman's terms, allowing key stakeholders to take the required decisions."

Notable practitioners

Hani Naja is a well-reputed lawyer with a solid track record when it comes to assisting clients with commercial mandates in the region. Splitting his time between Dubai and Abu Dhabi, he is able to advise on all aspects of corporate structuring and market entry, in addition to his expertise in a range of commercial contracts. **Strengths:** *"Hani has excellent business understanding and local experience in the market. He is a great person to discuss strategic goals with and he provides pragmatic legal advice."* *"Hani is responsive and customer-oriented."*

Eversheds Sutherland (International) LLP

What the team is known for Eversheds Sutherland is a prominent international law firm with a dedicated, highly experienced commercial contracts practice in the UAE, featuring lawyers based in both Dubai and Abu Dhabi. It acts for a prominent client roster across the TMT, financial services and insurance sectors. The team has noteworthy experience in distribution agreements, restructurings, joint ventures and compliance mandates. The firm also has a strong regional presence allowing for considerable cross-border capabilities.

Strengths

"All sophisticated matters are handled with the utmost care and skill."

Notable practitioners

Geraldine Ahern is the managing partner of Eversheds' Abu Dhabi office and heads its commercial practice. She is highly proficient in a wide variety of matters, ranging from drafting and negotiating contracts to corporate structuring and governance issues. She regularly supports clients on

the creation and operation of technology and joint venture projects, in addition to her work in the regulatory and compliance sphere. **Strengths:** *"Geraldine is technically excellent as well as being extremely pragmatic and commercial."* *"You can discuss things very openly with her, and her advice is super-clear."*

Hadef & Partners

What the team is known for Hadef & Partners is a UAE powerhouse with extensive expertise in, and depth of resources committed to, corporate and commercial mandates. Its lawyers often represent clients in corporate structuring and joint ventures, including matters in support of mergers and acquisitions. The team most commonly assists clients in the energy, technology and healthcare sectors. It has noteworthy experience advising both regional and international businesses and demonstrates further strengths in franchising, distribution and licensing matters. The firm is also accomplished in acting for domestic family groups on corporate restructurings.

Strengths

"They definitely give good, practical advice and they are commercially minded."

"Hadef & Partners has the right balance of international experience and local knowledge."

Notable practitioners

Abu Dhabi partner **Faraj Ahnish** (see p.2984) is a well-known and respected lawyer whose wealth of expertise covers a variety of contractual and commercial advisory matters. He has an impressive track record, having advised on several major strategic partnerships, and he remains key to Hadef & Partners' operations in Abu Dhabi. **Sadiq Jafar** (see p.2988) is the managing partner of Hadef & Partners. He regularly acts for domestic and regional family companies on group restructurings and corporate governance matters. He also advises international clients on the regulatory aspects of various commercial initiatives in the UAE. **Victoria Woods** (see p.2991) leads Hadef's commercial team from Dubai and is an accomplished lawyer who is well versed in advising both international and domestic clients on franchising, licensing and distribution agreements. She is also particularly skilled in acting for entities hailing from the e-commerce, technology, media and retail sectors on intellectual property and data security mandates.

Band 3

Afridi & Angell

What the team is known for Afridi & Angell offers clients a highly experienced group of lawyers based in Dubai who regularly act on large-scale, business-critical agreements with cross-border elements. The firm is experienced in advising on company establishment and commercial contracts as well as group restructuring and joint ventures. Its expertise in these areas is bolstered by a prolific competition and antitrust group. The team assists a broad range of clients, including domestic and foreign investors, international retail businesses and financial entities. It is further esteemed for its work representing private

equity and venture capital clients.

Strengths

"They carry out work to a high standard and provide very fast responses."

"The team provides useful strategic input."

Notable practitioners

Charles Laubach (see p.2988) is a highly experienced Dubai-based lawyer who is widely acclaimed for his broad commercial advisory practice. His work encompasses joint ventures, group restructuring, due diligence and commercial contracts. **Strengths:** *"Charles is a strong lawyer with a very good understanding of the business environment in the UAE."*

Bracewell LLP

What the team is known for Bracewell has a noteworthy corporate and commercial practice based in Dubai. Its lawyers are widely recognised for their expertise in the defence sector. The firm has additional experience advising clients within the automotive and energy industries and is adept at corporate governance and regulatory mandates. The firm's commercial practice is also accomplished at assisting with distribution and service agreements.

Strengths

"Bracewell are very responsive when providing guidance on the requested matters, as well as when offering forethought on potential areas of concern."

"They are very aware of the current commercial landscape."

Work highlights Bracewell advised Pilot Chemical on a supply agreement signed with the Iraqi Ministry of Energy.

Notable practitioners

Christopher Williams (see p.2991) is a seasoned lawyer who is best known for representing major multinationals in contractual agreements and regulatory matters. Based in Dubai, he particularly excels in distribution agreements and corporate governance issues. **Strengths:** *"Christopher is very responsive, engaged and directly involved in providing guidance. I am impressed with his legal acumen and his understanding of the region."*

Dentons

What the team is known for Dentons is a global law firm whose UAE-based lawyers have a proven track record in high-profile commercial matters. It is recognised for its expert knowledge of local laws and regulations, in addition to its noteworthy international strength. The firm is equally adept advising on domestic, regional and international mandates, including joint ventures, service-provider contracts and regulatory and compliance issues.

Notable practitioners

Iain Black is a key contact.

DLA Piper Middle East LLP

What the team is known for DLA Piper has an active team of lawyers adept at handling a range of corporate and commercial matters, in addition to its capabilities in M&A. It offers advice on joint ventures, corporate governance, shareholder agreements and high-value corporate restructurings. The group advises several notable clients active in the energy, healthcare and entertain-

ment sectors.

Strengths

"DLA Piper are always highly responsive and provide an exceptional level of attention to detail."

"DLA Piper's team are responsive and accessible. This has allowed us to build an excellent working relationship that has resulted in agile advice and support."

Work highlights A DLA Piper team assisted Equinix with the establishment of a joint venture with Omantel for development of a data centre in Oman.

Notable practitioners

Will Seivewright is a key contact in the department.

Norton Rose Fulbright

What the team is known for Norton Rose Fulbright fields a team that is proficient across a range of commercial and general corporate matters, including group restructuring and commercial contracts. The firm's lawyers also provide guidance on market entry, licensing and regulatory issues. Its client base hails from a multitude of sectors, including energy, infrastructure, education and technology.

Strengths

"Client service is always at the heart of what they do. They go above and beyond and they are super-efficient and responsive."

"Norton Rose come up with innovative solutions to manage the complexity of our requirements."

Work highlights A Norton Rose team advised Dar Global on a corporate reorganisation in advance of its public listing.

Notable practitioners

Adjou Ait Ben Idir is a noteworthy lawyer who is highly skilled in corporate governance, joint ventures and internal reorganisations. In each of these areas she is highly capable of advising major international clients on cross-border matters. **Strengths:** *"Adjou is a strategic adviser who provides advice beyond the pure legal aspects, inclusive of a business view."* *"Adjou possesses very strong commercial acumen and she is extremely dedicated to her clients."*

Pinsent Masons LLP

What the team is known for The Dubai corporate team at Pinsent Masons has experience handling major matters on behalf of domestic and international companies, in addition to investment groups. Its lawyers offer notable expertise in corporate structuring and are particularly strong in providing regulatory advice. The firm also regularly acts on joint ventures, as well as distribution, supply and franchising agreements throughout the GCC and beyond.

Strengths

"Pinsent Masons demonstrates a strong sense of commercial awareness. The team possesses a deep understanding of the evolving market landscape, the latest industry trends and related business considerations."

"We receive excellent service and advice."

Work highlights A Pinsent Masons team advised Abu Dhabi Ports on the establishment of a joint venture, alongside Hong Kong-based Belvor, for the development of a logistics and warehousing

hub in Uzbekistan.

Notable practitioners

Mohammad Tbaishat is a notable player in the commercial contracts world. He is well versed in assisting clients with regulatory advice, as well as corporate structurings and restructurings. In addition, he has advised on a number of significant distribution agreements and joint ventures. **Strengths:** *"Mohammad has a dynamic approach to implementation. His extensive practical experience brings value to his work."* *"Mohammad always understands the commercial side of the deal and always provides up-to-date advice."*

Band 4

HFW

What the team is known for HFW's commercial contracts practice comprises lawyers based in both Dubai and Abu Dhabi. The team has expertise in FDI, corporate governance, joint ventures and restructurings. It is widely recognised for its experience providing regulatory advice to clients who operate regionally, particularly with regard to shipping matters. Other specific sectors of expertise include defence, transport, healthcare and energy.

Strengths

"HFW are very customer-focused and responsive."

"All work is delivered within the agreed time frame."

Work highlights HFW advised Force 10 on its joint venture arrangements with the Edge Group.

Notable practitioners

Key contacts include Vince Gordon and Rula Dajani Abuljebain.

Hogan Lovells (Middle East) LLP

What the team is known for Hogan Lovells' Dubai office delivers high-calibre expertise in a diverse range of regional and international matters, including advice on joint ventures as well as distribution agreements. Its sectors of expertise include healthcare and energy. The firm's lawyers are also capable of providing guidance on commercial regulatory issues and corporate restructuring mandates.

Work highlights Hogan Lovells advised Aeroports de Paris International on the restructuring of its UAE business.

Notable practitioners

Imtiaz Shah is a key contact for the department.

Band 5

Addleshaw Goddard LLP

What the team is known for Addleshaw Goddard's Dubai team handles a full range of both corporate and commercial matters, including corporate governance and incorporation. Its lawyers offer expertise in distribution and franchising agreements, in addition to assisting clients with joint venture arrangements and regulatory matters. The firm brings additional value to its commercial practice through its command of data and privacy mandates, particularly in the education and retail sectors.

Strengths

"They do amazing work and they are great at thinking outside of the box."

"Addleshaw Goddard is a truly full-service firm. They have very good regional knowledge and give pragmatic advice."

Work highlights An Addleshaw Goddard team assisted Yum! with the amendment and revision of its franchise agreements and corporate structure in advance of its IPO.

Notable practitioners

Lowri Llwyd is a notable Dubai-based lawyer who is highly proficient in commercial contracts and corporate governance matters. She has further experience in joint ventures, data protection and outsourcing agreements, often acting for international clients from the retail and education sectors.

AMERELLER

What the team is known for AMERELLER fields a robust team of lawyers from its office in Dubai. The firm is adept across the spectrum of corporate and commercial matters, with particular strength in joint ventures. It also excels in corporate restructurings and reorganisations, as well as demonstrating a notable track record in commercial agency and distribution agreements. It regularly acts for international clients on a variety of issues relating to foreign direct investment.

Strengths

"They are well positioned to approach complex questions and matters. One of their most valuable traits is their ability to work with third parties to reach agreements and solutions to roadblocks."

Notable practitioners

Christopher Gunson and Jonathan Noble are co-heads of AMERELLER's corporate and commercial practice in Dubai.

Ashurst

What the team is known for Ashurst's lawyers in Dubai and Abu Dhabi advise a diverse roster of clients, including regional and international corporations. The firm's expertise straddles such industries as energy, utilities and transportation, with the team advising on an array of joint ventures and restructurings. Its lawyers are particularly adept at handling the commercial aspects of major infrastructure projects. The team also maintains notable expertise in Kuwait, where it represents major oil and gas clients.

Strengths

"Ashurst shows a strong cross-border skill set."

"The team are able to grasp difficult concepts quickly and translate them into practical legal suggestions and solutions."

"The firm's advice is prompt, thorough and detailed."

Work highlights Ashurst advised a cloud kitchen provider on the restructuring of its operations across the MENA region.

Notable practitioners

Simon Rahimzada is a key contact.

Bird & Bird (MEA) LLP

What the team is known for Bird & Bird is acknowledged for its particular know-how regarding commercial contracts in the media and technology sectors. With well-established offices in Dubai and Abu Dhabi, its other sectors

of expertise include aviation, telecoms, and food and beverages. The firm's lawyers are especially experienced representing European and US multinationals in joint ventures, franchising agreements and other commercial advisory work across the Middle East.

Strengths

"They are reliable and have deep knowledge of issues relevant to the region."

Work highlights A Bird & Bird team assisted NEOM with the commercial aspects of its development of the NEOM Media Village Studios and Bajdah Desert Studios.

Notable practitioners

Melissa Murray is well regarded for her established franchising practice, acting for global clients across the Middle East. She is also well placed to advise on corporate expansion and licensing issues.

Curtis, Mallet-Prevost, Colt & Mosle LLP

What the team is known for Curtis, Mallet-Prevost, Colt & Mosle has a well-established Dubai office which offers considerable expertise across the spectrum of corporate restructurings and contractual negotiations. Its lawyers frequently represent major international corporations in the technology and food and beverage industries.

Strengths

"The firm provides advice in a clear, comprehensive and practical manner."

"They are very result-oriented and risk-aware."

"We especially appreciate the firm's global approach to addressing client needs."

Notable practitioners

Jeremy Miocevic is an accomplished lawyer with extensive experience advising on a broad range of issues, including corporate structuring, corporate governance and termination agreements. His commercial contracts expertise is complemented by his significant experience in M&A transactions. **Strengths:** *"Jeremy's commercial awareness and understanding is his greatest strength."* *"He stands out particularly as someone who can dissect complex issues and articulate concise, coherent and strategically sensible advice."*

Gowling WLG

What the team is known for The Dubai office of Anglo-Canadian law firm Gowling WLG is home to a strong team of lawyers who are highly experienced in commercial contracts and related matters. The group is frequently called upon to advise clients with regard to in-depth reviews of commercial agreements, compliance matters and business set-up in the region. Its client roster features big-name hospitality groups and tech companies.

Strengths

"Gowling think outside the box and expand the realm of potential solutions."

"The team have a very reliable and flexible approach. They give tailored feedback, taking into account our business set-up and context."

Work highlights A Gowling WLG team assisted a UAE airline with drafting and renegotiating various software service agreements.

Notable practitioners

Tim Casben is a key contact for the practice.

Ince & Co Middle East

What the team is known for Ince Middle East is home to an impressive team of lawyers with considerable expertise in commercial contracts. It is capable of acting for major international clients on the drafting and negotiation of commercial agreements, with further skills in licensing, regulatory advice and corporate restructurings. Clients often hail from the technology, oil and gas, and finance sectors.

Strengths

"The team are very commercially aware."

Work highlights An Ince Middle East team assisted an international software and IT solutions consultancy with the restructuring of its UAE operations.

Notable practitioners

Alastair Holland has a broad practice encompassing contract negotiations and group restructurings relating to M&A transactions, acting for an array of UAE and regional clients. He is also skilled in joint ventures and private equity matters. **Strengths:** *"Alastair is responsive and able to guide people who are not well versed in legal matters."* **Rita Al Semaani Jansen** regularly handles corporate governance and reorganisation matters as well as assisting with sale and purchase agreements. She is also deeply experienced in the drafting and negotiation of shareholder agreements. **Strengths:** *"Rita is available, supportive and able to discuss the matters in detail while still focusing on the end goal."* *"Her remarkable responsiveness and timely decision-making are crucial in overcoming unexpected hurdles and ensuring the matter's completion within the given timeline."*

Mayer Brown LLP

What the team is known for The team at Mayer Brown advises a wide range of clients, including entities hailing from the finance and automotive sectors. It offers wide-ranging expertise in corporate restructurings and governance, and it is equally well versed in providing guidance on contractual issues underpinning major infrastructure developments. The team is based in Dubai.

Strengths

"Mayer Brown's negotiation skills are very client-centric, taking into account our company's position and preferred response times."

"The team offer very practical advice, taking the time to understand the real pressure points."

Notable practitioners

Tom Thraya (see p.2990) is regularly engaged by clients to assist with corporate restructurings and with the drafting and negotiation of service agreements. He chairs the Middle East practice at Mayer Brown and is also the firm's Dubai managing partner.

Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP

What the team is known for Morgan, Lewis & Bockius is a strong international law firm with a skilled team operating across Dubai and Abu Dhabi. The firm is highly experienced in negotiating joint venture agreements as well as creating template contracts for major international clients. It is also well versed in structuring and the

re-domiciliation of corporate entities.

Notable practitioners

Mark Gilligan offers extensive expertise in the negotiation of procurement contracts, as well as in corporate structuring and commercial advisory matters. His client base includes well-known investment entities as well as companies active in the technology and infrastructure spaces.

Trowers & Hamblins

What the team is known for Trowers & Hamblins fields an experienced group of lawyers who can counsel clients on a panoply of commercial contract matters as well as the related regulatory issues and corporate compliance. In addition, the team is able to offer assistance with joint ventures. It advises many major clients, including energy companies, with its corporate team operating out of both Dubai and Abu Dhabi.

Strengths

“The firm provides very reliable and useful advice in a timely fashion.”

“They have an excellent team who break down issues to ensure that the process, requirements and time frame are communicated effectively.”

Work highlights A Trowers & Hamblins team acted

for Arquitectonica on the structuring of a joint venture with a UAE property developer.

Notable practitioners

Bill Jefferies heads the international corporate department and is a key contact at the firm.

Other Ranked Lawyers

Steven Bainbridge of Greenberg Traurig is an accomplished lawyer who is best known for his experience in the sports sector. He regularly advises international clients on commercial contracts, supplier agreements and regulatory issues relating to event management.

Omar Momany is well recognised in the market for his experience advising major multinationals on market entry issues in the UAE and across the Middle East. He is also adept at representing clients in group restructurings and joint venture agreements, while also possessing a significant track record in commercial contract reviews and amendments. He recently joined Squire Patton Boggs after leaving Baker McKenzie.

Alexander Reid is an experienced lawyer who is well versed in the drafting and termination of

cross-border agreements, as well as advising on joint ventures and regulatory matters. He has considerable experience representing clients in the aviation and maritime sectors.

Strengths:

“Alex is very responsive.”

Chris Sioufi of EY Law demonstrates considerable expertise in assisting international entities with joint ventures, shareholder agreements and corporate structuring issues. He is also adept at M&A transactions and the formation of investment funds.

Foreign Experts

Marco De Leo heads the Dubai office of top-tier Italian law firm BonelliErede. He typically acts for Italian corporate clients regarding their operations in the UAE and wider GCC, with deep expertise in contract negotiation and group restructuring.

Strengths:

“Marco De Leo is a very well-rounded legal professional offering a good mix of business acumen and technical skills.”

“Marco is very professional and always available.”

Construction

Band 1

Clyde & Co LLP

What the team is known for Clyde & Co has a highly regarded practice with a longstanding presence in the UAE. Its offices in Abu Dhabi and Dubai offer robust capabilities for matters throughout the MENA region. The firm’s lawyers regularly advise clients on large-scale construction disputes, often acting on the contractor side. The team is further able to assist with a range of non-contentious projects. Clyde & Co also has strengths in sectors such as transportation, energy and infrastructure.

Strengths

“Clyde & Co is capable of handling the most complex and sophisticated issues in the region.”

“I would say it is one of the best construction disputes players in the Middle East. Clyde & Co’s knowledge and expertise in construction is incomparable.”

“The Clyde & Co team is extremely responsive at all times. In my experience, the personal engagement of everyone in the team sets the Clyde & Co team apart.”

Notable practitioners

Mark Blanksby is a Dubai-based lawyer who is well recognised throughout the market for his longevity and depth of practice in construction issues. Alongside his non-contentious work, he is particularly well equipped to handle a number of contentious issues, most significantly arbi-

trations, including before the DIAC. **Strengths:** *“Mark is an absolute pleasure to work with. He exudes calm at all times and is always one step ahead. Mark’s ability to understand the significance of complex technical matters in the context of legal and commercial frameworks is second to none.”* *“He is an excellent lawyer.”* *“Mark Blanksby is a very experienced and reliable lawyer.”* *“Mark is a very well-versed construction partner and highly regarded in the region.”* **Michael Grose** is a distinguished lawyer who possesses considerable strength in contentious construction projects. Based in Dubai, he has particular experience handling arbitrations. **Strengths:** *“Michael is by far the most well-informed and experienced construction partner in the GCC for both contentious and non-contentious work.”* **Alexa Hall** is regularly identified by sources as an up-and-coming lawyer in construction disputes. She works on a range of arbitrations, and her disputes practice is complemented by her experience assisting with the non-contentious aspects of large-scale infrastructure projects. She was promoted to partner at Clyde & Co in 2023. **Strengths:** *“Alexa is one of the most gifted individuals I have come across and she is an absolute joy to work with.”* *“Her attention to detail and ability to quickly grasp complex technical concepts is startling. Alexa combines this ability with an extremely strong legal and commercial understanding, cutting to the very core of issues in any dispute, with great effect.”* *“Alexa Hall is an excellent lawyer.”* *“Alexa is a sensible*

and practical lawyer who demonstrates significant attention to detail.”

Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer

What the team is known for Freshfields has an acclaimed construction practice which continues to be highlighted for its experience in major engineering projects. Its lawyers often assist with issues such as the structuring and negotiation of contracts, procurement matters and risk management. The firm also has strong international capabilities which allow it to act on a wide array of cross-border matters, with the Dubai team often drawing upon disputes expertise based in other Freshfields offices worldwide.

Strengths

“Freshfields has a well-experienced and established team. They offer quick response times.”

“It’s an excellent team with strength in depth. Seemingly, nothing is beyond their capabilities. Each matter is approached with forensic precision, with each member of the team having clearly defined areas of responsibility in which they excel.” *“Freshfields is the standout law firm for complex disputes in the Middle East. They are very proactive.”*

“With their talent and industry knowledge, the Freshfields team is fully equipped to handle the most complex cases. They are very responsive, making sure deadlines are met, no matter how challenging they are.”

Notable practitioners

Construction
Leading Firms
Band 1
Clyde & Co LLP
Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer
Band 2
Addleshaw Goddard LLP
Allen & Overy LLP
Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner LLP
DLA Piper Middle East LLP
King & Spalding LLP
Reed Smith
Band 3
Ashurst
Beale & Co (Middle East)
Clifford Chance LLP
Dentons
Eversheds Sutherland (International) LLP
Herbert Smith Freehills
Pinsent Masons LLP
White & Case LLP
Band 4
Baker McKenzie LLP
CMS (UAE) LLP
Mantle Law
Simmons & Simmons
Squire Patton Boggs
Trowers & Hamlins
Band 5
Al Tamimi & Company
Charles Russell Speechlys
Fenwick Elliott
Hadef & Partners
Horizons & Co Law Firm
K&L Gates
Norton Rose Fulbright
* Indicates individual with profile.
◇ (ORL) = Other Ranked Lawyer.
Alphabetical order within each band. Band 1 is highest.

Erin Miller Rankin is a highly accomplished lawyer who frequently acts on international construction disputes for clients such as contractors and engineering firms. Her work in the UAE includes representing major regional and international entities in ICC arbitrations. **Strengths:** “Erin is an exceptional talent who gets the job done.” “Erin Miller Rankin remains the standard that others aspire to.” “She is a true leader on a global level who always provides a first-class level of service. She maintains a clear vision of the endgame, and is able to adopt a refreshingly straightforward and no-nonsense approach to the realities of resolving complicated disputes.” “She is a highly experienced, commercially astute and pragmatic individual. Erin is tenacious on behalf of her clients.” “Erin is a well-known and well-regarded construction lawyer.” **Kim Rosenberg** (see p.2990) has fast become a go-to lawyer in Dubai for international construction disputes. She is frequently mandated to carry out high-profile and multi-jurisdictional investigations for a broad client base including significant names in the infrastructure sector. **Strengths:** “Kim Rosenberg is an all-rounder. She is really good with technicality, with the law, her team and her clients.” “She is a fantastic lawyer. Highly recommended.” “Kim provides a holistic approach and attention to detail.” “Kim Rosenberg is a clever lawyer who easily navigates through disputes.” **Amr**

Construction: Dispute Resolution
Eminent Practitioners
Eminent Practitioners
Blanksby Mark Clyde & Co LLP
Grose Michael Clyde & Co LLP
Leading Individuals
Band 1
Miller Rankin Erin Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer *
Nelson Michelle Reed Smith
Sutcliffe Jonathan H K&L Gates
Band 2
Bevan Alex Shearman & Sterling LLP (ORL) ◇
Burke Stephen Addleshaw Goddard LLP
Davies Richard Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner LLP
Lilley Charles Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner LLP
Miller Claire Beale & Co (Middle East)
Taylor Paul D Eversheds Sutherland (International) LLP
Wilson Thomas P Squire Patton Boggs
Band 3
Al Zarooni Ali Horizons & Co Law Firm *
Bhullar Ravinder Squire Patton Boggs
Carnell Nick Taylor Wessing (Middle East) LLP (ORL) ◇
Cuffe Cameron Ashurst
Dalley Ian Dentons
Farhad Alain Mayer Brown LLP (ORL) ◇ *
Farmer Bevan Addleshaw Goddard LLP
Heywood Matthew Mantle Law
Kerur Sachin Reed Smith
McLaren Beau Simmons & Simmons
Newbould Suzannah DLA Piper Middle East LLP *
Raymont Mark H Pinsent Masons LLP
Rosenberg Kim Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer *
Band 4
Cairns Cheryl Trowers & Hamlins
Coates Paul Clifford Chance LLP
Dimitracopoulos Antonios BSA Ahmad Bin (ORL) ◇
Ghaffari Amir GHAFARI PARTNERS (ORL) ◇
Ikram Nabeel Vinson & Elkins LLP (ORL) ◇
Karvelis Thanos Charles Russell Speechlys
Mackenzie Andrew DLA Piper Middle East LLP *
O’Leary Dean BLK Partners (ORL) ◇
Oury Nick Herbert Smith Freehills
Richards Lyndon Beale & Co (Middle East)
Ryburn Dean Dentons
Savager Jed Pinsent Masons LLP
Suckling Paul DWF (Middle East) LLP (ORL) ◇
Turrini Michael White & Case LLP
Walker Randall Hogan Lovells (Middle East) LLP (ORL) ◇
Wilson Mark Kennedys (ORL) ◇
Up-and-coming individuals
Dupay Richard Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner LLP
Fairbairn Suzannah Dentons
Hall Alexa Clyde & Co LLP
Kiryushin Slava HFW (ORL) ◇ *
Osman Nesreen Pinsent Masons LLP
Paterson Jennifer K&L Gates
Sibbald Greg CMS (UAE) LLP
Xu Daniel King & Wood Mallesons (ORL) ◇
Associates to watch
Omran Amr Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer *

Omran (see p.2989) enters the ranking table in recognition of his assistance with a variety of contentious construction matters. He frequently represents contractors and engineering companies in arbitration. **Strengths:** “Amr Omran quietly and calmly goes about being an exceptional lawyer.”

Construction: Non-contentious
Leading Individuals
Band 1
Burbury Tim King & Spalding LLP
Band 2
Karia Sachin Allen & Overy LLP *
Kerur Sachin Reed Smith
Band 3
Davies Richard Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner LLP
Kaur Gurmeet Pinsent Masons LLP
Kramer Nicholas Norton Rose Fulbright
Laher Inaamul Clifford Chance LLP
Nash Jon Dentons
Robottom Luke Ashurst
Band 4
Hakim Ibaad White & Case LLP
Rahman Hasan Trowers & Hamlins
Richards Lyndon Beale & Co (Middle East)
Swarbrick Tom Bracewell LLP (ORL) ◇ *

Band 2

Addleshaw Goddard LLP

What the team is known for Addleshaw Goddard is an accomplished international law firm with a strong presence both in the UAE and in the wider GCC region. The firm advises on the full life cycle of construction projects, from financing to any resultant disputes, and is regularly called upon to assist contractors, subcontractors and consultants with the full spectrum of contentious and non-contentious mandates. Addleshaw Goddard serves a range of clients in the infrastructure and utilities sectors, and its lawyers also possess significant experience in energy projects.

Strengths

“The team is very well versed in construction-related issues in the Middle East and is able to provide advice as and when required. The firm has very high service levels and has a real sense of responsiveness.”

“Addleshaw has sound knowledge and great experience. They are always able to provide the support we require.”

“Addleshaw Goddard is a very capable team. They are well-structured, experienced and responsive. They always meet deadlines, however demanding. They provide high-quality work and they are calm under pressure.”

Notable practitioners

Stephen Burke is praised by clients for his strengths in arbitration, including matters conducted under UNCITRAL rules. He is also particularly esteemed for his strong drafting capabilities.

Strengths: “Stephen is an extremely talented lawyer at every level. An arbitration expert, master tactician and expert cross-examiner. He has many strings to his bow and always gives his all.” “He is one of those rare individuals who has a natural instinct and ability to cross-examine witnesses with precision. He is just a phenomenal advocate and also has practical problem-solving skills.” A Dubai-based lawyer, **Bevan Farmer** is well versed in international construction arbitrations, including DIAC and ICC proceedings. Frequent clients of his include developers, contractors and subcontractors. He splits his time between Dubai and Doha. **Strengths:** “Sometimes, you get surprised by a dispute that escalates, so you need to come up with

Foreign Experts Construction
Based in United Arab Emirates with expertise in countries listed below
Bahrain Cairns Cheryl Trowers & Hamlins
Oman Cairns Cheryl Trowers & Hamlins
United Arab Emirates expertise based in countries listed below
Malaysia Shepherd Craig Herbert Smith Freehills LLP

a strategy which was not foreseen in the contract. That is what Bevan is good at."

Allen & Overy LLP

What the team is known for This team draws praise for its strengths in non-contentious mandates, regularly advising on big-ticket infrastructure projects. From its Dubai and Abu Dhabi offices, the firm frequently serves oil and gas clients and has complementary expertise acting for financial institutions on the financing of major construction projects. Its lawyers have notable experience concerning the construction and operation of district cooling plants and renewable energy projects. A&O's merger with US law firm Shearman & Sterling, set to go ahead in the first half of 2024, will add significant contentious construction experience to its offering.

Strengths

"The team is extremely knowledgeable and comes with various suggestions to assist with negotiations. They are available whenever we need them."

"They have an impressive ability to deal with the most complex of transactions."

"They're always available and go above and beyond for the client and the project. They are excellent lawyers and commercially astute."

Work highlights The firm continued to advise TAPI Pipeline Company on non-contentious issues arising from the construction of a major gas pipeline crossing through Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India.

Notable practitioners

Sachin Karia (see p.2988) is an experienced construction lawyer based in Dubai. He works with a number of major energy clients on a variety of projects. He is especially well versed in procurement agreements and PPP contracts. **Strengths:** "Sachin is an insightful construction lawyer." "Sachin Karia is one of the top legal advisers I work with."

Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner LLP

What the team is known for Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner (BCLP) is frequently sought out to assist clients with major construction joint ventures and large-scale construction projects, including mixed-use developments. Its lawyers regularly work on behalf of master developers, developers and contractors on mandates that often feature cross-border elements. The firm also assists clients with engineering disputes.

Strengths

"BCLP provides a high level of service and quick feedback. They are very timely and efficient in completing the tasks entrusted to them. They are an experienced law firm with a fresh perspective on many issues."

"They have excellent depth and breadth in the field

of construction disputes. A highly responsive team, with deliverables that consistently meet expectations."

"Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner is very experienced and has capable partners, counsel and senior associates, who are supported by high-quality associates and trainees. The team is very client-centric and always available."

"They are excellent. They produce high-quality work, think strategically, run complex disputes efficiently and are a pleasure to deal with."

Work highlights A Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner team acted for cladding subcontractor J&H Emirates on its USD245 million claim against the main contractor undertaking construction work for the Midfield Terminal Building Project at Abu Dhabi airport.

Notable practitioners

Middle East managing partner **Richard Davies** has extensive knowledge of both the contentious and non-contentious aspects of construction mandates, in which he often represents lenders and contractors. Well respected among peers for his multifaceted practice, he also has strengths in building and ancillary contracts, as well as arbitrations. **Strengths:** "Richard is very efficient and also very good at managing the team. He is practical and knowledgeable." **Charles Lilley** regularly acts on engineering and construction disputes with cross-border elements. An experienced lawyer based in Abu Dhabi, his clientele includes both developers and contractors. **Strengths:** "I highly recommend Charles Lilley. He produces high-quality work, thinks strategically, runs disputes efficiently and is a pleasure to deal with." "There is no one to rival Charles for his quality and volume of experience. He's a personable and strong character who's very strong in the local market." "Charles is a hard-working and highly competent individual with an eye for the tough issues. He has the experience and foresight to anticipate and alert contractors to the direction of events." "Charles delivers a highly responsive and technically excellent service." **Richard Dupay** is experienced assisting clients with LCIA, DIAC and ADCAC arbitrations. Based in Abu Dhabi, he was recently promoted to partner, having previously been ranked as an associate to watch. **Strengths:** "Richard is very detail-oriented and hard-working. He possesses good legal knowledge and has a good grasp of the technical side of things." "Richard Dupay is an expert in his field and always gives solution-oriented advice." "He's super-competent, nice to deal with and very good with clients. He has a very good manner about him and is technically capable."

DLA Piper Middle East LLP

What the team is known for DLA Piper is a well-regarded law firm with a strong footprint in the Middle East. The firm maintains a full-service construction team in its Dubai office with expertise in transactional and contentious mandates. The team frequently advises developers on multipurpose units. Its lawyers are noted for assisting clients with high-profile construction matters in sectors such as retail, infrastructure and energy.

Strengths

"The law firm shows tremendous dedication and expertise during the bidding phase and the finan-

cial closing."

"DLA's team is very supportive. They are extremely responsive."

Work highlights A DLA team assisted Bee'ah with various issues relating to its construction of a new headquarters building in Sharjah.

Notable practitioners

Suzannah Newbould (see p.2989) is praised by sources for her strong capabilities in arbitrations before the DIAC. She advises on the construction aspects of various public utility and retail projects. **Strengths:** "Suzannah Newbould is a very active and visible construction lawyer." **Andrew Mackenzie** (see p.2988) is a Dubai-based lawyer who is highly skilled in representing contractors and developers across the full range of construction disputes. He is especially prolific in acting on cases held before the DIFC courts.

King & Spalding LLP

What the team is known for King & Spalding has an esteemed construction practice based in Abu Dhabi and which has particular expertise in non-contentious construction. The firm is frequently sought out to assist with a broad spectrum of transactional mandates. Its lawyers are known for their expertise in utilities projects, particularly those relating to water and district cooling, as well as renewable energy schemes. Its clients include multinational companies and government entities. The team's experience includes advising on issues relating to the maintenance and operation of large-scale project developments.

Strengths

"The law firm is extremely good at handling complex and sophisticated matters. They are extremely responsive and reliable."

"King & Spalding has a proactive team that offers an excellent depth of coverage."

"King & Spalding has an exceptional knowledge of the market and commercial matters. They are world-class, sophisticated and pragmatic."

Work highlights King & Spalding advised Korea Electric Power Company on its role as contractor on the Jafurah co-generation project being procured by Saudi Aramco.

Notable practitioners

Tim Burbury is an eminent Abu Dhabi-based lawyer who is widely praised for his robust non-contentious construction practice. He possesses extensive knowledge of PPP projects, with strong expertise in district cooling mandates. He is also experienced in infrastructure transactions and construction financings. **Strengths:** "Tim Burbury is an outstanding partner."

Reed Smith

What the team is known for From its offices in Dubai and Abu Dhabi, Reed Smith is able to advise clients on construction-related transactional work, including procurement issues and PPP projects. The firm's lawyers are also active on contentious matters, including ICC arbitrations. The team is experienced in representing contractors and employers, including oil and gas companies.

Strengths

"The firm has a team that is able to handle complex issues. They have good industry acumen and they are always available."

"They think outside the box and know when to take a pragmatic approach."

"They demonstrate a collaborative team spirit that fosters effective communication and cohesiveness, reinforcing their ability to handle high-stakes scenarios smoothly."

"The team is very good and they are capable of understanding the complexity in EPC contracts and other construction-related matters."

Notable practitioners

Michelle Nelson is a significant lawyer in the market who divides her time between Dubai and Abu Dhabi. She demonstrates a wealth of knowledge in ICC arbitrations. She is also deeply experienced in the DIFC courts and frequently acts for both contractors and subcontractors. **Strengths:** *"Michelle is extremely capable. She has a fantastic knowledge of construction law and contract interpretation."* *"Michelle Nelson stands out as an exceptional lawyer with a unique blend of extensive legal knowledge and astute business sense. Her capacity to navigate intricate legal issues with clarity and her knack for explaining complex legal concepts plainly make her a standout in her field."* *"She has an incredible level of knowledge of the issues across various technical fields. She also understands the importance of timely communication and a team-based approach."* *"Her ingenuity and savviness, combined with her affable and respectful personality, have made her a long-time ally for her clients."*

Sachin Kerur splits his time between Dubai and Abu Dhabi. He is highly knowledgeable in infrastructure construction projects, both on the contentious and non-contentious sides. He heads Reed Smith's Middle East offices and is strongly experienced in arbitrations and contractual construction mandates. **Strengths:** *"Sachin is pragmatic, practical and no-nonsense. He is shrewd and gets results. He is easy to deal with and stands up for his clients."* *"He is a leading figure in construction disputes in the region, especially in complex and highly charged disputes."* *"Sachin Kerur is a well-known construction specialist."*

Band 3

Ashurst

What the team is known for Ashurst is a strong law firm whose Dubai and Abu Dhabi offices provide clients with advice on the full life cycle of construction projects based within the UAE. The team's lawyers also support clients across the GCC on oil and gas, power and renewable energy projects. Ashurst offers a full-service practice covering both the contentious and non-contentious aspects of construction mandates. The firm's clientele includes both contractors and developers.

Strengths

"The Ashurst team is one of the strongest in the MENA region."

Work highlights Ashurst assisted ADNOC with the construction and other aspects of Project Lightning, which it jointly procured alongside Abu Dhabi National Energy Company and which involved the creation of two high-voltage sub-sea power transmission systems.

Notable practitioners

Cameron Cuffe is skilled at representing government entities and contractors in significant construction arbitrations. **Strengths:** *"Cameron is very knowledgeable about the industry and he understands the commercial risks. He is clearly a leading expert in the MENA region."* **Luke Robottom** is an Abu Dhabi-based lawyer who is widely praised for his strengths acting on contractual construction matters. He demonstrates a strong understanding of the transactional aspects of construction, with further experience in energy and infrastructure projects. **Strengths:** *"Luke is a great point of call for all commercial and industry matters. He has a sensible approach and works with efficiency even on complex matters."* *"Luke is a committed and tireless counsel for his clients."*

Beale & Co (Middle East)

What the team is known for Beale & Co is an international boutique law firm with an emphasis on construction, engineering and insurance mandates. Its Dubai office possesses a deep understanding of international arbitrations and mediations in the construction sphere, and is also knowledgeable on non-contentious matters. Its lawyers act for an impressive list of developers and construction contractors on a range of infrastructure and mixed-use real estate projects.

Strengths

"It's an exceptional team that is very hard-working, bright and pleasant."

Work highlights Beale & Co has an ongoing retainer agreement with ALEC Engineering and Contracting, assisting the client with a number of front-end construction mandates.

Notable practitioners

Claire Miller is the managing partner of Beale & Co's Dubai office. She is an esteemed lawyer who is widely known for her deep experience in construction disputes, particularly arbitrations. **Strengths:** *"She is impressive, knowledgeable and gets good results."* *"Claire's leadership skills and savviness are top-notch. She takes the GC by the hand and advises them with the right proposals."* *"She is simply outstanding and one of the best and most pleasant lawyers I've ever worked with. She is always calm under pressure and provides reassuring legal guidance that is second to none."* **Lyndon Richards** is a well-regarded lawyer who represents clients in both contentious and non-contentious work. He is well versed in assisting engineering companies, contractors and design consultancies with a wide range of issues.

Clifford Chance LLP

What the team is known for Clifford Chance has a highly regarded construction practice with a long-standing presence in the UAE. Its offices in Abu Dhabi and Dubai offer robust capabilities for matters throughout the MENA region. The team regularly advises clients on large-scale construction disputes, often on the contractor side. Its lawyers are further able to assist with a range of non-contentious projects. The firm also has strengths in sectors such as energy and infrastructure.

Strengths

"They have a very experienced and knowledgeable team in construction. They are thorough, with a good breadth of knowledge."

"Clifford has a very good team of highly competent and effective staff at all levels."

Work highlights Clifford Chance assisted ADNOC with its construction of a multibillion-dollar LNG liquefaction plant being developed in the UAE.

Notable practitioners

Inaamul Laher heads the firm's regional construction practice from Abu Dhabi. He advises on construction and development of projects in the oil and gas, infrastructure and power sectors.

Strengths: *"He's a very experienced and trusted lawyer."* *"Inaamul is a first-class and very understanding person, and a go-to guy for all our legal support requirements."* *"A superb attorney."* Dubai-based **Paul Coates** is the partner in charge of Clifford Chance's Middle East construction disputes practice. He is well respected within the market and has considerable experience relating to contentious construction issues in the energy sector. **Strengths:** *"He is extremely intelligent and hard-working. He is also very charming and effective at both managing his team and dealing with sophisticated clients."* *"Paul Coates offers top-quality work."*

Dentons

What the team is known for Dentons maintains a strong construction practice with highly rated capabilities throughout the GCC region, and fielding specialist lawyers in its offices in Dubai and Abu Dhabi. The firm is active on high-profile construction disputes, including high-value arbitrations. Its key clients hail from sectors such as oil and gas, transportation and energy. The team also possesses considerable experience assisting with non-contentious matters relating to large-scale construction projects as diverse as airports, desalination plants and district cooling facilities.

Strengths

"Dentons is excellent. We receive very quick and responsive turnaround. They are a very strong construction team with a breadth of experience."

"Their team has vast experience, particularly within construction dispute resolution."

"The team has huge experience in complex and difficult matters across the spectrum of construction disputes. They have great people at all levels to ensure that matters are handled appropriately."

"Dentons has a great, knowledgeable team with plenty of capacity to bring additional people in as needed. They have fantastic knowledge of the market."

Work highlights Dentons acted for Al Farwaniya Property Developments on contentious and non-contentious issues stemming from the Reem Mall project in Abu Dhabi.

Notable practitioners

Ian Dalley is a dual-qualified lawyer and engineer who utilises his experience to advise clients on significant construction disputes, including those held before the ICC. He is now a part-time consultant, having stepped down as Abu Dhabi managing partner in 2023. **Strengths:** *"Ian Dalley has a great understanding of the client and the case's needs."* **Jon Nash** is an Abu Dhabi-based lawyer who possesses considerable depth in the market, with over two decades of experience advising clients on construction contracts and infrastructure projects. He regularly acts as counsel to both

sponsors and lenders. **Strengths:** “He is a superb professional.” **Dean Ryburn** heads the firm’s construction practice in the UAE. He is sought after for his experience acting for clients in arbitration proceedings to resolve construction project disputes. **Strengths:** “Dean Ryburn is tactically excellent, with a keen eye for detail and the strategic nuance of a case.” “He has the capacity to digest huge amounts of information, reads a tribunal well and anticipates points before they arise. His construction knowledge is top-notch and he delivers results. Dean is a safe pair of hands to deal with the largest and most difficult cases.” **Suzannah Fairbairn** is an up-and-coming lawyer with experience acting for architects, government entities, commercial banks and petrochemicals companies on an array of cases stemming from the construction of assets as diverse as airports and sporting venues. **Strengths:** “Her written work is excellent and she is incredibly diligent. She is quick to respond to client queries with sound, pragmatic advice.” “She is an excellent professional and also a very down-to-earth, commercial and practical lawyer.” “She is a very capable counsel with great knowledge of international arbitration rules and local laws. She is also very focused on client needs and ensures all submissions are made on time and at the required high level of quality.”

Eversheds Sutherland (International) LLP

What the team is known for In the context of construction, the Dubai office of Eversheds Sutherland is especially highlighted for its disputes expertise. More broadly, the firm is noted for its expansive geographical footprint in the MENA region, positioning it well to assist with multi-jurisdictional contentious issues. Its lawyers possess a wealth of knowledge regarding disputes in the energy and infrastructure sectors, with particular experience in renewables.

Strengths

“The legal advice is practical, clear and well-structured. Eversheds Sutherland’s lawyers are always available for meetings and calls. Tight deadlines are met and they are a well-rounded team.”

“The construction practice group offers a high ability to comprehend technical issues and provide practical solutions.”

“Their professionalism and responsiveness are truly commendable. Throughout the entire process, they consistently display a deep understanding of the legal complexities involved and have the ability to explain them in a clear and concise manner.”

“Eversheds is solid, responsive, supportive, efficient and collaborative.”

“The Eversheds Sutherland team shows great attention to detail and understands the complexity of the case. They offer a wide range of knowledge across the team.”

Notable practitioners

Paul Taylor is a Dubai-based lawyer who utilises his broad experience of the region to advise on cross-border construction disputes, including cases concerning delays and disruptions. **Strengths:** “We are delighted to convey our utmost satisfaction with his exceptional communication and strategic skills, as well as his vast knowledge and expertise, which enable him to effectively

represent and advocate on our behalf.” “He is very technically savvy and accommodating.” “Paul is one of the most knowledgeable and commercially astute lawyers we’ve had the pleasure of working with. He is very approachable and excels at helping us navigate complex arbitrations, delivering practical and effective legal assistance.” “Paul Taylor is very experienced and very capable.”

Herbert Smith Freehills

What the team is known for Herbert Smith Freehills offers a dynamic construction team in Dubai, whose practice is aided by the firm’s robust global footprint. The team is highlighted for its construction arbitration expertise as well as its cross-border activity. Its lawyers act for a wide variety of high-profile real estate developers, energy companies and utilities providers. The firm also has particular experience executing a range of contractual work for clients in the oil and gas sector.

Strengths

“The practice group is excellent and I am really impressed with how they manage the dispute collaboratively by utilising resources from multiple global locations. They are quick to respond and always offer proactive and positive solutions to issues that arise.”

“Herbert Smith Freehills is extremely good at handling complex and sophisticated matters. They are extremely responsive and reliable.”

“The team at HSF has an excellent knowledge of construction in the region, and always responds quickly and efficiently on complex and sophisticated projects. The advice is always reliable and accurate and we have confidence in their knowledge and advice.”

“HSF are very hands-on and proactive in dealing with all aspects of the dispute, working well with experts and clients to provide a well-managed and effective outcome. They are highly responsive.”

Notable practitioners

Nick Oury leads the firm’s regional contentious construction practice from Dubai and is widely recognised for his skills in arbitration. His clients include international oil and gas companies. **Strengths:** “Nick is a highly capable and experienced practitioner, and is also always very approachable to clients and colleagues alike. As an arbitration specialist he is not only in an elite field, but is also a joy to work with.” “Nick is very hands-on in managing the case from start to finish.” “Nick Oury is a very smart lawyer. The added value that he brings to the firm is strong.” **Craig Shepherd** is particularly skilled in ICC arbitrations arising from EPC contracts and energy projects. Based in the firm’s Kuala Lumpur office, he is well equipped to handle mandates for contractors and developers.

Pinsent Masons LLP

What the team is known for Pinsent Masons frequently draws praise for its MENA region construction expertise, with considerable knowledge of renewable energy and infrastructure projects. The firm’s Dubai office offers a full-service construction practice, capable of assisting with transactional matters as well as major disputes. Its lawyers are also particularly skilled in construction matters arising in the hospitality, energy and technology sectors.

Strengths

“Pinsent Masons is very pragmatic. They engage well with us as clients and they are good strategists.”

“The team is able to navigate their clients through all aspects of a bidding process. They offer a strong capability to handle complicated issues; they are strong on technical, legal and strategic matters.”

Work highlights Pinsent Masons represented a leading UAE property developer in a series of arbitrations (with a cumulative value of more than AED1 billion) resulting from its role on two major construction projects in Dubai.

Notable practitioners

Gurmeet Kaur is a prominent lawyer in the non-contentious construction market, particularly with regard to her work advising international lenders and energy clients on infrastructure projects. **Strengths:** “She is an excellent team leader. A thorough and dependable lawyer with a clear commitment to client results.” **Mark Raymont** is an esteemed lawyer who is deeply knowledgeable in engineering and construction arbitrations. He leads the firm’s construction disputes team in Dubai, and has experience acting for several major property developers, in addition to other high-profile clients. **Strengths:** “Mark is an excellent lawyer and a pleasure to work with.” “He is a capable and sharp lawyer.” **Jed Savager** assists clients with construction contracts and any contentious work which follows, particularly within the energy and infrastructure sectors. He has experience in ICC and UNCITRAL arbitrations.

Strengths: “Jed is a very talented lawyer.” “Jed Savager is very supportive in strategy matters and disputes.” **Nesreen Osman** has experience counselling on construction disputes occurring across the GCC and wider Middle East. She regularly acts for contractors in their disputes with subcontractors and employers. **Strengths:** “Nesreen Osman is a superb lawyer. She’s immensely hard-working, a great strategist, and fantastic with clients – as well as being a delight to work with.” “Nesreen is a future star, certainly a lawyer who is coming through the ranks.” “Nesreen is an Arabic speaker who is extremely good with regional Middle Eastern clients.”

White & Case LLP

What the team is known for White & Case is regularly highlighted for its strengths in the construction sector both regionally and on a global scale. The firm is active on contentious cross-border mandates as well as infrastructure arbitrations and FIDIC disputes. It also offers a strong regional practice acting for clients from across the GCC, and is frequently sought out by major energy companies and state-owned entities. Furthermore, its lawyers possess a wealth of experience in non-contentious contractual matters, acting particularly for government entities and energy groups.

Strengths

“White & Case has one of the strongest construction teams in the region. The lawyers are very well trained, work seamlessly across offices and teams, and are real experts in the field of construction law.” “The firm is phenomenal in the advice and guidance provided. The team consistently displays a proac-

tive approach to communication and a willingness to engage in open dialogue. This level of service and responsiveness contributes to a positive client experience and instils confidence in their capabilities."

"White & Case provides excellent service and is very responsive, with very swift and efficient turnaround. The team at W&C has an excellent knowledge of construction in the region and is excellent at sorting out complex procurements with their methodical, informed and absolute eye for detail."

"It is an extremely competent and engaged team who can see the big technical picture. They are very commercially savvy."

"White & Case has a solid technical understanding of construction cases. They are always prompt in replying to any enquiries."

Notable practitioners

Ibaad Hakim is a dual-qualified lawyer in England & Wales as well as Pakistan, and who is currently based in Abu Dhabi. He is increasingly active in construction matters, with recent experience handling matters in the oil and gas, infrastructure and real estate sectors. **Strengths:** "Ibaad is an excellent lawyer who is incredibly responsive, commercially aware and able to simplify incredibly complex legal issues. He has a real depth of experience in the Middle East and in Pakistan, and he is a safe pair of hands when it comes to construction-related matters." "Ibaad Hakim's in-depth industry knowledge and strategic insights are evident at every step of our collaboration. Ibaad's meticulous attention to detail, combined with his proactive approach to anticipating potential challenges, prove invaluable in navigating the complexities of the sector."

Michael Turrini is an adept lawyer who assists clients with construction mandates originating across the GCC. He is well versed in an array of construction disputes, including those related to real estate and infrastructure projects. **Strengths:** "He is popular with clients. He will make himself available at any time, which is appreciated."

Band 4

Baker McKenzie LLP

What the team is known for Baker McKenzie offers a notable construction practice in Dubai. The team has strong experience in a range of commercial construction transactions, particularly in contractual matters. Its lawyers also demonstrate significant capabilities in disputes. The firm acts for an extensive client list consisting of contractors, subcontractors, engineers and developers.

Strengths

"Baker McKenzie is very well qualified on legal, financial and technical topics. They offer quick responses and very efficient case management."

Notable practitioners

Luka Kristovic-Blazevic is a key client contact.

CMS (UAE) LLP

What the team is known for The Dubai office of CMS maintains a strong focus on construction issues in sectors such as hospitality and energy. The firm is able to advise on both transactional and contentious work and possesses a wealth of experience acting for contractors. Its lawyers

are also skilled in acting on construction disputes related to oil and gas projects.

Strengths

"The lawyers at CMS have great experience and a very good track record in construction matters. They always get great feedback from the top construction companies for their work."

"It is a strong team that provides detailed and fast advice. They are very responsive. The advice also takes into account the details and makes sure each point is addressed."

"I receive first-class service from CMS. I have full confidence that they have the expertise to properly manage whatever complex issue arises."

"The CMS team offers exceptional service and client care. They are a very high-quality team."

Work highlights CMS represented Técnicas Reunidas Saudia for Services and Contracting, as the main contractor on a gas plant being developed in Saudi Arabia, in an GBP8 million dispute with one of its subcontractors.

Notable practitioners

Greg Sibbald enters the ranking table in recognition of his increasingly high-profile construction disputes work. He represents several multi-jurisdictional clients in arbitration and litigation proceedings arising out of large-scale energy and infrastructure matters. **Strengths:** "Greg is fantastic. He has great input in each meeting. He is constructive and does not waste time. He is always constructive and his understanding of the UAE is great." "Greg is a highly recommended lawyer." "He is very responsive to queries and does a good job." "Greg Sibbald has a down-to-earth demeanour and is easy to get on with. He is very diligent and has a very good work ethic."

Mantle Law

What the team is known for Mantle Law is a well-regarded boutique law firm that assists domestic and international clients with contentious construction matters, including ICC arbitrations and contractor disputes. The lawyers here also have experience advising both developers and contractors. Mantle Law advises clients from its headquarters in Abu Dhabi as well as its office in London.

Strengths

"Mantle Law provides advice in an easily digestible way. They are very responsive and able to react quickly."

"Mantle is a boutique firm with a strong strategic approach to dispute resolution. They possess a very effective team that works hard to ensure each and every possible angle is covered."

"Mantle Law offers an excellent team that is very personable and has huge knowledge. They all have considerable experience in the region and in construction disputes specifically. Their all-round ability is superb and they always keep in mind the bigger picture of the commercial realities of the dispute."

Notable practitioners

Matthew Heywood is the founding partner of the firm. Based in Abu Dhabi, he leads the practice, with a particular focus on construction disputes in the infrastructure and energy sectors. **Strengths:** "Matthew Heywood is a very efficient lawyer who provides clear and focused advice." "He instils con-

fidence in clients and builds relationships. He gives his clients ultimate confidence and good advice." "Matthew Heywood is a go-to lawyer for large, complex construction disputes." "He is an outstanding lawyer with great commercial acumen."

Simmons & Simmons

What the team is known for Simmons & Simmons leverages its strong international footprint to assist clients with both disputes and transactional mandates in the UAE. The firm regularly acts on behalf of construction companies and contractors. Its lawyers are particularly noted for their wealth of experience in large construction and infrastructure disputes. The team also advises on issues throughout the MENA region, acting for an impressive international client base.

Strengths

"The team is very responsive and attuned to the client's legal and commercial objectives."

"Simmons & Simmons has extremely experienced partners who are willing to take a practical, hands-on approach so the client is well advised and represented."

"The Simmons team is excellent at very quickly gaining an understanding of complicated and technical issues which allows the legal team and technical experts to work together seamlessly."

"The team is very capable and good at responding."

Notable practitioners

Beau McLaren is well regarded for his formidable contentious construction practice, and noted for his particular experience handling arbitrations conducted under ICC rules. His acts for hospitality clients as well as transportation groups. **Strengths:** "Beau is a very capable construction partner who knows the region very well." "Beau is very focused on strategies to deliver optimum results for the client."

Squire Patton Boggs

What the team is known for From its UAE base, the Squire Patton Boggs construction team advises a range of clients, including international and local contractors as well as sovereign governments, ministries and government agencies. The firm is noted for its skill in litigation and arbitration mandates. It is well placed to leverage the strengths of the firm's recently opened office in Saudi Arabia on cross-border matters.

Strengths

"Squire Patton Boggs offers first-rate client care. They are a great team."

Notable practitioners

Thomas Wilson is an accomplished lawyer who has a wealth of experience representing clients in significant multi-jurisdictional disputes, including high-stakes ICC and DIAC arbitrations. **Ravinder Bhullar** is an esteemed lawyer who is widely acknowledged for his considerable strengths across a range of construction disputes. He is based in Dubai and is particularly skilled in representing contractors before the DIAC. **Strengths:** "Ravinder is highly experienced, sensible and caring of clients' interests. He works hard for his clients." "He provides great client care and is fantastic to work with."

Trowers & Hamblins

What the team is known for The Dubai office of Trowers & Hamblins is home to a full-service construction practice acting on a range of non-contentious matters and disputes. The firm advises major high-profile clients such as governments, project companies and financial institutions. Its lawyers are experienced in arbitrations, particularly in the energy and infrastructure sectors.

Strengths

"A very effective team with a personal approach. They always punch above their weight and are very, very impressive."

"Trowers & Hamblins immediately responds to emails and calls. They offer clear communication and detailed responses to each item as well as clearly outlining options and approaches."

"Trowers & Hamblins has a strong team in Dubai and international offices that can offer extra support. As a firm they are very client-oriented."

Work highlights Trowers & Hamblins acted for Bahrain Development Bank on the construction contract for redevelopment of the Sitra Mall in Bahrain.

Notable practitioners

Cheryl Cairns possesses considerable expertise in construction disputes across the region, with a particular focus on Oman and Bahrain. She is adept at handling engineering disputes, especially matters concerning delay and procurement issues. **Strengths:** *"She is a good team leader and is highly regarded."* *"Cheryl Cairns is an excellent lawyer."* *"Cheryl is simply superb. She's always on top of the most challenging issues and fights hard for your best interests."* **Hasan Rahman** assists clients with various contractual and non-contentious construction issues, such as the negotiation of contracts. Based in Abu Dhabi, his recent work encompasses matters in Saudi Arabia, Oman and Bahrain, as well as in the UAE. **Strengths:** *"Hasan is very knowledgeable regarding construction contracts in the region. For example, he understands the nuances that the impact of specific conditions may have on the overall project. He gives excellent and clear advice."* *"Hasan Rahman is a pleasure to work with and has helped us turn around an important project on time."*

Band 5

Al Tamimi & Company

What the team is known for Al Tamimi & Company is a leading Middle Eastern law firm noted for its deep knowledge of the local market combined with its expansive reach throughout the region. Primarily staffing construction matters from its Abu Dhabi office, the firm assists clients with contentious mandates as well as transactional construction matters, including contract negotiations and the construction of mixed-use developments. Its lawyers frequently work on behalf of developers, subcontractors and other clients in sectors such as tourism and oil and gas.

Work highlights An Al Tamimi team assisted Abu Dhabi Motor Management with the track redesign and associated construction works for the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix.

Notable practitioners

Euan Lloyd is a key contact.

Charles Russell Speechlys

What the team is known for Charles Russell Speechlys' Dubai-based construction team advises on a variety of contentious and non-contentious issues. The UAE team is able to leverage the firm's enduringly strong reputation in Bahrain, often working on cross-border matters alongside its Bahrain-based colleagues. The department typically acts for hotel brands, engineering companies and banks, and is also notable for its ability to advise clients on Emirati civil court proceedings as well as representing them in arbitration.

Strengths

"The Charles Russell team is incredibly competent and able to grasp complex construction-related and technical matters."

"It's a great team to work with. They are collaborative and responsive."

"Charles Russell Speechlys' strength lies in their understanding of the complexities of construction activities."

"CRS has a strong, knowledgeable and helpful team. The law firm is ready and willing to assist with all queries and issues."

Work highlights A CRS team successfully assisted Reem Emirates Aluminium with its resolution of a AED17 million dispute with FIVE Real Estate Development arising from the construction contract for FIVE Jumeirah Village.

Notable practitioners

Thanos Karvelis is a seasoned construction partner with a wealth of experience acting for developers, contractors and other stakeholders in multimillion-dollar disputes. His practice also sees him assisting with the enforcement of foreign judgments. **Strengths:** *"He is a fantastic lawyer and a pleasure to work with. He provides good advocacy and commerciality."* *"Thanos is a very strong legal professional with great commercial awareness and long-term experience."*

Fenwick Elliott

What the team is known for Fenwick Elliott is a global construction boutique which has maintained a presence in Dubai for close to a decade. It is especially active on contentious construction, with work relating to a variety of real estate, infrastructure and energy projects located throughout the Middle East. The local team works in tandem with its London colleagues on a number of significant matters.

Strengths

"Fenwick Elliott provide clear, focused advice."

Notable practitioners

A key contact in the firm is Patrick Stone.

Hadef & Partners

What the team is known for Heavyweight domestic law firm Hadef & Partners offers a robust construction practice that is able to represent clients at all levels of the UAE and DIFC courts, utilising its substantial knowledge of local litigation. The firm also often assists with arbitration claims against government entities and acts for a wide variety of international clients.

Notable practitioners

Key contacts include James Harbridge and Basil

Siddiqi.

Horizons & Co Law Firm

What the team is known for Horizons & Co Law Firm is a respected Emirati law firm which is widely praised for its knowledge of construction. The team is typically active representing multi-jurisdictional clients in litigation and arbitration proceedings. In such matters it has extensive experience counselling developers, contractors and banks on cases involving issues such as extension of time and defaults on payment.

Strengths

"Horizons & Co has an excellent reputation for construction disputes work."

"The practice is able to handle complex and difficult matters from a local law perspective."

"Horizons is adept at dealing with international as well as local disputes and is able to guide a client through the issues with clarity."

Work highlights Horizons represented Dubai Islamic Bank, as claimant, in a AED200 million dispute relating to the terms of a financial facility through which the defendant had been able to undertake a major construction project.

Notable practitioners

Managing partner **Ali Al Zarooni** (see p.2984) is a much-esteemed Emirati disputes lawyer who is noted for his frequent handling of high-value construction litigation cases. He is equally well versed in major international arbitrations conducted under the auspices of such institutions as the ICC and DIAC. **Strengths:** *"Ali is very sharp when it comes to global strategy and objectives as well as counter-strategy before the local courts or at arbitration."* *"Ali is the ideal co-counsel on large, complicated international arbitrations under UAE law."* *"Ali is well advised and experienced, in addition to being up-to-date with all laws and regulations."*

K&L Gates

What the team is known for K&L Gates maintains a compact yet high-quality construction department in its Dubai office. It is principally noted for handling contentious matters, and assists clients both within the UAE and across the region. It is especially noteworthy for its expertise in cases which arise from high-profile infrastructure projects, with equally notable experience concerning insolvent contractors.

Strengths

"The team has a broad and in-depth knowledge of the legal processes and they are always reachable. They're very proactive and there is a fast response time from the team leaders."

"They have a deep knowledge of construction issues. They get on top of the detail and quickly understand the issues relevant for our business. The team is always available whenever we need them. They respond quickly, and the service is consistent."

Notable practitioners

Jonathan Sutcliffe has been based in Dubai for many years, during which time he has amassed huge experience handling a wide variety of high-value and highly sensitive construction claims. He is well versed in advising employers and contractors, as well as other notable stakeholders

such as litigation funders. **Strengths:** *“Jonathan Sutcliffe is an excellent leader. He is always very informative.” “Jonathan provides advice in a manner which is easy to understand and digest.”* **Jennifer Paterson** is a recent partner promotion, having formerly practised as a barrister in London. She is notable for her lead roles representing employers, and is increasingly visible on the firm’s major Middle East construction cases. **Strengths:** *“Jennifer has a huge capacity to digest and analyse large amounts of evidence and data. She makes judicious decisions and is all over the detail. Her drafting is excellent and proper.”*

Norton Rose Fulbright

What the team is known for Norton Rose Fulbright has a well-recognised group regularly tasked with advising on construction projects across a multitude of sectors, including infrastructure, healthcare and power. With notable expertise in the non-contentious aspects of projects, the team is frequently engaged to handle arbitrations as well as procurement structuring. Its lawyers are capable of acting for developers, contractors and sponsors.

Strengths

“The team not only stays on top of their matters and is always available, but they also have the technical knowledge and expertise to handle a project of a significant size.”

“The members of the team have an incredible breadth of experience and are senior, with years of exposure to complex matters.”

Work highlights Norton Rose advised Emirates on the contracts relating to its design and construction of an engineering and maintenance facility.

Notable practitioners

Nicholas Kramer is an accomplished lawyer with substantial experience in construction projects. He is especially adept in the energy and infrastructure spaces. **Strengths:** *“Nicholas is an exceptional lawyer and runs everything excellently.”*

Other Ranked Lawyers

Alex Bevan is a highly regarded lawyer with experience in an array of contentious construction issues, including arbitrations arising within the oil and gas sector. He also advises clients on claims relating to EPC contracts and extension of time matters.

Nick Carnell is a seasoned lawyer based at Taylor Wessing in Dubai. He has deep experience derived from a host of construction and engineering arbitrations and his clientele includes several well-known contractors and developers.

Strengths:

“Nick is a very capable construction lawyer.”

“He is very strong in the arbitration space.”

Antonios Dimitracopoulos is acclaimed by the market for his depth of expertise in UAE construction law. Based in Dubai, he often acts for contractors and subcontractors on arbitrations relating to delay claims. He also has extensive experience in engineering disputes.

Alain Farhad (see p.2986) of Mayer Brown represents a varied client list in construction arbitration proceedings concerning issues such as delay, disruption and variations. He assists developers and contractors as well as major oil and gas companies.

Strengths:

“Alain is great. He is knowledgeable and always available.”

Amir Ghaffari is recognised by sources for his assured representation of construction, energy and natural resources companies in international arbitrations. He also represents a number of government entities within the UAE.

Strengths:

“Amir is very responsive and very knowledgeable. He always brings a sensible and cost-effective approach.”

“I’m very impressed with Amir’s knowledge, advice and client focus.”

Nabeel Ikram is widely recognised for his longevity in the market and is especially well versed in disputes involving engineering and construction issues.

Strengths:

“Nabeel Ikram offers excellent communication and legal skills.”

Up-and-coming lawyer **Slava Kiryushin** (see p.2988) is best known for his handling of construction disputes in the oil and gas space, with further experience concerning infrastructure matters. He joined HFW in May 2023 after leaving DWF.

Strengths:

“Slava is an outstanding energy lawyer. He has an outstanding commercial awareness of the energy industry and of the motivators driving both sides in complex disputes.”

“We enjoy working with Slava. He works in a collaborative manner to bring together inputs from a variety of experts to address complex issues on large-scale infrastructure projects.”

“Slava is hands-down the best lawyer we have worked with. Extremely intelligent and user-friendly, with a perfect balance of technical advice and commercial expertise.”

Dean O’Leary is a well-known figure and one of the most experienced construction lawyers currently active in Dubai. He is well versed in the

rules of all major arbitral fora and is capable of acting for employers, contractors, subcontractors and a variety of other stakeholders.

Strengths:

“Dean is a strong advocate for commercially driven solutions, and he is very well regarded.”

Paul Suckling joined DWF in August 2023 after leaving Horizons & Co. He is a seasoned practitioner in the construction law space and has considerable experience assisting international clients with landmark projects.

Strengths:

“Paul is a great lawyer and a great guy; working with him really is a pleasure.”

“Paul is an excellent lawyer and his background in commercial construction allows him to understand complex issues superbly.”

Tom Swarbrick (see p.2990) of Bracewell receives strong market praise for his work. He is recognised as an active adviser to various renewable energy clients on the construction aspects of their regional projects.

Randall Walker is a recent joiner at Hogan Lovells who previously practised at King & Spalding. A seasoned construction disputes partner, he has notable experience defending employers against claims brought by contractors.

Strengths:

“Randall is very attentive to detail, he communicates very effectively and represents his clients in a very professional manner.”

“Randall demonstrates strategic thinking, attention to detail, and the ability to navigate complex legal issues. He also has strong writing and communication skills.”

“Randall is a very experienced construction lawyer and a pleasure to work with.”

“He provides clear direction and understands the importance of expert evidence.”

“Randall is an excellent lawyer with an exceptional knowledge of construction law.”

Mark Wilson heads the Dubai-based construction team at Kennedys. He is especially notable for his expertise in construction-related insurance claims, with further experience handling a variety of other construction disputes.

Strengths:

“Mark is always on top of the issues.”

Daniel Xu is noted for his frequent work on behalf of Chinese clients. He is frequently to be seen advising on international arbitration proceedings and litigations arising from construction projects.

Strengths:

“His strong capabilities, responsiveness and hands-on approach are what makes Daniel stand apart. He has a great connection with the community of large Chinese investors in the region.”

“Daniel is one of the best lawyers I work with.”

Corporate/M&A

Corporate/M&A
Leading Firms
Band 1
Allen & Overy LLP
Clifford Chance LLP
Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer
Linklaters
Band 2
Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP
White & Case LLP
Band 3
Addleshaw Goddard LLP
Clyde & Co LLP
DLA Piper Middle East LLP
Eversheds Sutherland (International) LLP
King & Spalding LLP
Latham & Watkins LLP
Band 4
Al Tamimi & Company
Ashurst
Baker McKenzie LLP
Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP
CMS (UAE) LLP
Dentons
Herbert Smith Freehills
Band 5
Hadef & Partners
Ibrahim & Partners
Norton Rose Fulbright
Pinsent Masons LLP
<i>* Indicates individual with profile.</i>
<i>◇ (ORL) = Other Ranked Lawyer.</i>
<i>Alphabetical order within each band. Band 1 is highest.</i>

Band 1

Allen & Overy LLP

What the team is known for This esteemed law firm has a pre-eminent reputation for corporate and M&A work in the UAE. With offices in both Dubai and Abu Dhabi, the firm is well recognised for handling high-stakes M&A deals across a wide spectrum of industries, most significantly in financial services, healthcare and education. The team's lawyers are well placed to assist its top-flight client base with joint ventures and disposals, and have further noteworthy expertise in energy and technology-related transactions. The team's other areas of expertise include group restructurings and corporate governance matters.

Strengths

"They provide clear advice and direction in a concise and uncomplicated way, together with having a good understanding of the key drivers behind the transaction and the concerns of the parties."

Work highlights Allen & Overy advised Mubadala on the sale of stakes in Masdar to TAQA and ADNOC, in a deal valued at USD1.9 billion.

Notable practitioners

Ibrahim Mubaydeen is a distinguished lawyer, particularly noted for his handling of transactions relating to power and infrastructure projects. He has led some of the largest M&A transactions in the UAE, most notably within the oil and gas sector, while also excelling at corporate restructuring work. **David Foster** has fast become a

Corporate/M&A: Abu Dhabi-based
Eminent Practitioners
Eminent Practitioners
Mubaydeen Ibrahim Allen & Overy LLP*
Leading Individuals
Band 1
Garousha Khalid Allen & Overy LLP*
Hilton Michael Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer*
Band 2
Younes Renad Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP*
Band 3
Abouali Gamal Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP
Audi Osama Baker McKenzie LLP
Edwards Nicholas Linklaters
Fraser Simon King & Spalding LLP*
Jabsheh Wael Akin (ORL) ◇
Macbeth Chris Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP
Omar Yasser Hadef & Partners*
Worthington Steven White & Case LLP
Up-and-coming individuals
Ammar Lynn Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP
Associates to watch
Stevens Charlotte Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer

go-to lawyer for market-leading M&A transactions in the UAE. As regional head of corporate in the Dubai office, he is very experienced in cross-border mergers, equity investments and joint ventures, acting particularly for clients in the education sector. **Strengths:** *"David helps us with large, complex, cross-border M&A deals. He is hard-working, commercial, always available and easy to work with."* **Khalid Garousha** is a highly esteemed lawyer, based in Abu Dhabi, who has a formidable reputation for his work on market-leading M&A transactions. He is also an eminent figure in ECM matters, most significantly in IPOs. In 2023 he took on the role of A&O's interim global managing partner, overseeing its merger with US law firm Shearman & Sterling. **Strengths:** *"Khalid is one of the strongest lawyers in the Middle East."* *"He is very hands-on, attending most calls and meetings himself and making himself available whenever needed for any one-on-one discussions."*

Clifford Chance LLP

What the team is known for Clifford Chance operates a premier practice in Dubai with exceptional expertise in major M&A deals across the Middle East. The team represents clients from a broad range of sectors including retail, aviation and financial services, and has played a key role in several major regional bank mergers and acquisitions. The firm's lawyers have considerable experience acting for international financial institutions, major corporations and sovereign wealth funds. The team is much admired by the market for its seamless interdisciplinary approach and cross-border depth, with the capacity to work alongside the firm's other departments and offices with ease.

Strengths

"Clifford Chance simply leaves no stone unturned and gets the deal done."
"I always go to them for specialist big-ticket transactions."

Corporate/M&A: Dubai-based
Senior Statespeople
Senior Statespeople: distinguished older partners
Silver Jonathan Clyde & Co LLP
Leading Individuals
Band 1
Akhtar Pervez Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer*
Al-Shukairy Mohammed Clifford Chance LLP
Campbell Scott Linklaters
Elaraby Marwan Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP*
Foster David Allen & Overy LLP*
Band 2
Mir Zubair Norton Rose Fulbright
Band 3
Alulama Abdulwahid White & Case LLP
Booth Marcus White & Case LLP
Hanania Zeid Eversheds Sutherland (International) LLP
Issa Nabil King & Spalding LLP
Johnston Andrew Addleshaw Goddard LLP
Band 4
Al-Louzi Sami White & Case LLP
Lester Chris Latham & Watkins LLP
Llwyd Lowri Addleshaw Goddard LLP
Rahimzada Simon Ashurst
Seivewright William DLA Piper Middle East LLP*
Tas Deniz Clifford Chance LLP
Band 5
Abou-Zeid Thérèse DLA Piper Middle East LLP*
El Masry Malack Ibrahim & Partners
Harper Rupert Covington & Burling LLP (ORL) ◇*
Harris Darren Clyde & Co LLP
Hawashin Haitham Baker Botts L.L.P. (ORL) ◇*
Hawayek Naji Clyde & Co LLP
Latif Eyad Latham & Watkins LLP
O'Connor John CMS (UAE) LLP
Powell Matthew Squire Patton Boggs (ORL) ◇
Tbaishat Mohammad Pinsent Masons LLP
Up-and-coming individuals
Bassiri Gharb Roshanak Clyde & Co LLP
Doha Adnan Baker McKenzie LLP
Hughes Richard DLA Piper Middle East LLP*
Walters Chris Herbert Smith Freehills
Associates to watch
Aikman Alexandra Pinsent Masons LLP
Mian Saad Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer
Neil Claire Linklaters

Work highlights Clifford Chance advised DP World on an approximately USD2.4 billion investment in three of its flagship UAE assets by Saudi Arabia's Hassana Investment.

Notable practitioners

Mohammed Al-Shukairy is Clifford Chance's regional managing partner and is an accomplished lawyer in high-profile outbound acquisitions. He is also noted for his considerable expertise regarding mergers in the financial services sector.

Strengths: *"Mohammed is just amazing - very knowledgeable and good at smoothing things over. He is absolutely brilliant and a massive help."* **Deniz Tas** operates a wide-ranging practice advising clients in the energy, logistics and real estate sectors, among others. He is adept at advising on high-value, cross-border transactions. **Strengths:** *"He is very tenacious, commercially driven, intelligent and hard-working. I am impressed with him. He*

Foreign Desks Corporate/M&A
Based in United Arab Emirates with expertise in countries listed below
Iraq Herbert Smith Freehills
Iraq Vinson & Elkins LLP
Kenya Anjarwalla Collins & Haidermota Legal
Foreign Experts Corporate/M&A
Based in United Arab Emirates with expertise in countries listed below
Central & Eastern Europe Conlon Graham CMS
Egypt Akhtar Pervez Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer*
Egypt Elaraby Marwan Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP*
Kenya Anjarwalla Atiq S Anjarwalla Collins (ORL) ◇
Kuwait Fraser Simon King & Spalding LLP*
Saudi Arabia Al-Louzi Sami White & Case LLP
Saudi Arabia Hourani Hayel F Hourani (ORL) ◇
Saudi Arabia Issa Nabil King & Spalding LLP
Saudi Arabia Powell Matthew Squire Patton (ORL) ◇
Saudi Arabia Stull James King & Spalding LLP*
Ukraine Conlon Graham CMS (UAE) LLP
United Arab Emirates expertise based in countries listed below
UK Plahe Hardeep Addleshaw Goddard LLP
USA Shaikley Ali Sidley Austin LLP (ORL) ◇*
* Indicates individual with profile.
◇ (ORL) = Other Ranked Lawyer.

has strong negotiation skills, especially in sensitive situations." "Deniz is a very good operator."

Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer

What the team is known for Freshfields is a pre-eminent law firm that adeptly handles multi-jurisdictional M&A deals and corporate structurings from its offices in Dubai and Abu Dhabi. The corporate team regularly assists financial investors and prominent regional clients in the TMT, oil and gas, and financial services sectors. The team has noteworthy experience advising on high-profile, cross-border M&A, and its lawyers are widely endorsed for their strengths assisting sovereign wealth funds and acting for major private equity houses.

Strengths

"On our deal, the team at Freshfields was required to respond to a changing environment, and the support they gave us was seamless irrespective of the time of day."

"The team is strong across all levels of seniority, from the managing partner down to the associates."

"The firm keeps up to date and consistent with all changes in the regulatory requirements."

Work highlights Freshfields advised Kuwait Finance House on its acquisition of 100% of Ahli United Bank's shares, for an approximate value of USD11.6 billion.

Notable practitioners

MENA managing partner **Michael Hilton** advises leading clients on major M&A transactions and joint ventures, most regularly acting for entities in the oil and gas and financial services sectors. He is also experienced advising on cross-border acquisitions across the Middle East. **Strengths:** "Michael is an excellent lawyer who is commercially aware and shows strong leadership in complex situations." "He is a very shrewd and extremely per-

sonable lawyer. He excels in client-related matters and has a deep understanding of his operational field." **Saad Mian** is an increasingly well-recognised lawyer in Freshfields' Dubai team. He advises sovereign wealth funds and investors on the full gamut of M&A matters, offering additional expertise on corporate reorganisations. **Strengths:** "Saad shows great ownership, responsiveness and understanding of the legal and commercial context." "He is an excellent lawyer with a very practical approach to problem-solving." **Charlotte Stevens** is a rising star who is based in Freshfields' Abu Dhabi office. Her expertise lies primarily in the handling of acquisitions and joint ventures for clients operating in the energy and infrastructure sectors. **Strengths:** "She is an excellent professional who we see as a trusted adviser." "Charlotte provides very fast turnaround times." **Pervez Akhtar** is an eminent lawyer who is widely considered a top choice for private equity and M&A transactions in the UAE and further afield. He regularly handles ground-breaking acquisitions on behalf of venture capital firms, sovereign wealth funds and clients in the energy and education sectors. He is further recognised for his expertise in Egypt-related deals.

Linklaters

What the team is known for Linklaters is a leading law firm much admired for its expertise in high-stakes M&A transactions. Its lawyers are best known for private equity and joint ventures, as well as corporate matters ancillary to IPOs. With strong offices in both Dubai and Abu Dhabi, the firm has further expertise in asset disposals and group reorganisations. The team is well known for its capabilities and typically acts for banks, sovereign wealth funds and private equity houses. The team is also experienced representing clients in the oil and gas, technology, and food and beverage sectors.

Strengths

"Linklaters offers client-oriented and focused service, deep bandwidth and expertise on top of really pragmatic, commercial advice."

Work highlights Linklaters advised Emaar Properties on its AED7.5 billion acquisition of Dubai Creek Harbour from Dubai Holding.

Notable practitioners

Scott Campbell is widely acclaimed for his considerable experience in cross-border M&A transactions. He is especially seasoned in representing major regional clients in acquisitions, disposals and corporate finance transactions. He offers additional expertise in capital markets mandates, particularly IPOs. **Nicholas Edwards** is a leading lawyer who co-heads the firm's Abu Dhabi office. He maintains a robust M&A practice, often acting for clients in the oil and gas and finance sectors. He is also adept at joint ventures and equity raisings. **Strengths:** "Nicholas provides pragmatic advice and is available around the clock." **Claire Neil** is a managing associate who advises clients on a wide range of cross-border M&A and joint ventures. She is notable for her experience advising on private equity and sovereign wealth fund matters.

Band 2

Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP

What the team is known for Gibson Dunn continues to make waves in the UAE legal market. It has attracted considerable attention following a slew of high-profile lateral hires at the end of 2022 and the start of 2023, largely targeting Shearman & Sterling, and its recent opening of additional Middle Eastern offices in Abu Dhabi and Riyadh. The group offers considerable expertise in private equity, with a strong track record when it comes to advising investment managers and sovereign wealth funds. Its lawyers are regularly seen on buyout transactions. Other significant clients include major corporations and investment banks.

Strengths

"Gibson Dunn has an extremely energetic and dedicated team, offering thoughtfulness, creativity and the ability to find solutions to the most complex issues."

Notable practitioners

Renad Younes is a well-regarded lawyer who regularly takes a lead role on high-profile M&A matters within the oil and gas sector, leveraging her long-standing track record in the field of projects and energy. She is also adept at overseeing joint ventures and strategic partnerships. At the start of 2023 she was one of several lawyers who joined Gibson Dunn from Shearman & Sterling. She heads the Abu Dhabi office. **Marwan Elaraby** is a highly accomplished transactional lawyer in charge of the firm's Dubai office. He advises on acquisitions, disposals, joint ventures and ECM matters. He is particularly well known for his significant track record of acting for major clients in the oil and gas sector. Active throughout the region, he maintains an especially prolific practice in Egypt and recently joined Gibson Dunn after leaving Shearman & Sterling. **Strengths:** "Marwan is incredibly efficient, solution-oriented and delivers on time."

White & Case LLP

What the team is known for White & Case demonstrates strong capabilities across the Middle East, typically offering specialist corporate and M&A expertise from its Dubai office, and assisting with real estate and energy mandates mostly from Abu Dhabi. The firm is highly respected for its advice to clients on major multi-jurisdictional M&A transactions, leveraged buyouts and joint ventures. The group's lawyers are adept at handling high-stakes private equity mandates and have assisted with strategic partnerships in the oil and gas sector, where they are also noted for their long-standing client relationships.

Strengths

"The team at White & Case has worked through some complex matters for us, providing both clear viewpoints on risk and excellent insight on structuring options. The differentiator has been their ability to understand and interpret our need as clients and deliver across the board."

"The firm excels both in terms of technical input and expertise. The fact that they're extremely attentive is what sets them apart. Response times are phenomenal."

"Working with White & Case in the UAE provides

great access to the firm's global network, which helps in cross-border transactions."

Work highlights White & Case advised TAQA on its USD1 billion, 100% acquisition of Al Mansoori Petroleum Services.

Notable practitioners

Abdulwahid Alulama is an esteemed Emirati lawyer who is widely respected for his expertise in cross-border M&A, strategic partnerships and joint ventures. He is based in Dubai and is also notably experienced in corporate governance and commercial contracts relating to high-profile acquisitions. **Strengths:** "Abdulwahid has a great ability to facilitate negotiations. He's incredible at relationship building and getting deals over the line." **Marcus Booth** is a highly regarded Dubai-based lawyer who co-heads the firm's financial sponsor practice. In this arena, he acts for leading private equity houses, venture capital entities and sovereign wealth funds on cross-border buy-outs and major corporate structuring matters. **Strengths:** "Marcus makes us feel valued by the firm and his work product is excellent." Abu Dhabi-based **Steven Worthington** is well recognised for his work on behalf of high-profile clients on large-scale, cross-border transactions and investments. Co-heading the financial sponsor practice, he is adept at handling joint venture arrangements and his recent work has had a notable emphasis on the energy and technology sectors. **Strengths:** "Steven is always responsive, commercially aware and very thoughtful in terms of thinking about how certain factors might impact negotiations and desired outcomes." "Steven is very commercial in his approach, direct and to the point, but at the same time very good at finding solutions to quite complicated issues. He also coordinates advice very consistently across their global network." **Sami Al-Louzi** is a highly capable lawyer who is well versed in cross-border M&A and often mandated on ground-breaking transactions across the region. In addition to his M&A practice, he offers expertise in privatisations and ECM work. He is based in Dubai and is especially experienced in corporate and capital markets transactions within Saudi Arabia.

Band 3

Addleshaw Goddard LLP

What the team is known for Addleshaw Goddard is a well-regarded international law firm with a considerable presence in the Middle East, including a strong office in Dubai. The group is able to act on the full gamut of corporate and commercial matters, and is particularly active in private equity, group restructuring and corporate real estate transactions. The team frequently represents major international and regional corporations across an extremely broad range of sectors including education, professional services, and food and beverages.

Strengths

"They have really good regional knowledge and give pragmatic advice."

"Addleshaw Goddard provides solid solutions to complex deal structures."

Work highlights Addleshaw Goddard advised a

Waha Capital subsidiary on the AED555 million sale of a portfolio of warehouse buildings to Peninsula Real Estate.

Notable practitioners

Andrew Johnston is Addleshaw Goddard's regional managing partner for the Middle East and Asia, and also head of its Middle East corporate practice. He is renowned for his extensive capabilities in international M&A and private equity transactions, as well as joint ventures. He is well versed in acting for clients from the food and beverage, education, hospitality and retail sectors. **Strengths:** "Andrew is very good at taking a commercial view and guiding his team to do the same." **Lowri Llwyd** heads Addleshaw's corporate practice in the UAE. She offers extensive expertise in cross-border M&A and private equity, in addition to a very strong standing in the field of commercial contracts and joint venture arrangements. Her clients hail from a variety of sectors, including education and real estate. **Strengths:** "Lowri is very helpful, approachable, sharp, and analytical when providing advice." "Lowri is excellent to deal with." **Hardeep Plahe** maintains a widely respected corporate practice and is particularly prolific in cross-border acquisitions, restructurings and foreign investment mandates. He is also renowned for representing private equity clients and entities in the TMT sector. Based in London, he recently joined Addleshaw after leaving Gibson Dunn.

Clyde & Co LLP

What the team is known for Clyde & Co has a large team based across Dubai and Abu Dhabi which is much admired for its deep bench and broad corporate offering. In 2023, the Dubai office was bolstered further by several lateral hires from PwC Legal. The team's lawyers are well respected for investments and corporate restructuring matters; the firm's experience also encompasses corporate finance and private equity. The team has strengths in the education and healthcare sectors, with further experience in the insurance, energy and real estate industries.

Strengths

"Clyde & Co's team is well balanced in terms of sectorial knowledge, in addition to possessing a keen ability to identify solutions throughout complex negotiations."

"I am astonished by their strong understanding of business requirements and their flexibility in customising agreements accordingly, leading to the achievement of our goals."

Work highlights Clyde & Co acted for e-commerce platform noon regarding its AED1.23 billion acquisition of Namshi Holding from Emaar Malls Management.

Notable practitioners

Jonathan Silver is a long-standing Dubai-based lawyer whose expertise encompasses M&A, joint ventures, restructurings and private equity matters. He also has a significant track record in entity structurings and foreign direct investment. **Strengths:** "Jonathan is incredibly well regarded and his career is rightly celebrated." **Darren Harris** has a notable track record in cross-border M&A, acting for both domestic and international clients. He is especially experienced in private equity

transactions and has further expertise in corporate restructurings. He joined Clyde & Co in May 2023 after leaving PwC Legal. **Naji Hawayek** heads Clyde's Middle East corporate practice. He is well known for his capabilities in domestic and cross-border M&A transactions, often acting for clients in the education, construction and healthcare sectors. **Strengths:** "Naji has a very practical approach and an excellent background, with the ability to make complex transactions look simple." **Roshanak Bassiri Gharb** offers considerable international experience, having handled M&A mandates in several different jurisdictions. She advises both domestic and overseas clients on cross-border M&A and divestment transactions, in addition to which she maintains a strong track record in group reorganisations. **Strengths:** "Roshanak is a very present, hands-on partner with good business acumen." "Roshanak is dedicated, hard-working, passionate, bright and switched on. She is extremely committed to all matters and she goes above and beyond to ensure the protection of her client's interests."

DLA Piper Middle East LLP

What the team is known for DLA Piper is a well-regarded international law firm with an increasingly significant reputation for M&A transactions both within the UAE and across the Middle East, staffing region-wide work primarily from its Dubai office. Alongside major acquisitions, sales and disposals, the firm is also proficient in regulatory matters, joint ventures, restructurings and reorganisations. The team's lawyers are notably experienced in representing clients from the healthcare and technology sectors, with further skills in hospitality and oil and gas.

Strengths

"Each team member at DLA provides excellent service. They are always available and turn around the necessary documentation as quickly as possible."

"DLA Piper demonstrates competitive commercial awareness, with a deep understanding of industry dynamics and a strategic approach to delivering valuable insights."

"Partners and more junior members of the team are both able to adequately cover client needs."

Work highlights DLA Piper acted for Abu Dhabi Ports in relation to the merger between its subsidiary KEZAD Communities and the Al Eskan Al Jamae Group.

Notable practitioners

William Seivewright (see p.2990) is an experienced M&A lawyer who is DLA's regional head of corporate. He regularly acts for clients in the real estate, telecoms and energy sectors on cross-border acquisitions and joint ventures, offering additional expertise in corporate restructurings. **Strengths:** "William successfully led our high-value, complex deal to a very successful outcome. Throughout the process, he provided excellent service and pragmatic solutions." **Thérèse Abou-Zeid** (see p.2984) is a well-regarded lawyer who regularly acts for major regional clients on high-profile acquisitions. She also demonstrates strength in sales and equity investments, with a strong track record in the pharma and healthcare space. **Strengths:** "She has the right sensibilities to work with US clients." **Richard Hughes** (see

p.2987) has a growing reputation in the M&A arena. He operates an impressive transactional and commercial advisory practice, assisting clients across a range of sectors on both domestic and cross-border mandates. His clients typically hail from the fintech, construction and healthcare sectors. **Strengths:** *“Richard is a well-rounded and pragmatic lawyer.” “Richard is excellent at keeping us informed and advising on the negotiable nature of certain points. His strong advice gives us a lot of security and comfort.” “He is my go-to counsel in the Middle East and has provided excellent work on multiple engagements.”*

Eversheds Sutherland (International) LLP

What the team is known for Eversheds Sutherland is well regarded in the UAE for its representation of conglomerates and private equity houses in inbound and outbound cross-border M&A. Lawyers in the firm’s Dubai office demonstrate a range of capabilities, advising on reorganisations, direct investments and entry into new markets. The firm is also experienced in corporate matters relating to oil and gas and renewable energy projects across the region.

Strengths

“The team at Eversheds always offers the necessary bandwidth to attend all meetings and produce the relevant documentation within tight deadlines.” “They are always able to come up with out-of-the-box ideas.”

Notable practitioners

Zeid Hanania is a Dubai-based corporate lawyer who leads Eversheds’ Middle East M&A practice. He is widely considered to be a go-to figure for cross-border M&A transactions, with considerable experience in private equity, strategic joint ventures and inbound investments. **Strengths:** *“Zeid is a great lawyer with strong commercial judgement and the ability to deliver creative solutions while looking after the best interest of his clients.” “With Zeid, we appreciate the value for money we are getting, the timeliness and the pragmatism, without ever feeling he is compromising on proper risk diagnosis or mitigation.”*

King & Spalding LLP

What the team is known for King & Spalding is a strong law firm for corporate/M&A work in the UAE and is known for having specific expertise in transactions relating to Saudi Arabia. The firm is especially well versed in corporate matters arising in the energy sector, including in the petrochemicals arena as well as with regard to renewables. The team offers further expertise in the healthcare, retail and real estate industries and is well endorsed for its capabilities in private equity and venture capital, drawing upon the strength of its market-leading investment funds practice. The team’s clientele commonly includes multinational corporations, government entities and private equity firms.

Strengths

“King & Spalding is able to advise on the legal repercussions of various terms and scenarios while also accounting for the commercial needs of my business.”

Work highlights King & Spalding counselled Al

Thiqa Al Shamlah for Real Estate Company on the SAR200 million sale of its stake in Arabian Homes Company to private buyers located in Jeddah.

Notable practitioners

Simon Fraser (see p.2987) is a seasoned lawyer on sales and acquisitions, particularly when it comes to representing clients in the energy and oil and gas sectors. He is also regularly involved in Kuwait-related deals. He recently joined King & Spalding after leaving Ashurst. **Strengths:** *“Simon participates actively in all the discussions and is a voice of reason.” “Despite the time zone differences, Simon Fraser makes himself and his key colleagues available at short notice and ensures their turnaround time to deliver critical work is always first-rate.”* Middle East managing partner **Nabil Issa** is a well-known lawyer with a remarkably broad practice that encompasses M&A, private equity and investment funds. He splits his time between Dubai and Riyadh and is widely esteemed for his expertise concerning the Saudi Arabian market. **James Stull** is a Dubai-based lawyer who is highly regarded for his expertise in relation to Saudi Arabia. He is particularly well versed in investment funds, private equity and venture capital issues and is increasingly active in the technology space.

Latham & Watkins LLP

What the team is known for Latham & Watkins is widely endorsed for its expertise in private equity and venture capital matters. From its office in Dubai, the firm is regularly mandated on significant transactions originating in Saudi Arabia. The team has considerable experience advising on both the sell and buy sides of high-value M&A mandates. Notable clients include regional and international institutional investors. Latham also has a strong track record in representing sovereign wealth funds as well as clients from the healthcare, energy and financial services sectors.

Strengths

“Latham & Watkins understands time pressure and provides good, pragmatic coverage. They’re like an extension of our in-house team.”

“The team’s breadth and depth exceed our expectations every time.”

Notable practitioners

Chris Lester has extensive experience which spans the full gamut of mergers, demergers and acquisitions, in addition to restructurings, privatisations and joint ventures. His clientele includes prominent regional banks, private equity houses and entities in the oil and gas sector. **Strengths:** *“Chris is very good at negotiating on our behalf.”* **Eyad Latif** is a well-established Dubai-based lawyer who has a burgeoning reputation for cross-border M&A. He is often recognised by sources for his strengths in venture capital and is also skilled in transactions related to regional technology startups. **Strengths:** *“He’s an excellent lawyer who is incredibly responsive and always delivers in a reliable manner.”*

Band 4

Al Tamimi & Company

What the team is known for Al Tamimi is a well-established regional law firm with one of the largest corporate/M&A teams both within the UAE and across the Middle East. The team advises prominent domestic and international clients on major M&A transactions, joint ventures, corporate structuring and licensing matters. Its lawyers represent a broad spectrum of clients straddling a range of industries, with especially notable expertise in acting for financial institutions. The team also advises on corporate structuring and entity formation.

Strengths

“Al Tamimi is commercially oriented and understands the needs of its clients.”

“The team provide top-notch legal advice and guidance at every stage.”

Work highlights Al Tamimi acted for Apollo Global Management on its acquisition of a minority stake in Aldar Investment Properties.

Notable practitioners

Nicholas Watson is a key contact at the firm.

Ashurst

What the team is known for Ashurst is a respected law firm with an established presence in the corporate sphere within the UAE. The group’s lawyers are especially well regarded for their strengths acting for clients from the energy and infrastructure sectors in conjunction with the firm’s distinguished projects practice. The team is experienced in acquisitions and disposals while also adept at joint ventures, regulatory matters and corporate governance work.

Strengths

“Ashurst have a good understanding of the market and consider the specifics of our industry.”

“The Ashurst team is very creative in providing solutions to unusual problems. They not only conceptualise a unique solution, but also implement it end-to-end.”

“The firm maintains regular and detailed communication throughout, both oral and written.”

Work highlights Ashurst advised Gulf Capital on the sale of an interest in UAE-based Repton School to global education provider Cognita.

Notable practitioners

Simon Rahimzada is a noted Dubai-based lawyer who often represents sovereign entities and private equity firms in acquisitions in the food and beverage, energy, education and healthcare sectors. His corporate practice also encompasses restructurings and joint ventures. He recently joined Ashurst after leaving King & Spalding. **Strengths:** *“Simon Rahimzada is a talented partner, with strong experience in M&A. We are lucky to have him assist with our deals.”*

Baker McKenzie LLP

What the team is known for Baker McKenzie’s Dubai team offers notable capabilities in cross-border M&A, with further strengths in corporate governance, compliance and regulatory matters. The team is also regularly to be seen advising on joint venture agreements and corporate restructuring arrangements. It acts for real estate

developers and insurers as well as energy and education companies.

Strengths

"The team at Baker McKenzie is always available and willing to break down complex legal issues into simple terms, which is helpful when making decisions."

"We are supported by partners and associates at all levels throughout all of our projects. They always find time for us and give us their full support."

"The firm understands the overriding strategic and commercial imperatives behind the deals and provides guidance that is tailored to help progress the transactions while also identifying key legal risks to be addressed."

Work highlights Baker McKenzie advised cloud kitchen platform Kitopi on its acquisition of food and beverage company AWJ Investments.

Notable practitioners

Osama Audi is based in Abu Dhabi, from where he heads the UAE corporate and M&A team. He acts for an impressive array of regional clients on high-profile M&A, private equity and venture capital transactions. **Strengths:** *"Osama Audi is very sharp and is a good communicator." "Osama is an exceptionally bright, measured and effective M&A counsel." "He is responsive and commercially savvy."* **Adnan Doha** is a well-regarded corporate lawyer based in Baker's Dubai office. He adeptly advises on the full range of transactional matters, including both private and public M&A, restructurings and joint ventures. His clients hail from a variety of sectors such as energy and food and beverages. **Strengths:** *"His knowledge of the subject matter and commercial awareness is at the highest level." "Adnan is astute and an effective negotiator." "Adnan is great in situations where he has to break down legal principles and explain them in a very digestible way. His drafting is also very clear – the way he crafts language in agreements is concise and easy to understand."*

Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP

What the team is known for The Abu Dhabi office of Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton is highly experienced in high-value acquisitions and equity investments. The firm is especially well known for representing sovereign wealth and private equity funds, and is able to leverage its extensive global network on cross-border projects. Cleary Gottlieb's lawyers are also seasoned in investments into the energy, oil and gas, and technology sectors.

Strengths

"Cleary Gottlieb takes the needs of the business into consideration when providing advice. As such, they deliver tailored, focused advice that identifies the legal concerns but also provides solutions that are workable from a commercial perspective."

"They are super responsive, handle complex transactions well and their global network is incredibly helpful."

"Cleary's teams are diverse in capability and very experienced."

Work highlights Cleary Gottlieb represented Fertiglobe regarding its proposed joint venture with ADNOC, GS Energy and Mitsui & Co, the purpose of which was to develop a blue ammonia production facility.

Notable practitioners

Gamal Abouali is a well-respected lawyer who co-founded the firm's Abu Dhabi office more than a decade ago. He has a strong track record in cross-border M&A transactions, most regularly acting for clients in the oil and gas sector. Additionally, he is well placed to assist investment funds and corporates with various venture capital matters. **Strengths:** *"Gamal is a very experienced lawyer. He is able to go into a high level of detail while still keeping the big picture in mind."* **Chris Macbeth** is one of the co-founders of Cleary's Abu Dhabi office. He has a strong reputation for his work assisting with acquisitions and private equity investments. He is particularly experienced in acting for sovereign wealth funds and is also well versed in venture capital work. **Strengths:** *"Chris has a comprehensive knowledge of corporate law and his ability to navigate complex issues has been a valuable asset in our transactions." "Chris is great to work with and gives clear, commercial advice."* **Lynn Ammar** maintains a wide-ranging M&A practice from Cleary's Abu Dhabi office. Her expertise in cross-border transactions, corporate restructurings and project development is highly sought after by corporates and sovereign wealth funds. **Strengths:** *"Lynn is timely, efficient and result-oriented." "Lynn Ammar has a deep understanding of the legal and commercial aspects and is able to identify the core issues that are relevant to a transaction. Her knowledge of complex transactional matters, clear communication and ability to come up with out-of-the-box solutions are an invaluable asset in M&A transactions."*

CMS (UAE) LLP

What the team is known for The Dubai office of CMS fields a notable team with a commendable M&A practice. The firm's lawyers frequently carry out the Middle Eastern elements of high-profile global acquisitions. They are furthermore experienced in restructurings, FDI, joint ventures and divestments. The team can often be found representing clients from the financial services, hospitality, technology and energy sectors.

Strengths

"CMS has strong sector expertise and a commercial understanding of what underscores the deals it advises on."

"The team at CMS is very responsive and the quality of the service is extremely high."

Work highlights CMS acted for Croatian oil company INA on the sale of its interests in two oil and gas production sharing agreements to Afentra.

Notable practitioners

John O'Connor is head of corporate and commercial in Dubai. He is a well-established figure in the market whose wide-ranging practice covers buyouts and joint venture structuring, in addition to group reorganisations and various commercial contracts considerations. **Strengths:** *"John is very responsive and open to providing the advice we need, as well as listening to us and our requirements. We always get clear-cut answers from him." "John provides excellent pragmatic advice and coverage of the risks."* **Graham Conlon** is a well-reputed practitioner advising private equity funds operating in Ukraine and Central and Eastern Europe on multi-jurisdictional acquisitions in the

insurance sector. He also has a track record of dealing with transactions related to the chemicals and shipping sectors. He relocated to Dubai from Kyiv in 2023. **Strengths:** *"Graham is a pleasure to work with – he is collaborative, approaches problems with a commercial mindset and is technically very strong."*

Dentons

What the team is known for Dentons offers a full-service corporate and transactional practice from its offices in Dubai and Abu Dhabi. The firm's impressive regional network is of great benefit when advising on cross-border matters. Its lawyers have expertise in a broad range of corporate and commercial matters including joint ventures, disposals and acquisitions, with additional capabilities in project development. The group is highly experienced in representing major international corporations, in addition to working with government entities. The firm often advises clients operating within the entertainment, technology and financial services sectors.

Work highlights Dentons acted for Dulsco on its cross-border acquisition of UK-headquartered Advance Global Recruitment.

Notable practitioners

Iain Black is a key point of contact.

Herbert Smith Freehills

What the team is known for Herbert Smith Freehills is a respected law firm with a successful MENA platform and substantial cross-border capabilities. With a robust Dubai office, the firm regularly features on high-profile domestic deals as well as global transactions, encompassing M&A, joint ventures and regulatory work. Sectors of expertise include infrastructure, financial services, energy and TMT. The firm also possesses notable expertise concerning energy-related mandates in Iraq.

Strengths

"HSF provides guidance that allows us to manage projects in the most efficient and beneficial manner. They have a quick turnaround time, whether it is related to general questions or the completion of documents."

"They are widely known to be a very strong technical team with the ability to manage highly sophisticated matters with precision."

Work highlights Herbert Smith advised Uber on Etisalat's USD400 million acquisition of a controlling stake in Careem's super app, of which Uber is also a shareholder.

Notable practitioners

Chris Walters heads the Middle East corporate team. He has significant experience in cross-border transactions, with a strong track record concerning mergers, acquisitions and the structuring of joint ventures. He typically advises clients operating in sectors such as pharmaceuticals, technology and real estate. **Strengths:** *"Chris combines superb technical skills with a strong commercial focus." "His ability to share knowledge with clients, in order to help them make informed decisions, is always appreciated."*

Band 5

Hadeef & Partners

What the team is known for Hadeef & Partners is a leading domestic law firm with considerable longevity and depth of experience throughout the UAE. The group's corporate division is highly seasoned in acquisitions and has a notably broad practice also encompassing joint ventures and corporate restructurings. The firm is regularly instructed by international law firms to act as local counsel on M&A deals.

Strengths

"Hadeef provides consistently prompt and reliable turnaround times without compromising on the quality of the advice."

"The team at Hadeef is very business-oriented. They always try to find solutions that allow us to meet our targets while still being compliant with local law."

"They distil very complicated issues down to simple points."

Work highlights Hadeef acted for Islamic insurer Watania in relation to its merger with Dar Al Takaful.

Notable practitioners

Yasser Omar (see p.2989) heads the corporate team at Hadeef from the firm's Abu Dhabi office. He has extensive experience advising on cross-border M&A and corporate restructurings.

Strengths: *"Yasser is a safe pair of hands on UAE law matters. We value him for his responsiveness and his dedication to ensure that optimal resources are allocated to our matters. The final advice is always prompt, useful and valuable."* *"He is always available to support on any matter that falls within his areas of expertise and goes above and beyond by providing practical and workable solutions to the issues at hand."*

Ibrahim & Partners

What the team is known for Ibrahim & Partners is a noteworthy law firm based in Dubai which offers significant experience of both public and private M&A. The group's lawyers are also especially accomplished in the creation of joint ventures and in corporate restructuring advice. The team's clientele includes domestic and regional companies, and the firm is also regularly instructed by international law firms to consult on local law matters.

Strengths

"Ibrahim & Partners provides outstanding turnaround times for all enquiries. Furthermore, they consistently meet and beat set deadlines."

"The entire team is hands-on, brilliant and efficient."

Work highlights Ibrahim & Partners acted for Islamic insurer Dar Al Takaful on its merger with Watania.

Notable practitioners

Malack El Masry is a well-regarded, Dubai-based lawyer who has an extensive track record of advising regional clients on cross-border M&A and corporate restructurings. She offers additional expertise in commercial matters, assisting local corporates and multinationals with joint venture and shareholder agreements.

Norton Rose Fulbright

What the team is known for Norton Rose Fulbright fields a compact yet respected team in

Dubai, advising on the full range of transactional matters. In addition to the firm's capabilities in matters related to investment funds and private equity, its lawyers adeptly advise on cross-border M&A and are sought after by a number of regional conglomerates alongside acting for the firm's international clientele.

Strengths

"The team at Norton Rose is very responsive and there to deliver, no matter what time it is, and thanks to their global capabilities and network."

"One of the team's main strengths is to remain pragmatic at all times and keep an eye on what is commercially relevant."

"We can always rely on their advice and responsiveness. They strike the right balance between commerciality and technical knowledge."

Work highlights Norton Rose acted for International Energy Holding on its approximately USD490 million acquisition of a 50% stake in Turkey-based Kalyon Enerji.

Notable practitioners

Zubair Mir maintains a broad-ranging practice that encompasses region-spanning M&A mandates as well as investment fund formation. He is a well-known figure in the market and is based in Dubai. **Strengths:** *"Zubair understands our structure and business. He looks at the issue strategically, taking into account the point of view of the client and the long-term implications."* *"His reliability and client-centric approach set him apart and he always goes the extra mile to deliver above and beyond expectations."*

Pinsent Masons LLP

What the team is known for Pinsent Masons houses a growing corporate offering with considerable depth of experience throughout the UAE. The firm's corporate team in Dubai is well versed in handling M&A transactions as well as significant commercial contracts issues. It is also highly capable with regard to joint ventures and corporate restructurings. The firm acts for a variety of clients in the construction, healthcare and hospitality sectors.

Strengths

"The firm's exceptional ability to handle complex and sophisticated legal matters, its attention to detail and strategic thinking have been invaluable throughout our deal."

"Pinsent Masons is responsive and proactive in relation to our requirements."

Work highlights Pinsent Masons acted for the Starlink Group on its cross-border merger with cyber security distributor Infinigate.

Notable practitioners

Mohammad Tbaishat heads Pinsent's Middle East corporate team. He holds extensive expertise in transactional matters, advising on cross-border M&A as well as group restructurings. He is also well versed in the establishment of joint ventures and can assist with private equity mandates. **Strengths:** *"Mohammad looks after not only the technical legal aspects, but also the practical aspects of the deal."* *"He is very knowledgeable and reassuring when dealing with complex issues."* **Alexandra Aikman** is a senior associate based in Pinsent's Dubai office. She is noted for her expertise in both corporate and commercial

matters, including cross-border M&A, corporate restructuring and joint ventures. **Strengths:** *"I am particularly impressed with Alexandra's forward-thinking approach. She is always looking for new ways to help us achieve our goals."*

Foreign Desks**Anjarwalla Collins & Haidermota Legal Consultants**

What the team is known for Anjarwalla Collins & Haidermota is uniquely placed to advise multinational and Kenyan clients on matters of Kenyan law. The firm's practice covers a wide spectrum of corporate and commercial mandates including M&A deals, joint ventures and regulatory transactions. The group also has strong capabilities in the hospitality and real estate sectors in Kenya. The team has further capabilities in handling pan-African transactions for clients based in Asia, Europe and the USA.

Notable practitioners

Atiq Anjarwalla is the managing partner of Anjarwalla Collins & Haidermota, and is based in Dubai. He has long-standing expertise in corporate and M&A transactions in Kenya and is a particularly skilled lawyer in assisting entities from the finance and hospitality sectors.

Vinson & Elkins LLP

What the team is known for Vinson & Elkins is widely recognised as a major operator in Iraq, with the Dubai team supplying most of the key lawyers. The group regularly represents prominent domestic clients and offers both transactional and contentious expertise. The team is also active in infrastructure projects, foreign investment and joint ventures.

Notable practitioners

Christopher Strong is a key contact, splitting his time between Dubai and London.

Other Ranked Lawyers

Rupert Harper (see p.2987) of Covington & Burling is a seasoned lawyer who advises on acquisitions and sales as well as corporate structuring matters, both within the UAE and across the region. He is also experienced in private equity and strategic investment mandates.

Strengths:

"Rupert is very thorough, measured and tries to come up with innovative solutions and options for us to consider."

"Rupert dives in and really calms things down whenever tensions are running high during a transaction."

Haitham Hawashin (see p.2987) leads the Dubai M&A team at Baker Botts. He is well versed in M&A transactions involving major regional financial institutions. He also regularly acts for private equity clients.

Strengths:

"Haitham has the skills to support his clients and direct his team to deliver quality legal support without losing sight of the commercial aspects of transactions."

"He is highly attentive to details and the require-

ments of the transaction.”

Wael Jabsheh is the Abu Dhabi managing partner of Akin. He is noted for his impressive handling of high-value acquisitions and disposals, frequently advising sovereign entities and asset managers. He is also well versed in matters relating to commercial contracts, acting particularly for clients in the field of telecommunications.

Strengths:

“Wael provides important insights, both commercially and legally.”

“Wael acts as a good and reassuring sounding board.”

Foreign Experts

Hayel Hourani of Hourani & Partners Legal Consultancy is widely acknowledged as a formidable lawyer when it comes to transactions in Saudi Arabia. Based in Dubai, he has recently acted on regulatory and contractual matters for clients in

the insurance and automotive sectors.

Matthew Powell of Squire Patton Boggs advises on the full gamut of corporate/M&A and private equity work across the UAE and Saudi Arabia. He is also well placed to assist with the establishment of joint ventures and offers additional expertise in commercial mandates.

Strengths:

“Matthew shows exemplary dedication to the client and a comprehensive understanding of client needs.”

“Matthew is spot-on and experienced, with a great understanding of the practicalities of complex jurisdictions.”

Foreign Experts (Based Abroad)

Ali Shaikley is a leading lawyer for M&A, most significantly acting on deals relating to the power and oil and gas sectors. He is also well versed in private equity and venture capital work. He repre-

sents a range of clients including logistics companies, property developers and private equity houses. He recently joined Sidley Austin after leaving White & Case, where he operated from the firm’s Middle East offices, and currently splits his time between Sidley’s London and New York offices.

Strengths:

“Ali is a very good M&A partner. You reach out to him with issues and he gives you a legal position and a commercial execution as well. He tells you the market precedent and helps you navigate the transactions.”

“He responds quickly and makes you feel as though you are his only client, despite the fact that he has many. He instils confidence and trust.”

“Ali is really well versed in the US-to-GCC cross-border world of investments. He is the guy you want on your side.”

Corporate Compliance & Investigations

Corporate Compliance & Investigations
Leading Firms
Band 1
DLA Piper Middle East LLP
Norton Rose Fulbright
Band 2
Akin
Al Tamimi & Company FZ-LLC
Clyde & Co LLP
Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer
Jones Day
Squire Patton Boggs
Leading Individuals
Band 1
Kelly Rebecca Clyde & Co LLP
Lassoued Ibtissem Al Tamimi & Company
Shadmand Sheila L Jones Day
Shanahan Matthew Norton Rose Fulbright
Vause Adam DLA Piper Middle East LLP*
Band 2
Beheshti Payam Simmons & Simmons (ORL) ◇
Copley Rebecca Eversheds Sutherland (ORL) ◇
Fadlallah Mahmoud (Mac) Akin
Gibbon Richard Squire Patton Boggs
Jurdi Ramsey DLA Piper Middle East LLP*
Paterson Stuart J H Herbert Smith Freehills (ORL) ◇
Band 3
Abbott James CMS (UAE) LLP (ORL) ◇
Al Hamrani Khalid Al Tamimi & Company
Azzam Walid Hedef & Partners (ORL) ◇*
Rosenberg Kim Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer*
Shingler Laura DLA Piper Middle East LLP*
Up-and-coming individuals
Martin Heather Jones Day
Merali Zara Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer*
Talerman Lauren Akin
Associates to watch
Fisher Katy Squire Patton Boggs

Foreign Experts (Based Abroad) Corporate Investigations
United Arab Emirates expertise based in countries listed below
UK Beswetherick Mark Clyde & Co LLP
* Indicates individual with profile.
◇ (ORL) = Other Ranked Lawyer.
Alphabetical order within each band. Band 1 is highest.
Band 1
DLA Piper Middle East LLP
What the team is known for DLA Piper is well known for its market-leading investigations team in the Middle East, which offers a high level of cross-border expertise and is especially noted for its know-how in sanctions work. The firm assists clients active across a wide range of industries, with several recent major instructions from big names in the pharma, banking and energy sectors. The team is praised by clients for its deep bench of lawyers, who have experience across the full gamut of internal investigations.
Strengths
“The broad experience and profound knowledge of the DLA team provides them with an excellent ability to handle complex and sophisticated matters.”
“They have a very deep bench of talent – they’re extremely experienced.”
Notable practitioners
Adam Vause (see p.2990) co-chairs the global compliance and investigations group at DLA Piper from his base in Dubai. He is widely commended for his Middle East anti-corruption and anti-bribery practice. He frequently advises clients on regulatory issues as well as internal compliance policies. His experience as a former UK SFO

prosecutor provides him with a unique understanding of the UK Bribery Act and related fraud matters. **Strengths:** “Adam is great. He knows his stuff and is brilliant in technical matters.” “He has a mature, established practice in the UAE. From a technical standpoint, Adam Vause is brilliant, and he is also brilliant with his clients. He is absolutely on top of his game.” “He is a trusted, level-headed and hard-nosed lawyer able to run deeply technical investigations.” **Ramsey Jurdi** (see p.2988) is noted for his solid work on behalf of energy clients and financial institutions in Dubai. He is a strong choice for the provision of advice on FCPA compliance as well as economic sanctions targeting Russia and Iran. **Strengths:** “He is our primary sanctions counsel and is key to our operations. If we have any doubts regarding sanctions implications we run them through him.” “Ramsey Jurdi gives us very important advice. He is the main partner for anything to do with global sanctions. His responsiveness is great; he comes back to us very quickly.” **Laura Shingler** (see p.2990) is well known in Dubai and further afield for her practice focusing on financial crime, with her work regularly including mandates arising from allegations of bribery, tax evasion, manipulation of funds and fraud. **Strengths:** “She is clearly strong in expertise and experience. She is very clear and supportive in terms of guiding me through that process.”

Norton Rose Fulbright

What the team is known for Norton Rose’s Dubai-based investigations practice has a strong focus on the financial services sector, with extensive experience acting for asset managers, brokerage firms and individual executives. The team offers counsel on an array of anti-money laundering and corporate governance concerns, and is well

versed in acting for clients regarding investigations undertaken by the Dubai Financial Services Authority (DFSA) and Abu Dhabi's Financial Services Regulatory Authority (FSRA). Outside the financial services sphere, the firm is also able to assist with workplace investigations into issues such as bullying and harassment.

Strengths

"Norton Rose Fulbright has a full-service corporate investigations offering. They can pretty much cover anything."

"They are extremely thorough and their work is excellent."

"Within the UAE they have the best, most qualified regulatory specialists. I cannot recommend their level of customer service more."

Notable practitioners

Matthew Shanahan counsels on white-collar fraud, anti-money laundering and other financial criminal matters. Based in Dubai, he leverages his background as a former regulator to provide expert advice on DFSA and FRSA investigations.

Strengths: *"He is an expert in the subject matter. He is an industry veteran who cares for the client. He is very forward-looking, practical and solution-oriented."* *"He is a very valuable adviser on various legal matters. He is very well respected in the industry and provides his advice based on a broad consideration of the client's circumstances, as well as possible risks and actions that could be taken."* *"I am extremely pleased with the quality of his advice and his practical approach, which is always very balanced."*

Band 2

Akin

What the team is known for Akin maintains a strong reputation in the corporate investigations field within the UAE. The team is especially highlighted for its extensive experience assisting clients with the full gamut of export control and cross-border sanctions-related issues. The team is equally capable of advising on anti-money laundering investigations as well as proceedings stemming from instances of alleged fraud. Its client list features companies active in sectors as diverse as logistics and professional services.

Strengths

"They are experts in the field and provide us with opinions and views in a timely manner."

"They offer excellent client service. They are very bright, have very good insight into the law and its interpretations, and are very good at strategising with you on the best approach."

"Akin has consistently delivered spot-on advice and has gone the extra mile to consider the commercial and practical implications of that advice."

Notable practitioners

Mac Fadlallah is well positioned to advise clients on the extraterritorial application of US trade sanctions and compliance laws, including in relation to export control. Clients from varied sectors seek his advice, including sovereign wealth funds, multinational clothing brands and energy companies. He is US-qualified and divides his time between Dubai and Washington, DC. **Strengths:** *"He is an excellent lawyer. He is very bright and*

represents his clients very well. He is very hard-working, has a lot of knowledge and makes himself available." *"Mac Fadlallah is an excellent technical lawyer and a trusted adviser."* *"He is very responsive, and very practical in his advice."*

Lauren Talerma is a rising star whose recent practice has seen her acting for several clients with regard to the business impact of US sanctions on Russia. She is also well versed in export control and FCPA compliance, and has represented a number of major companies before US regulatory bodies.

Strengths: *"She is excellent. She is very good at the details. She is a great drafter who also advises on communication with regulatory authorities."*

"Lauren is an awesome lawyer who is always available with timely support."

Al Tamimi & Company FZ-LLC

What the team is known for Al Tamimi is a highly commended law firm with strong expertise across the region. The DIFC office acts as the focal point for its region-wide investigations practice, calling upon expertise based elsewhere across its network as needed. The firm is most often noted for its capabilities in white-collar financial crime proceedings, including cases involving allegations of embezzlement and fraud. The group counts among its clients international financial institutions, government-owned entities and numerous major corporations.

Strengths

"They are a well-reputed law firm with international experience. I get a full service and good experience working with the staff. It is a one-stop shop where we can get everything."

"They have a very pleasant, customer-oriented and personal approach."

"They touch base at every stage, constantly updating us and responding immediately when we ask questions."

Notable practitioners

Ibtissem Lassoued is a prominent Dubai-based lawyer who is well respected across the UAE. She advises on multi-jurisdictional financial crime matters, including those relating to anti-money laundering, as well as anti-corruption and counter-terrorist financing. She also demonstrates outstanding skills concerning FCPA investigations and the UK Bribery Act's extraterritorial effects. **Strengths:** *"She is fantastic. She is experienced, competent and a pleasure to work with."* *"Her reputation speaks for itself. She is very straightforward to deal with and is very accessible if I need to reach out to her. She is one of the pivotal people in the market with regard to financial investigations."* **Khalid Al Hamrani** has considerable experience representing financial institutions in fraud and bribery-related cases, as well as anti-money laundering matters. He heads Al Tamimi's financial crime practice from Dubai. **Strengths:** *"He is very hard-working and very well known."*

Clyde & Co LLP

What the team is known for Clyde & Co's corporate investigations team is able to leverage the firm's top-tier reputation in employment matters, frequently assisting with internal investigations into alleged instances of employee misconduct. The group has a strong client following among

accountancy firms and insurance companies, with considerable experience advising on investigations conducted by the UAE's regulatory bodies, including the DFSA.

Strengths

"They speak the same language as in-house counsel and chief compliance officers, and they provide timely updates throughout the entire process."

Notable practitioners

Rebecca Kelly is active on behalf of clients hailing from a range of sectors, conducting investigations into issues such as cybercrime, white-collar fraud and potential regulatory breaches as well as workplace discrimination and harassment. Her wider UAE practice sees her advise clients on compliance with anti-bribery and anti-corruption laws, the applicability of sanctions and the potential extradition of prominent individuals. She recently joined Clyde & Co after leaving Morgan Lewis. **Strengths:** *"Rebecca Kelly stands out. She is held in very high regard in this space."* *"She is a big hitter."* **Mark Beswetherick** is well equipped to handle contentious regulatory matters and internal investigations, including those relating to bribery and fraud. He receives particular praise for his deep experience in the insurance sector, and frequently advises insurance companies and financial institutions on regulatory matters in the UAE and the wider Middle East. **Strengths:** *"He is attentive and responsive to our requirements, and aware of the procedures and regulatory expectations."* *"He has done some very big-ticket investigation work."*

Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer

What the team is known for Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer maintains a prominent corporate investigations team within its Dubai office. This group is noted for its ability to handle a wide range of work within the field, advising on issues arising from alleged white-collar fraud and anti-bribery investigations as well as asset-tracing proceedings. The team also has in-depth experience advising on cross-border matters.

Strengths

"Their work requires a nuanced understanding of the law, efficient management of extensive documentation and meticulous investigative skills. The firm demonstrates its ability to handle these complexities exceptionally well."

"Freshfields have a wealth of experience across their team. Their investigation capabilities are second to none and cover most types of investigations."

Notable practitioners

Kim Rosenberg (see p.2990) frequently handles high-profile and multi-jurisdictional investigations on behalf of a broad client base that includes well-known players in sectors such as oil and gas, and telecoms. **Strengths:** *"Kim is a model professional. I would have no hesitancy in recommending Kim for any complex and sensitive case. She treats the client's issues as her own, and that speaks volumes to her character and professionalism."* *"Kim is knowledgeable of both the subject matter and how it will impact the business. She deals with other individuals in the most respectful manner and is able to have conversations with a deep understanding of*

technical issues.” *“Kim understands the big picture and is able to come up with a strategy.”* Commentators praise **Zara Merali** (see p.2988) for her in-depth knowledge of the corporate investigations space. She is noted for her broad-ranging experience advising clients on matters relating to fraud and asset tracing, as well as in regard to anti-bribery and anti-corruption mandates. **Strengths:** *“Zara is an exceptional lawyer with a broad range of technical awareness and a finger on the pulse of latest market conditions.” “Zara is a flexible, agile and standout professional. She has worked on complex cases, thrown herself at difficult issues and taken ownership, showing real leadership.” “Zara is a strong communicator and helps deliver solutions.”*

Jones Day

What the team is known for Jones Day’s Dubai team is well placed to assist clients with cross-border investigations concerning alleged financial irregularities. It also has notable experience interacting with US enforcement agencies, including the FBI and SEC. The team offers additional expertise in sanctions and export-control compliance, and represents a number of clients operating in the financial services and petrochemicals industries.

Strengths

“They have a very solid understanding of clients’ needs and are able to navigate complex situations. Another thing to point out is that the lawyers have a very consistent standard across the board.”

Notable practitioners

Sheila Shadmand is a prominent US-qualified lawyer who is well known for advising a diverse Middle Eastern clientele on the extraterritorial application of US laws. Her practice encompasses FCPA investigations, in addition to regularly advising on anti-money laundering concerns. She is Middle East and Africa managing partner at Jones Day. **Heather Martin** is a US-qualified lawyer who advises on sanctions, export-control and anti-money laundering matters relating to a broad range of jurisdictions. An of counsel within the firm, she also has significant in-house experience gained as a previous head of litigation and regulatory affairs at Mubadala. **Strengths:** *“Heather Martin is very experienced and has a lot of expertise. She has worked with many regulators and has handled many complex cases. She has insight and value she can add from that perspective.” “She is a first-rate lawyer who has extensive experience handling cross-border investigations.”*

Squire Patton Boggs

What the team is known for The Dubai-based investigations team at Squire Patton Boggs regularly advises clients in the defence and financial services industries on export control and sanctions compliance matters. It offers significant investigation expertise, covering counter-ter-

rorism financing laws and anti-money laundering issues in addition to a wide range of other sensitive and high-stakes matters. It regularly represents clients before US enforcement agencies and regulators.

Strengths

“They are a very commercially aware team who know the market, their clients and the regulatory environments in which their clients operate.”

“Squire Patton Boggs has in-depth experience of issues relating to the Middle East.”

“It is a very diverse team with excellent practitioners.”

“One of their strengths is the breadth of their knowledge of the relevant technology around AML systems.”

“They are always very responsive.”

Notable practitioners

Richard Gibbon frequently advises banks headquartered in the GCC on US sanctions laws and internal investigations. He also provides guidance on UAE laws and regulations in the corporate investigations space, including anti-money laundering matters. He regularly handles his work in conjunction with colleagues located in Squire Patton Boggs’s Washington, DC office. **Strengths:** *“Richard is a top lawyer. He is a market-leading expert and is highly sought after by clients, both domestically and internationally.” “I think his knowledge of the law and international regulations is of the highest standard across the Middle East. If there is a legal issue where I need some more clarity, he is the person I call.” “He’s a great lawyer and a pleasure to work with.” “He has the ability to break down a lot of legal jargon very easily, to tell us what things mean in plain English.”* **Katy Fisher** is a financial services and financial regulation specialist with a broad contentious and non-contentious practice. She is a respected lawyer who has a high level of experience in cases relating to alleged white-collar fraud and money laundering. She joined Squire Patton Boggs in September 2023 after leaving Kobre & Kim. **Strengths:** *“She is a fantastic investigator. She is really a rising star.”*

Other Ranked Lawyers

James Abbott receives strong praise for his experience in matters relating to money laundering, fraud and workplace investigations. Operating out of Dubai, the core of his client base comprises significant banks and private equity investors. He is also well placed to advise on the extraterritorial application of UAE anti-bribery laws. He recently joined CMS after leaving Clifford Chance.

Strengths:

“He is a very approachable and practical person who clearly understands the market here very well. He is very down to earth with his advice.”

“He has been around for a long time and is a seasoned statesman. His experience is unparalleled.”

Walid Azzam (see p.2985) of Hadeef & Partners is a dispute resolution lawyer whose practice has a strong emphasis on corporate criminal cases. He handles a wide variety of mandates relating to asset tracing and white-collar fraud, as well as alleged instances of corruption and anti-money laundering issues.

Strengths:

“He is fully immersed in the Middle East. He is a great presenter with an incredibly busy practice. He is very professional and a great person to work with.”

“Walid is hyper-sharp.”

Payam Beheshti of Simmons & Simmons has considerable strengths in conducting regulatory investigations on behalf of financial institutions in the DIFC. His practice extends beyond the finance sector, with experience advising major tech and healthcare clients on internal investigations relating to issues such as data security and workplace misconduct.

Strengths:

“He’s very responsive and knowledgeable, particularly regarding DIFC court matters.”

Rebecca Copley heads the Middle East corporate crime and investigations team at Eversheds Sutherland. She is highly rated for her accomplished representation of financial services clients across the UAE and the wider region. She assists several well-known institutions with regulatory compliance matters as well as their responses to whistle-blowing allegations. She is also highly experienced in overseeing investigations into possible financial misconduct.

Strengths:

“She has a great depth of local knowledge and knowledge of the broader context. She is superb to work with – passionate about the case and always on top of the issue.”

“Rebecca is a smart, diplomatic litigator. She is reassuring and has navigated tricky cases.”

“She is very responsive and hard-working, and always provides timely advice. She is a pragmatic and trusted adviser.”

Stuart Paterson provides high-level advice to financial services clients in regard to issues of fraudulent misrepresentation and corporate crime. He also represents individuals and family conglomerates in white-collar criminal investigations. In addition to his client-facing work, he is Middle East managing partner at Herbert Smith.

Strengths:

“He is a first-rate, phenomenal lawyer. He is very responsive.”

“The best part about him is his flexibility. He makes sure he is flexible to the client’s needs. I also really like that he will take a complex matter and explain it in a very simple manner so that the client understands what to do.”

“Stuart operates intellectually and practically at a very high level, and he knows the region inside out.”

Dispute Resolution

Dispute Resolution
Leading Firms
Band 1
Al Tamimi & Company
Clyde & Co LLP
Band 2
Allen & Overy LLP
Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer
Hadef & Partners
Band 3
Clifford Chance LLP
DLA Piper Middle East LLP
Herbert Smith Freehills
Norton Rose Fulbright
Pinsent Masons LLP
Band 4
Addleshaw Goddard LLP
Dentons
Eversheds Sutherland (International) LLP – Dubai
Band 5
Afridi & Angell
Charles Russell Speechlys
DWF (Middle East) LLP
HFW
Jones Day
KBH
Reed Smith
Watson Farley & Williams LLP
* Indicates individual with profile.
◇ (ORL) = Other Ranked Lawyer.
Alphabetical order within each band. Band 1 is highest.

Band 1

Al Tamimi & Company

What the team is known for Al Tamimi is a market-leading regional law firm with strong experience in international disputes. Its expertise spans a range of fields and the team is licensed to practise in the jurisdiction's international arbitration centres. Centred in Dubai, the firm represents domestic clients in investment-related cases in the Middle East, Africa and further afield, and is able to leverage its unparalleled regional presence in its handling of cross-border work. The firm has a leading practice in the DIFC Courts, where it acts for a slew of international clients including major financial institutions.

Strengths

"One thing I like about Al Tamimi is the responsiveness and consistency of their service across the region. It is very reassuring, and I feel confident that the lawyers there can deliver a great level of expertise and give the right advice."

"The Al Tamimi team have been very attentive and responsive, managing the case preparation and representation in the litigation with a methodical approach."

"The Al Tamimi team covers many areas of the law with great knowledge in each area. I enjoy working with them and am impressed with the depth of their knowledge."

"Our overall impression of the team at Al Tamimi & Company is highly positive. They have proven to be a cohesive and well-coordinated group with deep expertise in dispute resolution. Their commitment

Dispute Resolution
Senior Statespeople & Eminent Practitioners
Senior Statespeople: distinguished older partners
Al Mulla Habib <i>Habib Al Mulla & Partners (ORL) ◇</i>
Al Tamimi Essam <i>Al Tamimi & Company</i>
Eminent Practitioners
Arab Hassan <i>Al Tamimi & Company</i>
Leading Individuals
Band 1
Abbott James <i>CMS (UAE) LLP (ORL) ◇</i>
Jaballah Rita <i>Al Tamimi & Company</i>
Lovett Graham <i>Akin (ORL) ◇</i>
Tannous Sami <i>Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer</i>
Band 2
Bevan Alex <i>Shearman & Sterling LLP (ORL) ◇</i>
Chadwick Adrian <i>Hadef & Partners</i>
Hutchison Keith <i>Clyde & Co LLP</i>
Quinlan Henry <i>DLA Piper Middle East LLP*</i>
Sutcliffe Jonathan H <i>K&L Gates (ORL) ◇</i>
Taylor Tim <i>Lewis Baach Kaufman Middlemiss (ORL) ◇</i>
Band 3
BouMalhab Nassif <i>Clyde & Co LLP</i>
Copley Rebecca <i>Eversheds Sutherland (International)</i>
Crosse Damian <i>Pinsent Masons LLP</i>
Farhad Alain <i>Mayer Brown LLP (ORL) ◇*</i>
Francis Yacine <i>Allen & Overy LLP*</i>
Jury Shane <i>Addleshaw Goddard LLP</i>
Mackenzie Andrew <i>DLA Piper Middle East LLP*</i>
Paterson Stuart J H <i>Herbert Smith Freehills</i>
Showler Matthew <i>Trowers & Hamlins LLP (ORL) ◇</i>
Snider Thomas <i>Charles Russell Speechlys</i>
Strain Joanne <i>Quinn Emanuel Urquhart (ORL) ◇</i>
Band 4
Abdel-Nabi Susie <i>Clyde & Co LLP</i>
Ahmed Bushra <i>KBH</i>
Bijlani Charlotte <i>Watson Farley & Williams LLP</i>
Fox James <i>DWF (Middle East) LLP</i>
Hughes Paul <i>Kobre & Kim (ORL) ◇</i>
Shadmand Sheila L <i>Jones Day</i>
Walker Deirdre <i>Norton Rose Fulbright</i>
Band 5
Braganza Nick <i>HFW*</i>
Chaturvedi Parnika <i>Quinn Emanuel Urquhart (ORL) ◇</i>
O'Connell Kirsten <i>Allen & Overy LLP*</i>
Pitts Lucas <i>Bird & Bird (MEA) LLP (ORL) ◇</i>
Randeniya Chatura <i>Afridi & Angell</i>
Sheffield Sara <i>Charles Russell Speechlys</i>
Willn James <i>Reed Smith</i>
Up-and-coming individuals
Birt Antonia <i>Reed Smith</i>
Bono Seema <i>Pinsent Masons LLP</i>
Clarke Richard <i>Kobre & Kim (ORL) ◇</i>
Kemp Joshua <i>ADG Legal (ORL) ◇</i>
Koleilat-Aranjo Sara <i>Morgan, Lewis & Bockius (ORL) ◇</i>
Lewis John <i>Charles Russell Speechlys</i>
Sharratt Nicholas <i>Norton Rose Fulbright</i>

to excellence and willingness to go the extra mile have instilled confidence in us as clients."

Notable practitioners

The firm's chair and founder **Essam Al Tamimi** offers longstanding experience in dispute resolution, encompassing the full gamut of the practice area, with significant experience across several industries in the UAE. **Hassan Arab** heads up Al

Dispute Resolution
Most in Demand Arbitrators
Leading Individuals
Al Aidarous Ali <i>Al Aidarous Advocates & Legal (ORL) ◇</i>
Black Michael <i>XXIV Old Buildings (ORL) ◇</i>
Blanke Gordon <i>Blanke Arbitration (ORL) ◇</i>
Cole Adrian <i>Adrian Cole – Independent Arbitrator (ORL) ◇</i>
Emmerson Alec <i>Alec Emmerson – International (ORL) ◇</i>
Farhad Alain <i>Mayer Brown LLP (ORL) ◇*</i>
Hammoud Lara <i>Arbitra (ORL) ◇</i>
Heitzmann Pierre <i>Jones Day</i>
Hoffmann Anne <i>Hoffmann Arbitration (ORL) ◇*</i>
Ibrahim Ahmed <i>Ibrahim ADR (ORL) ◇</i>
Leginsky Victor <i>Arbitralis ADR FZ LLE (ORL) ◇</i>
Nassif Karim J <i>Nassif Arbitration (ORL) ◇</i>

Foreign Experts (Based Abroad)

Dispute Resolution

United Arab Emirates expertise based in countries listed below

UK **Stothard Paul** *Norton Rose Fulbright*

Tamimi's regional dispute resolution team. He is a highly experienced lawyer who continues to provide clients with a range of market insights relevant to commercial disputes. In addition to his leadership role within the firm, he remains active both in the local and DIFC courts. Head of international litigation **Rita Jaballah** is frequently sought after by both regional and international banks, as well as financial regulatory authorities, for her wealth of experience in financial services litigation. Based in Dubai, she is very well respected by her peers. **Strengths:** "Rita Jaballah is excellent in service delivery, formulating legal strategy, coordinating with her Arabic-speaking colleagues and team members to identify areas of support, and advocating for us as her client. Her understanding of commercial matters is extremely effective." "Rita Jaballah is one of the finest lawyers I have ever worked with. She is a remarkably skilled analyst and advocate. She has a great manner with clients and is judicious when it comes to complicated issues." "Rita Jaballah is a very astute and measured professional who can expertly guide her clients through the complexities of a dispute."

Clyde & Co LLP

What the team is known for Clyde & Co is recognised as one of the most prominent international law firms to invest resources in UAE dispute resolution. It offers a leading team in arbitration and is equally highly recognised for its handling of litigation before the DIFC Courts. In both these spheres it has acted on several landmark cases and has an impressive track record of success. Its sizeable team of lawyers offers a wide range of specialisations, with deep expertise in professional negligence, white-collar fraud and insolvency, as well as joint venture, partnership and other commercial contract disputes. The firm also has considerable experience assisting clients hailing from the hospitality, finance and technology sectors.

Strengths

"The team at Clyde & Co are always available to discuss issues and are extremely responsive to all

communications, whether verbal or written.”

“Clyde & Co have a wealth of experience in managing disputes and litigation within the Middle East, across several industries, which enables them to readily understand complex matters and provide strong strategic and commercial advice.”

“The Clyde & Co team demonstrated experience and knowledge in respect of our matter over the course of the representation.”

“A good commercial understanding is shown by the Clyde & Co team, which allows us to approach complex matters with a commercial outlook.”

“Clyde & Co has a strong team of experts who always work from various angles to provide the best solution to a matter.”

Notable practitioners

Keith Hutchison regularly handles high-value insolvency and finance-related mandates as well as DIFC shareholder disputes. Based in Dubai, he leads Clyde & Co’s debt recovery team for the Middle East and Africa. **Nassif BouMalhab** heads the Middle East arbitration practice from Dubai. He represents clients in both arbitration and litigation matters, with a focus on financial services and commercial contract disputes. **Strengths:** “Nassif BouMalhab is an outstanding counsel. He delivers effective advice and litigation strategy in very complex disputes. His advice is unmatched.”

“Nassif is one of the best lawyers in town.”

Susie Abdel-Nabi handles a broad range of commercial disputes in the Middle East and heads the Middle East dispute resolution practice. She has extensive experience representing clients from sectors such as media and hospitality. **Strengths:** “Susie Abdel-Nabi’s local expertise and depth of experience is strongly evident in her ability to provide strategic advice on complex matters from the early signs of a dispute through to full litigation.” “Susie Abdel-Nabi is well connected within the law firm so she can always find the right person and resources we need. Regardless of whether it is the UAE, Saudi or Europe, she will find the person we need.” “Susie Abdel-Nabi is a very experienced litigator with vast experience in international arbitration and disputes in the Middle East.” “Susie Abdel-Nabi is a very good lawyer and excellent with clients.”

Band 2

Allen & Overy LLP

What the team is known for A&O has maintained a highly regarded disputes department in the UAE for many years, fielding a group of lawyers who are very well acquainted with international matters. The team is a respected presence in the DIFC Courts, notably acting on financial services and white-collar crime cases. It advises an array of financial institutions and technology companies, among many other high-profile clients. It is also able to represent clients in arbitration. At the time of writing, A&O is set to merge with US law firm Shearman & Sterling, enhancing the group’s UAE dispute resolution capabilities considerably.

Strengths

“Allen & Overy have sound local law knowledge and a good way of working with clients.”

“They are very well connected to key counterparties and clients. They have a very good sense of what is

going on in the market.”

Notable practitioners

Yacine Francis is well known for his prolific DIFC litigation practice. In addition to this, he takes on a variety of international arbitration matters as counsel, acting for clients on joint venture, shareholder and other commercial disputes. Operating from Dubai, he frequently represents financial institutions and technology companies.

Strengths: “Yacine Francis is a very good lawyer; his advice is good and clear.” “Yacine Francis is well respected within the region and is always a great opponent.” **Kirsten O’Connell** (see p.2989) is an experienced international arbitration partner based in Dubai. She undertakes an array of work, including shareholder disputes as well as investment treaty cases. **Strengths:** “Kirsten O’Connell is a highly skilled professional who is capable of putting a range of diverse clients at ease.” “I am always impressed with the first-class pragmatic advice and assistance she and her team provide.”

Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer

What the team is known for Freshfields maintains a prominent arbitration team in Dubai which often acts for industry leaders on multi-jurisdictional cases. Its lawyers are well versed in matters arising from contentious investment agreements, demonstrate further strengths in regulatory investigations and frequently represent international companies in disputes with national governments and state-owned institutions. Typical clients originate from a diverse range of sectors, including manufacturing and telecoms.

Strengths

“Freshfields’ strengths include their clear and effective communication. Moreover, they understand the root issue and tailor expert questions and answers accordingly. The team are quick to understand the dispute and have a knowledge of the subject which results in clear, well-drafted advice and recommendations.”

“Freshfields have good knowledge of international and regional dispute laws, regulations and previous court verdicts.”

Notable practitioners

Sami Tannous is well known for his strong track record in arbitrations. He represents tech giants, telecoms companies and high net worth individuals in a broad range of cases. **Strengths:** “Sami Tannous is extremely smart, and I believe he is one of the best arbitration practitioners in the Middle East. He understands the complexities of the region incredibly well and gives practical advice as well as a pure legal analysis.” “Sami Tannous is pragmatic, results-oriented and professional.” “Sami is a calm, cool and technical lawyer. He is always diligent in his approach. It is clear his advice is well considered. We find his technical and strategic thinking to be on point.” “I find Sami excellent to work with. He is always thoroughly on top of the material and well prepared. He’s a source of fully considered and thoughtful advice and is a cool head under pressure with very sound strategic and tactical judgement.”

Hadef & Partners

What the team is known for Hadef & Partners has a highly developed dispute resolution department that is well respected by clients and peers. It has

a wealth of arbitration experience in the region, and benefits from a diverse team of Emirati and international lawyers. Hadef is especially known for its financial services expertise and regularly acts as co-counsel alongside international law firms on multi-jurisdictional disputes. The firm acts for both claimants and respondents on debt recovery and liquidation actions and is also active in employment and shareholder disputes.

Strengths

“The Hadef & Partners team are very business-oriented and they always try to find solutions that allow us to meet our targets and be in line with legislation in the UAE.”

“Hadef & Partners are flexible, smart, creative, reliable, rapid and proactive.”

“Hadef & Partners stay vigilant in monitoring the cases, identifying potential issues and taking appropriate action promptly.”

“Hadef & Partners offer excellent legal analysis and have great client-handling skills.”

Notable practitioners

Adrian Chadwick handles a broad range of litigation, and also acts as both arbitration counsel and arbitrator in a number of cases. His wide-ranging commercial disputes practice is complemented by a specialism in maritime and trade cases. **Strengths:** “Adrian Chadwick builds bridges well with the other side. He is easy to work with and has a lot of experience.”

Band 3

Clifford Chance LLP

What the team is known for Clifford Chance is especially applauded for its DIFC litigation work. In this field it is well known for representing leading investment banks in mis-selling claims, as well as handling numerous other cases in the financial services sector. In addition, the firm is increasingly active on high-value professional negligence and insolvency proceedings. The Dubai team continues to develop its arbitration offering, with a particular emphasis on the construction and oil and gas sectors.

Strengths

“The Clifford Chance team are brilliant at managing and steering the case to a successful outcome.”

“Their strategic thinking is extremely advanced and sharp. They always think of what the next step should be and take into account all scenarios before deciding what we should do.”

“It’s an amazing experience working with them. They are extremely professional, good listeners and very hands-on with the file. They also have excellent communication skills.”

Notable practitioners

Paul Coates is a key contact.

DLA Piper Middle East LLP

What the team is known for DLA Piper’s expanding UAE disputes team is noted for its long experience in the Middle East. It has an enviable record in the courts of the DIFC and ADGM, and is acknowledged for its strong financial crime practice. The firm also has comprehensive arbitration abilities and is very active on cross-border disputes throughout the region and beyond. Law-

yers within the team are regularly called upon to assist with a broad array of joint venture and other investment-related cases.

Strengths

“DLA Piper demonstrate a significant ability to handle complex and sophisticated matters.”

“DLA Piper bring an excellent mix of understanding in regard to local and international realities.”

“DLA Piper has a strong team with in-depth knowledge of litigation and general legal advisory.”

“The team we are working with at DLA Piper come with a wealth of experience and give clear direction.”

“DLA Piper have a good knowledge of the market and are prompt in their advice.”

Work highlights DLA Piper counselled the two co-defendants in a USD87 million securities fraud case before the courts of the ADGM.

Notable practitioners

Henry Quinlan acts on a broad range of DIFC litigation and arbitration matters. His varied client base includes several well-known financial institutions. Peers praise his deep experience in banking and general commercial disputes. Of late he has taken on the role of head of litigation funding for the Middle East, Africa and India. **Strengths:** *“Henry Quinlan is a sophisticated and commercially aware litigator.”* *“Henry Quinlan is easy to work with and is passionate about the job. He pushes to ensure his client gets the best outcome.”* **Andrew Mackenzie** (see p.2988) is DLA Piper’s Middle East head of litigation, arbitration and investigations. He is very active in the international arbitration arena, acting on both commercial and treaty-based disputes, and also frequently appears before the DIFC and ADGM courts. He draws his enviable client base from a variety of sectors, including technology.

Herbert Smith Freehills

What the team is known for The Herbert Smith Freehills team often acts for major regional petrochemicals conglomerates and energy companies on cases throughout the Middle East. The firm is also regularly active on shareholder and joint venture disputes. In addition, it is recognised for its strong experience in arbitration and retains a substantial financial services disputes and financial crime practice which is complemented by its expertise in corporate investigations.

Strengths

“Herbert Smith Freehills is fantastic on the disputes piece. They provide pragmatic and sound advice.”

“Not only do Herbert Smith Freehills have a multi-talented team but they make themselves available quickly and readily.”

“Herbert Smith Freehills are very hands-on and proactive in dealing with all aspects of a dispute, working well with experts and clients to provide a well-managed and effective outcome.”

“Herbert Smith Freehills’ Dubai practice excels in its level of service, responsiveness and agility in guiding clients through the arbitral process.”

Notable practitioners

Stuart Paterson frequently acts on behalf of international banks and financial services clients on a broad variety of contentious matters in the DIFC. His handling of shareholder and contractual disputes is complemented by considerable expertise in white-collar fraud and corporate investi-

gations. **Strengths:** *“Stuart Paterson is a capable, reliable and trustworthy pair of hands.”* *“Stuart Paterson is personable, amenable and understands the UAE dispute resolution scene very thoroughly.”*

Norton Rose Fulbright

What the team is known for Norton Rose Fulbright has a strong disputes practice in Dubai. The firm is acknowledged for its broad-ranging experience in arbitration, especially in regard to high-profile mandates in the energy and natural resources sector. It also has complementary expertise in corporate investigations and contentious financial regulatory matters. Lawyers within the team are well versed in a variety of financial services, TMT and insurance cases.

Strengths

“The Norton Rose team are on top of all matters and always available. They have the requisite technical knowledge and expertise. The members of the team dedicated to our case have an incredible breadth of experience.”

“They are responsive, analytical and offer fine turn-arounds.”

Notable practitioners

Deirdre Walker is a seasoned disputes lawyer who acts for major corporations, financial institutions and high net worth individuals on a broad range of commercial cases in the DIFC.

Strengths: *“She possesses technical knowledge of the subject matter at hand, and her support in managing our disputes is invaluable. Her strategies are without fault and she is empathetic to commercial considerations.”*

Nicholas Sharratt has a wealth of experience in both arbitration and DIFC Court litigation. He regularly handles financial services, real estate and commodities cases. He recently joined Norton Rose as its Middle East head of dispute resolution after leaving Stephenson Harwood. **Paul Stothard** is active in both arbitration and litigation, with a wealth of experience acting for banks and asset managers. He is now based in the London office, having recently relocated from Dubai. **Strengths:** *“Paul Stothard is very good and responsive. He plainly understands the client imperative, thinks outside the box and is willing to express an opinion.”*

Pinsent Masons LLP

What the team is known for Pinsent Masons maintains a strong global reputation as a go-to construction law firm, but its Dubai team is also active on general commercial disputes, including high-profile cross-border actions. The firm has noteworthy expertise in tax cases, and also provides a variety of regulatory and compliance advice in relation to anti-corruption, white-collar fraud and other corporate crime matters.

Strengths

“They are extremely knowledgeable in their subject matter. They are always accessible and approachable, and I feel confident in the advice I receive.”

“Pinsent Masons’ expertise in litigation is unquestionable in terms of its depth and breadth.”

“Pinsent Mason has a deep bench of lawyers. The matters are always appropriately staffed.”

“The advice of Pinsent Masons has consistently identified practical ways forward through obstacles and challenges in multiple jurisdictions.”

Work highlights A Pinsent Masons team jointly led from Dubai, London and Doha represented Qatar Airways in litigation against Airbus concerning an alleged defect in the design of its A350 aircraft.

Notable practitioners

Damian Crosse heads Pinsent Masons’ Middle East commercial litigation and compliance team out of Dubai. He advises a number of high-profile clients operating in sectors such as financial services, real estate and technology. **Strengths:** *“Damian Crosse pursues his clients’ interests passionately, while at the same time providing thoughtful and practical commercial advice. He is very accessible, with an ability to explain complex issues in an easy-to-understand manner. He is a highly effective and respected negotiator.”* *“Damian Crosse provides quality service and advice, as well as good value for money.”* *“He can coordinate with different parties, bring international experience on board and ensure anything locally is aligned globally.”* *“In litigation, you need a lawyer who can think outside the box, and is determined and self-confident in turning a uncertain situation into a successful position. I would say this is a good description of Damian.”* **Seema Bono** is regularly highlighted by sources for her diligence and strong client service skills. She has a wealth of experience handling cross-border shareholder and contractual disputes. **Strengths:** *“Seema Bono is an excellent lawyer and a pleasure to work with.”* *“Seema Bono is a steady hand and a cool head. I know I can always rely on her to make sure the work gets done in a timely manner and that the quality is outstanding. Seema also goes above and beyond to support us.”* *“Seema Bono has a very good way with clients and pays a lot of care and attention to the details and how people respond to things. She is good at reading the room, which is good with clients and opponents. She has a good team with her, too.”*

Band 4

Addleshaw Goddard LLP

What the team is known for Addleshaw Goddard operates an up-and-coming disputes team that is noted for its strong presence in the DIFC Courts, as well as those of the ADGM. It demonstrates pronounced strengths in debt recovery proceedings and broader financial services claims, as well as shareholder and commercial contract disputes. The team acts for household names from a variety of industries, including telecoms, technology, and oil and gas. It is also respected for its arbitration practice, handling significant shareholder disputes for high net worth individuals and other major clients.

Strengths

“The team led by Shane Jury at Addleshaw Goddard are responsive, imaginative and user-friendly.”

“Addleshaw Goddard is an excellent team with a strong understanding of the multi-jurisdictional aspects of our claim.”

Work highlights Addleshaw Goddard acted for Emirates NBD, as the agent representing a syndicate of nine banks, in DIFC Court proceedings to recover a USD300 million loan from KBBO CPG

Investment.

Notable practitioners

Shane Jury leads the Middle East commercial disputes practice and is well placed to coordinate cross-border cases alongside Addleshaw colleagues based in Saudi Arabia, Oman and Qatar. He has a wide-ranging practice covering international arbitration as well as litigation within the UAE's economic free zones. He has acted on shareholder, fraud and negligence cases, among other matters. **Strengths:** "Shane Jury is one of the cleverest lawyers I have worked with. Every time I am on communications with him he is all over the detail – a super-impressive lawyer." "Shane Jury is exceptional. He is a commercially and legally astute individual and a great leader. His instructions are clear and he can discuss complicated matters of law." "Shane Jury and his team are incredibly responsive, client-focused and go above and beyond on every matter they have worked on with us." "Shane Jury is an outstanding litigator and strategic thinker." "Shane Jury is fantastic when it comes to turnaround time and legal clarity. His strategy is impressive from a conceptual and enforcement perspective."

Dentons

What the team is known for Dentons is regularly noted for its broad global footprint, encompassing numerous offices throughout the Middle East. Its UAE disputes group is often instructed on cross-border cases. This includes arbitrations as well as shareholder and banking disputes heard before the commercial courts of the ADGM and DIFC. It also regularly assists with the enforcement of overseas arbitral awards. Typical clients are active in sectors such as financial services, oil and gas, and hospitality.

Strengths

"The team at Dentons are professional and clear in their opinions. They answer any questions we have in a timely manner while also collaborating with external jurisdictional sources for extra information when needed."

"Dentons are both proactive and responsive. They are always professional and are respected by all of our internal team."

"Dentons provide a great service. They give clear opinions and they come back to us in a timely manner."

Work highlights Dentons was instructed by the Haulotte Group in a series of litigation proceedings against its local distributor, concerning a debt of USD17 million and the alleged breach of two commercial contracts.

Notable practitioners

Dean Ryburn is a key point of contact for clients.

Eversheds Sutherland (International) LLP – Dubai

What the team is known for Eversheds Sutherland has a comprehensive Middle East disputes practice that is particularly active in the region's arbitration centres. It represents a diverse clientele including a number of regional and international banks. The team maintains a strong contentious regulatory and investigations team and notably advises on major banking disputes. It also acts on energy and white-collar fraud mat-

ters, overseeing cases before the local and DIFC Courts.

Strengths

"The Eversheds team are well educated and are experienced in handling complicated legal issues."

"Eversheds have a wide range of expertise, with strong leadership and work ethic."

"The work of the Eversheds partners is logical, measured and efficient. The firm recommends practical solutions to overcome challenging legal and commercial matters."

"Eversheds always provide efficient support in a timely manner."

Notable practitioners

Middle East disputes head **Rebecca Copley** has a broad practice which sees her act on all manner of DIFC litigation proceedings, in addition to corporate investigations and contentious regulatory matters. **Strengths:** "Rebecca Copley is fantastic. She possesses a deep understanding of the local culture and context of the UAE." "Rebecca Copley is very responsive and hard-working. She always provides timely advice. She is pragmatic and a trusted adviser." "Rebecca Copley is very client-focused and committed to providing an exemplary service. She often goes above and beyond, while also maintaining team morale and wellbeing." "Rebecca Copley is very knowledgeable and pragmatic."

Band 5

Afridi & Angell

What the team is known for Afridi & Angell supports numerous international and domestic clients in cross-border commercial litigation and arbitration. It continues to be noted for its work on shipping and financial services disputes as well as demonstrating further capability in real estate and construction. It acts on matters across the GCC, representing a variety of clients, including international financial institutions and major manufacturers. It has broad experience representing South Asian clients in UAE-related and domiciled matters.

Strengths

"Afridi & Angell always fields a strong and cohesive team and are adept at handling very substantial litigation."

"The lawyers at Afridi & Angell are very effective and communicate complex legal issues in a manner that is easy for the client to understand and evaluate."

"The Afridi team understand our commercial drivers and our ideal outcome in a complex scenario. They approach us with ideas that can assist us in exploring areas we had not previously considered."

Notable practitioners

Chatura Randeniya has experience concerning the enforcement of arbitral awards and is well versed in representing construction and financial services clients. **Strengths:** "He guides the legal advice and manages his team effectively and economically." "Chatura Randeniya is an excellent lawyer who provides quick and sophisticated advice." "Chatura Randeniya sifts through to find solutions and explain things in terms that are practical. He is personable, good to work with, flexible and very knowledgeable."

Charles Russell Speechlys

What the team is known for Charles Russell Speechlys is notable for its expanding dispute resolution team in Dubai. It acts for a mix of large corporate clients and private individuals on a wide range of claims, with experience in joint venture and contractual disputes. The firm is able to oversee local litigation cases in Arabic, and its Dubai-based lawyers regularly work alongside the firm's top-tier disputes practice in Bahrain on commercially sensitive proceedings.

Strengths

"The firm is very adept at coming up with bespoke legal solutions for clients and presenting counsel with clear instructions on the central issues."

"Charles Russell Speechlys are strong from partner level right down to their associates, and the quality of instructions and advice is maintained throughout. They are one of the most impressive outfits I work with in the region."

Work highlights Charles Russell Speechlys acted for Huobi in a novel dispute relating to a cryptocurrency sale, involving claims for breach of contract, breach of confidentiality and breach of fiduciary duty.

Notable practitioners

Tom Snider is recognised for his strong track record in LCIA cases. He acts for a varied client base, including tech giants and major financial institutions. He recently joined Charles Russell Speechlys as head of international arbitration, having previously held an equivalent position at Al Tamimi. **Strengths:** "Thomas Snider is a savvy and highly accomplished disputes lawyer who is a joy to work with." "Thomas Snider is extremely knowledgeable in the Middle East." **Sara Sheffield** is a respected lawyer with a growing reputation in the DIFC disputes sphere. She handles an array of high-value fraud and shareholder disputes and is equally well experienced in assisting with enforcement proceedings. **Strengths:** "Sara Sheffield builds strong relationships with her clients, who clearly trust the advice that she gives. She provides an exceptional bespoke service on cases with challenging and complex fact patterns, managing to turn these into clear legal strategies." **John Lewis** is a Dubai-based partner with a rising market profile. He acts for clients on both arbitration and DIFC litigation cases, and is especially noted for his work representing accountancy firms in professional negligence matters. **Strengths:** "John Lewis is an up-and-coming, rising star in professional negligence defence. He has run our case excellently."

DWF (Middle East) LLP

What the team is known for DWF maintains a commendable disputes practice in Dubai which has experience acting on a range of regional and international disputes. Its strengths include representing banks in debt recovery proceedings, as well as acting on a variety of white-collar fraud cases. The team also has experience in insolvency matters, in addition to pursuing professional negligence claims against auditors and assisting with the enforcement of arbitral awards.

Strengths

"Their ability to provide clarity surrounding the options available and processes to be followed

always makes the experience of engaging with DWF extremely beneficial.”

“The team at DWF and their work are both laudable. Their strengths include their collaboration in drafting, their active listening and advice, their effective communication and timely responses.”

Work highlights DWF represented Cerner Oracle in the enforcement of a USD95 million arbitration award against the UAE Minister of Health.

Notable practitioners

James Fox is noted for the depth of his experience in commercial litigation and arbitration matters. He is especially well regarded in the UAE for his work handling asset recovery, professional negligence, insolvency and white-collar fraud claims in the DIFC Courts. **Strengths:** “James Fox is an excellent litigator. His management of the team is impressive. He is also a good technical lawyer, and clearly a market leader given his knowledge and understanding of local courts and tactical approach.” “He possesses sound commercial judgement. He is hard-working and on top of everything.” “James Fox is our primary point of contact. We have always found him and his team to provide exceptional advice, information and guidance.” “James provides clear, concise advice and masters the most complex cross-border issues. He is supported by an extremely strong, responsive team with excellent attention to detail, who are all very pleasant to deal with.”

HFW

What the team is known for HFW is a growing disputes player in the Middle East and often acts for financial institutions. The firm’s Dubai office is noted for its specialist aviation knowledge, and its disputes lawyers are regularly called upon to handle cases in this sector. HFW is also noteworthy for its association with local Emirati law firm Salam Al Midfa Advocates, giving it the capability to oversee matters in the domestic UAE courts.

Strengths

“HFW have navigated some complex claims with challenging counterparties. They adapt quickly and communicate well.”

Work highlights HFW assisted National Bank of Fujairah with its recovery of an approximately AED45 million sum through the Dubai courts.

Notable practitioners

Nick Braganza (see p.2986) is an ever-more prominent commercial disputes lawyer. He regularly advises clients on fraud and insolvency matters, as well as shareholder disputes. His work principally focuses on DIFC Court matters. **Strengths:** “Nick has really good litigation instincts and is a really knowledgeable litigator.” “I have a lot of time for Nick Braganza. He is a sensible and good, client-friendly lawyer.”

Jones Day

What the team is known for Jones Day has a compact team in Dubai which demonstrates a broad range of skills in the disputes arena. It is adept at handling international arbitration cases and is equally well versed in appearing before the DIFC Courts in general commercial disputes. Further expertise spans corporate investigations and related issues, including white-collar fraud and

anti-money laundering matters.

Strengths

“They possess an excellent grasp of complex cross-border issues.”

“Jones Day has an outstanding cross-disciplinary team of leading experts. They are commercial and pragmatic.”

Work highlights Jones Day represented Canadian mining company Gold Pool in a BIT arbitration against the Republic of Kazakhstan, involving a claim for USD917 million.

Notable practitioners

Sheila Shadmand oversees Jones Day’s work throughout the Middle East and Africa. She is active on a range of arbitration and DIFC litigation matters, with her practice complemented by deep experience in white-collar crime cases, FCPA investigations and anti-money laundering mandates. **Pierre Heitzmann** is regularly appointed as an arbitrator and has wide-ranging experience extending to all major institutional rules. He also acts as counsel and is particularly adept at representing construction clients. He divides his time between Dubai and Paris. **Strengths:** “Pierre Heitzmann is a very good lawyer. A true gentleman who is excellent in his field.” “Pierre Heitzmann is a well-rounded professional.”

KBH

What the team is known for KBH is noted for its presence before the DIFC Courts, where it represents clients in cases ranging from recovery claims to employment cases as well as shareholder and joint venture disputes. The team handles a variety of significant commercial litigation cases and is also very active on arbitration matters.

Strengths

“KBH are open and conscientious of the requirements of their clients and go above and beyond to ensure the best possible representation.”

“The team at KBH are proactive in zealously representing their client. They show great attention to detail and a command over complex court procedures.”

“They show an exceptional understanding of the commercial laws.”

Work highlights KBH represented two defendants in DIFC proceedings brought by Deutsche Bank and valued at USD92 million.

Notable practitioners

Bushra Ahmed is an active litigation lawyer with a strong track record before the DIFC Courts. In addition to general commercial litigation, she is noted for her frequent handling of employment litigation and has further expertise in contentious financial services regulatory matters. **Strengths:** “Bushra Ahmed is a stellar litigator and a fierce advocate.” “Her tenacity in uncovering every possible angle of a situation and then go for the jugular is what makes her a great success.” “Bushra Ahmed is very professional, approachable and knowledgeable.”

Reed Smith

What the team is known for Reed Smith is a respected full-service law firm with well-established offices in Dubai and Abu Dhabi. Its expanding commercial dispute resolution team

in the UAE handles a variety of DIFC Court cases as well as arbitration matters. Its key areas of experience include shareholder and insolvency disputes, and the team is also able to leverage the reputation of the firm’s much-respected construction disputes team.

Strengths

“Reed Smith provide immediate and timely responses to any query and are always available for consultation.”

“One of their best qualities is that they listen to what we want and keep the best interest of the company in mind.”

Work highlights Reed Smith represented Corbin Crossroads Consulting, as well as former US ambassador to the UAE Michael Corbin, in DIFC Court proceedings arising out of the terms of a commercial agreement.

Notable practitioners

James Willn has a wide range of experience covering matters as diverse as cryptocurrency disputes as well as sanctions-related cases. He is well versed in representing clients in arbitration proceedings conducted under a variety of institutional rules. **Antonia Birt** is an impressive lawyer who represents clients in a wide range of commercial disputes. She often acts in cases arising in industries such as oil and gas and real estate. **Strengths:** “Antonia Birt is a priceless resource and is very aware of client interests. She protects and pursues the intended goal effortlessly.”

Watson Farley & Williams LLP

What the team is known for Watson Farley has a robust disputes team in Dubai which leverages the firm’s strong reputation in asset finance to assist with a variety of aviation-related disputes. This is complemented by a strong standing in the field of shipping disputes. In addition to this work, its lawyers offer considerable experience in shareholder and contractual disputes, with growing expertise in cybercrime cases. The team acts for property developers and major industrial clients, among other notable names.

Strengths

“Watson Farley & Williams are a highly skilled and experienced team who know how to define and solve the problem.”

“The team at Watson Farley respond promptly and attend to client matters diligently. They spare no effort to provide us with the highest levels of professional services on time, yet without compromising their work quality, which is always outstanding.”

“Watson Farley & Williams are well-experienced lawyers who really understand the commercial side.”

“Watson Farley & Williams provide good attention to detail, diligence and effectively communicate the solution.”

Work highlights A team at Watson Farley & Williams represented Gulf Wings in a more than USD10 million claim against A&K Trading before the DIFC Courts.

Notable practitioners

Charlotte Bijlani maintains an impressive litigation and arbitration practice in Dubai. She acts for a diverse list of corporations and financial institutions on a wide variety of contentious matters.

Strengths: “Charlotte Bijlani is an excellent lawyer who takes her clients’ matters to heart and deals with them diligently and professionally.” “Charlotte has a very calm approach. She listens to client concerns carefully, and in addition to her strong legal and communication skills, she has strong commercial acumen.” “Charlotte Bijlani is an extremely well-rounded legal adviser who is always available and quickly flags salient points that may affect our commercial position.” “I strongly recommend Charlotte Bijlani for her superb leadership of the dispute resolution practice in the Middle East. She is highly respected, highly regarded, and I recommend her for any complex and sophisticated case.”

Other Ranked Lawyers

James Abbott is a leading name for DIFC litigation. His broad practice sees him acting on financial services disputes, insolvency proceedings and corporate investigations, as well as representing accountancy firms in professional negligence claims. He recently joined CMS after leaving Clifford Chance.

Strengths:

“James Abbott is very experienced and a go-to adviser.”

“James Abbott has been around a long time. He is a seasoned lawyer and his experienced is unparalleled.”

“James Abbott is one of the most knowledgeable and experienced practitioners in the DIFC.”

Ali Al Aidarous is an esteemed Emirati lawyer who frequently acts as arbitrator in arbitrations held under the auspices of institutions such as the DIAC.

Strengths:

“Ali Al Aidarous is a leading local arbitrator. He possesses a deep and fine knowledge of the law.”

Habib Al Mulla has a leading reputation across the GCC, maintaining a longstanding dispute resolution practice in both the local and DIFC courts. He is frequently appointed as sole arbitrator in significant disputes and also remains active as arbitration counsel and expert witness.

Leading disputes lawyer **Alex Bevan** of Shearman & Sterling is well regarded for his construction arbitration practice in the UAE. He is also regularly called upon to assist with oil and gas cases in addition to high-value contractual disputes.

Michael Black KC is especially noted for his in-depth experience advising on construction and energy matters in the Middle East. He is frequently appointed as an arbitrator.

Gordon Blanke is regularly highlighted as a go-to arbitrator in Dubai. He is often appointed on cases in the financial services and oil and gas sectors.

Strengths:

“Gordon Blanke has excellent depth of knowledge and is able to pinpoint useful clauses to support a case quickly and relay those in a clear and concise manner.”

“Gordon Blanke always brings his diverse legal acumen to the case and with great ease, which is refreshing.”

“Gordon Blanke is prolific in his work.”

“Gordon Blanke has great visibility in the UAE and is trusted. His background allows him to bring a pro-

cedural structure to the framework of arbitration.” **Parnika Chaturvedi** frequently advises on disputes arising out of joint ventures as well as sale and purchase and distribution agreements. She recently joined Quinn Emanuel after leaving King & Wood Mallesons.

Strengths:

“Parnika Chaturvedi is across all the detail, with almost a photographic memory.”

“Parnika Chaturvedi is very bright and hard-working.”

“Parnika Chaturvedi is highly competent and capable.”

“Parnika Chaturvedi is a very good lawyer, she is a pleasure to work with. She has a really sharp commercial judgement.”

“Parnika Chaturvedi is technically strong and very responsive, ensuring deadlines are met. She has a very strategic outlook ensuring that advice is delivered after all angles are considered.”

Richard Clarke of Kobre & Kim is an up-and-coming lawyer based in Dubai. His practice has a notable focus on civil fraud, insolvency and asset recovery. He has further experience assisting with enforcement proceedings.

Strengths:

“Richard Clarke is a star of the future.”

“Richard Clarke is one of the best younger lawyers in the DIFC. He is impressive and does not get fazed.”

Adrian Cole has extensive experience in construction disputes and is regarded as one of the leading disputes lawyers in the UAE. Now operating as a full-time arbitrator, he has a flourishing practice and is widely agreed to be one of the go-to names in his field.

Strengths:

“Adrian Cole has made a fine practice for himself and is a real leading light.”

“He has been in the UAE for many years and understands the culture. He is also known on an international level. I am always impressed by his professionalism and he is technically good in construction.”

Alec Emmerson is a highly recognisable name for international arbitration in the UAE. He frequently acts as sole arbitrator in highly significant cases. His longstanding practice spans more than four decades and covers the full gamut of dispute resolution.

Strengths:

“Alec Emmerson is the most senior and experienced of all arbitrators as an expatriate in the Middle East.”

“Alec Emmerson never disappoints you. He is brilliant and fun to work with.”

“Alec Emmerson is on the ball and makes sure stuff gets done. He is important as an arbitrator and important for the legal community.”

Alain Farhad (see p.2986) has a strong focus on international arbitration and he is well accustomed to representing clients hailing from the construction, energy and real estate sectors. Based in Dubai, he heads the UAE disputes practice at Mayer Brown.

Strengths:

“Alain Farhad is a very intelligent arbitration lawyer.”

“Alain Farhad is a class act. He is one of the most cool, calm and collected individuals. He is someone you want in your corner.”

“Alain Farhad is a force to be reckoned with. He is very capable as an arbitrator and as counsel.”

“Alain Farhad is an exceptional disputes lawyer who combines excellent technical skills and strong strategic thinking.”

Lara Hammoud is a prominent arbitrator with a depth of knowledge in construction, energy and technology disputes. She is well known in the market and has extensive experience acting on a wide variety of disputes.

Strengths:

“Lara Hammoud is an excellent lawyer. She has a high level of understanding for cases and is dedicated.”

Anne Hoffmann (see p.2987) is a highly regarded arbitrator who has in-depth experience in the Middle East. She is particularly skilled in general commercial and shareholder disputes, but also increasingly focused on disputes arising in the energy, natural resources and mining industries. Based in Dubai, she is dual-qualified in both Germany and England & Wales.

Strengths:

“Anne Hoffmann is a very good arbitrator. She has good attention to detail and is both responsive and proactive.”

“Anne Hoffmann is to the point, good on factual cases and a very busy arbitrator.”

“Anne Hoffmann is an impressive individual.”

Paul Hughes of Kobre & Kim maintains an impressive practice, covering white-collar fraud cases in addition to the enforcement of foreign judgments and arbitral awards. He is noteworthy for his representation of individual executives and high net worth individuals as well as financial institutions and petrochemicals companies.

Strengths:

“Paul Hughes is a fantastic lawyer possessing extensive subject matter expertise and a strong commercial acumen. His wealth of experience enables him to navigate complex legal matters with exceptional proficiency.”

“Paul Hughes’s solutions are intricately intertwined with our business considerations, effectively harmonising the legal strategies with our overarching commercial goals. He is a highly valuable asset to our team.”

“I have been blown away by Paul Hughes; he is superb. He is switched on and a brilliant strategist. He is tactical and commercially minded.”

“Paul Hughes is an excellent lawyer. He knows the bigger picture and is on top of all the detail.”

Ahmed Ibrahim has considerable experience acting as an arbitrator. He has been appointed on numerous high-stakes disputes spanning various sectors including insurance and oil and gas.

Strengths:

“Ahmed Ibrahim has this ability to simplify things in complicated disputes. He is able to blend a regional and international practice into one.”

“Ahmed Ibrahim is making a name for himself and building a good reputation.”

Joshua Kemp of ADG Legal is an up-and-coming partner based in Dubai. He is noted for his litigation and arbitration practice, handling a range of shareholder and joint venture disputes alongside internal investigations and asset recovery proceedings.

Sara Koleilat-Aranjo is a lawyer with a growing

reputation in the Middle East. She frequently represents clients in arbitrations and is noted for working on a wide range of construction, real estate and project-related disputes. In September 2023 she joined Morgan Lewis as its regional head of arbitration and disputes, having left Al Tamimi.

Strengths:

"Sara Koleilat-Aranjo is easy to work with and adds tremendous value. Her responsiveness is top-notch, she is personable, conscientious and technically sound, and her strategic thinking is something that sets her apart."

Victor Leginsky is a veteran lawyer with a long history of appearances as chair, party-appointed arbitrator and sole arbitrator in major breach of contract cases. He has particular experience relating to real estate and construction disputes but has also overseen a wealth of matters in other industries.

Strengths:

"Victor Leginsky is well known and respected within the region. He is a go-to arbitrator in Dubai."

"Victor Leginsky is very busy, important and sought after."

Graham Lovett of Akin maintains an excellent reputation for both DIFC Court litigation and international arbitration. He is well known among his peers in the legal profession, and his wide-ranging practice encompasses the full spectrum of general commercial disputes, including joint venture and investment matters.

Strengths:

"Graham Lovett and his team are efficient. They dissected the case, identified pressure points and communicated excellently with the other side."

"Graham Lovett is impressive. He has a strong brand and good recognition."

Karim Nassif is noted for his work as an arbitrator across the UAE. He presides over a variety of cases, including construction and energy disputes, and is noted both for his abilities as an advocate as well as for his strong sense of strategy.

Strengths:

"Karim Nassif is an excellent lawyer who is diligent and knowledgeable, with a rich experience and great personality."

"Karim Nassif is comfortable with Arab civil law and French law, as well as Shari'a and wider Islamic law, so he has a good understanding of different jurisdictions."

"Karim Nassif is open-minded, clever, and very able to assess the strength of a case and form an independent view. He is pretty pragmatic in his dealings with other arbitrators."

Lucas Pitts is based in the Dubai office of Bird & Bird and is highly commended for his expert handling of commercial disputes. His recent work includes high-value disputes in such sectors as aviation, technology, and oil and gas.

Strengths:

"Lucas Pitts is extremely well rounded as a lawyer."

"I am very happy to have collaborated with Lucas Pitts. He has immense knowledge and patience."

Matthew Showler of Trowers & Hamlin is a well-known litigator with considerable experience handling contentious matters. He is active in a broad range of commercial disputes, representing high net worth individuals, financial institutions and insurance companies.

Strengths:

"Matthew Showler is a team leader with vision and an incredible level of sophistication."

"Matthew Showler is a good adviser and no-nonsense."

Joanne Strain receives considerable praise for her handling of a wide variety of disputes, including debt recovery, insolvency and commercial fraud matters. She joined Quinn Emanuel at the start of 2024 as a partner in its recently launched Abu Dhabi office, after leaving King & Wood Mallesons.

Strengths:

"Joanne Strain is a proficient and well-informed litigator."

"Joanne Strain is good on the client care side and sees what matters on cases. She has very good judgement about what is important."

"Joanne Strain is technically strong, with an ability to distil the challenges of complex situations into clear pathways forward. Her manner is engaging and responsive. She is also empathetic, which is very important."

Jonathan Sutcliffe of K&L Gates has garnered deep respect for his significant experience in international arbitration and litigation in the DIFC. He is highly regarded for his ability to handle an array of construction, IP, joint venture and general commercial disputes.

Strengths:

"Jonathan Sutcliffe is always there for us 24/7, and provides truly excellent service. He makes us feel as though we are his most important client."

"Jonathan Sutcliffe is thorough, careful, hard-working and an excellent lawyer. He has been in the region a long time and knows how the dispute world works here. He is really intelligent, and good at explaining complicated matters in a simple way."

Tim Taylor KC is noted for his many years' experience of litigation work in the DIFC Courts, taking on the full gamut of international disputes, and serving clients from such sectors as financial services, hospitality, and food and beverages.

Dispute Resolution Domestic

Dispute Resolution: Domestic
Leading Firms
Band 1
Al Tamimi & Company
Hadeef & Partners
Band 2
Alsuwaidi & Company
Galadari Advocates & Legal Consultants
Global Advocacy and Legal Counsel
Horizons & Co Law Firm
OGH Legal
Band 3
ADG Legal
Al Aidarous Advocates & Legal Consultants
BSA Ahmad Bin Hezeem & Associates LLC
Habib Al Mulla & Partners
M&CO Legal
Mohamed Alserkal Advocates and Legal
PRIMECASE – Hamad Al Rahma Advocates
* Indicates individual with profile.
◇ (ORL) = Other Ranked Lawyer.
Alphabetical order within each band. Band 1 is highest.

Band 1

Al Tamimi & Company

What the team is known for Al Tamimi & Company is frequently applauded for the breadth and depth of its domestic litigation team. It is regularly to be seen representing big-name clients before the courts of each individual emirate, as well as before the Federal Supreme Court. It often acts for creditors in their attempts to recover sums from debtors, and is also well versed in bankruptcy litigation. The firm offers a further wealth of experience in shareholder and partnership proceedings, as well as with regard to the enforcement of arbitral awards. Clients include leading property developers, commercial banks and energy companies. The UAE litigation team is also able to coordinate with the firm's other offices across the Middle East in multi-jurisdictional proceedings.

Strengths

"They navigate the complexities of the legal environment in Dubai with remarkable expertise, swiftly adapting to unexpected circumstances. Their strategic approach and deep understanding of domestic law results in a robust defence, ensuring our interests are staunchly protected."

"The Al Tamimi team are extremely focused and cover all anticipated arguments. They have a strategic approach."

"Their expertise in handling intricate issues is commendable and they consistently demonstrate their knowledge of the legal landscape."

Work highlights Al Tamimi acted for a multinational bank on the enforcement of interim measures against its obligors through the UAE courts in support of a AED310 million claim in Singapore.

Notable practitioners

Essam Al Tamimi is the founding partner of Al Tamimi & Company and oversees the activities of the firm in his current role as chairman. A highly influential figure in the UAE, having been responsible for drafting key pieces of legislation, his

Dispute Resolution: Domestic
Senior Statespeople & Eminent Practitioners
Senior Statespeople: distinguished older partners
Al Mulla Habib <i>Habib Al Mulla & Partners</i>
Al Tamimi Essam <i>Al Tamimi & Company</i>
Eminent Practitioners
Arab Hassan <i>Al Tamimi & Company</i>
Leading Individuals
Band 1
Al Hashimi Ali <i>Global Advocacy and Legal Counsel</i>
Al Zarooni Ali <i>Horizons & Co Law Firm</i> *
Juma Abdulrahman <i>Hadeef & Partners</i> *
Band 2
Al Aidarous Ali <i>Al Aidarous Advocates & Legal</i>
Alsuwaidi Mohammed R <i>Alsuwaidi & Company</i>
Hussain Mahmood <i>M&CO Legal</i>
Band 3
Al Osaiba Nasser <i>Global Advocacy and Legal Counsel</i>
Allouz Ahmed <i>Al Tamimi & Company</i>
Azzam Walid <i>Hadeef & Partners</i> *
Hikal Sherif <i>OGH Legal</i>

advice and guidance continue to be much sought after by other members of his team. **Strengths:** "Essam Al Tamimi deserves accolades for providing exceptional client service." "Essam Al Tamimi's visionary approach and keen understanding of the business landscape enable him to offer strategic advice and innovative solutions that make him an invaluable asset to clients seeking comprehensive and forward-thinking guidance." **Hassan Arab** is a veteran Emirati litigator who is immensely well respected by his peers in the legal community. He remains active on local litigation matters, combining this work with his responsibilities as regional head of dispute resolution. **Ahmed Allouz** is an experienced litigator before the UAE courts, representing a range of clients in commercial disputes and white-collar crime cases. **Naief Yahia** has considerable experience advising clients on local litigation matters. He is especially noted for his handling of banking and real estate disputes. **Strengths:** "Naief Yahia has the experience and vision which in my opinion are key to obtaining the desired results of cases before the courts." "Naief is a very experienced and capable lawyer who delivers excellent client service." "Naief Yahia is very professional and well informed about our industry. He has practicable solutions for our cases. He is proactive and very hands-on with all our requests."

Hadeef & Partners

What the team is known for Hadeef & Partners is a leading full-service law firm with offices in both Dubai and Abu Dhabi. It is best known for its substantial domestic litigation practice, which is regularly cited as one of the most capable departments in this field. Its lawyers represent an impressive list of international and domestic clients at all levels of the Emirati court system. The team has considerable experience concerning financial services disputes. Further areas of expertise include shareholder and agency disputes, as well as white-collar crime cases.

Strengths

"Hadeef & Partners always finds the best solution for

Dispute Resolution Domestic: Without Rights of Audience
Leading Individuals
Alshraideh Mohammad <i>PRIMECASE – Hamad Al</i> *
El Daye Ghassan <i>Charles Russell Speechlys (ORL)</i> ◇
El Ghatit Mohamed <i>OGH Legal</i>
Jayousi Areen <i>Horizons & Co Law Firm</i> *
Yahia Naief <i>Al Tamimi & Company</i>

complex matters, with a high level of accuracy and professionalism."

"Hadeef & Partners can analyse in-depth and find convincing arguments to protect their clients."

"Hadeef are in a different level. They are very organised, timely and extremely responsive to any queries a client may have."

"Hadeef & Partners' dispute resolution practice exhibits impressive strengths, including their expertise, client-centric approach, strategic thinking, negotiation skills and proactive case management."

Notable practitioners

Abdulrahman Juma (see p.2988) heads the firm's dispute resolution practice in Dubai. He handles a range of disputes relating to issues such as taxation, IP and foreign investment, and is active before both the local and federal courts.

Strengths: "He is a very smart and intelligent lawyer." "On local issues he is excellent." **Walid Azzam** (see p.2985) is noted for his frequent work on high-value commercial disputes, in addition to his expertise in white-collar crime and asset recovery. **Strengths:** "He has good drafting and communication skills, and his legal knowledge is good." "Walid Azzam is a hyper-sharp individual."

Band 2

Alsuwaidi & Company

What the team is known for Alsuwaidi & Company's litigation group is licensed to operate in all the UAE courts, including the federal and DIFC Courts, as well as the Dubai judicial system up to and including the Court of Cassation. The team is particularly noted for its ability in cases involving the governments of the UAE and is equally well versed in financial, insurance and maritime disputes. It also possesses a noteworthy white-collar crime practice with expertise in commercial fraud claims, and retains experts in employment, oil and gas and medical negligence disputes.

Strengths

"They are very responsive and provide regular updates."

"They are very knowledgeable about the court process and have a very systematic approach."

Work highlights Alsuwaidi & Company represented a well-known food and beverage company in proceedings against its former CEO concerning the alleged misappropriation of AED3.5 million.

Notable practitioners

Mohammed Alsuwaidi is a longstanding disputes lawyer in Dubai and a highly regarded presence before the local courts. He is a regular adviser to banks on issues such as the enforcement of arbitral awards and also has noteworthy expertise

in real estate disputes. **Strengths:** “Mohammed Alsuwaidi is my most trusted and capable legal representative.” “Mohammed Alsuwaidi is a very respected professional with a diverse range of experience.” “Mohammed Alsuwaidi is focused on customer service and goes out of his way to help the client understand cultural idiosyncrasies and differences.” “Mohammed Alsuwaidi is a man of good knowledge and experience.”

Galadari Advocates & Legal Consultants

What the team is known for Galadari Advocates is an established Emirati law firm which continues to be recommended for its abilities in the local courts. It is marked out for its strong experience in finance and white-collar fraud cases, and benefits from a team of local and internationally qualified lawyers with strong expertise in the construction, real estate and energy sectors. The firm is regularly sought out by government agencies, high net worth individuals and both construction and insurance companies.

Work highlights Galadari Advocates & Legal Consultants represented a leading global name in the car industry in a AED7 million dispute with its local distributor, as well as defending the company in a AED160 million counterclaim.

Notable practitioners

Managing partner and head of litigation Ahmed Galadari is a key contact at the firm.

Global Advocacy and Legal Counsel

What the team is known for Global Advocacy and Legal Counsel is a prominent UAE law firm which is frequently cited by internationals as a preferred choice of local counsel. The team has a growing presence in the DIFC Courts and is already a very visible presence in other courts across the UAE. It is also acknowledged for its activity in both Arabic and English-language arbitration, within domestic and international forums. The firm is regularly active on construction and banking disputes, particularly those with Shari'a elements.

Notable practitioners

Managing partner **Ali Al Hashimi** is a top choice for disputes in the finance sphere, as well as for any dispute in real estate or construction. He frequently appears before the Dubai Courts and is also active in arbitration cases, with regular appointments as an arbitrator. **Strengths:** “Ali Al Hashimi is one of the best lawyers of his generation.” “Ali Al Hashimi is a very good lawyer. He is responsive and collaborative.” **Nasser Al Osaiba** heads the Abu Dhabi office and is active in the local as well as offshore courts. Leveraging his in-house experience gained at the National Bank of Umm Al Quwain, he is well positioned to advise clients on financial services disputes.

Horizons & Co Law Firm

What the team is known for Horizons & Co is an established Emirati law firm with a well-attested presence in the local courts. It is a popular choice for international counsel seeking local disputes expertise, and is noted for its growing bench of litigators in both the local and DIFC Courts. The firm has strong experience in banking and construction disputes, including with regard to arbi-

tral award enforcement. It also frequently acts on real estate matters.

Strengths

“Horizons & Co are one of the largest in the region and have plenty of experienced lawyers in their team.”

“The service level at Horizons & Co is amazing, starting from the person who answers the phone all the way through to the team handling my case. I never need to follow up with them as they are updating me all the time.”

“The lawyers within the firm are able to handle all matters diligently, professionally and in a timely manner.”

“Horizons offer a level of service before the local courts which cannot easily be found elsewhere. Their ability to understand the needs of international clients and explain the nuances of the local courts sets Horizons apart.”

Work highlights Horizons & Co represented HSBC Middle East, in the Abu Dhabi Courts, in proceedings valued at AED130 million and relating to the enforcement of two separate mortgages.

Notable practitioners

Ali Al Zarooni (see p.2984) is a leading Emirati advocate whose name carries considerable respect in the market. He is an immensely experienced figure who has particularly in-depth expertise in real estate and construction disputes. **Strengths:** “Ali Al Zarooni is a very qualified lawyer. He pays attention to the details as well as focusing on client management and the customer experience.” “Ali Al Zarooni is a legend in the UAE legal community. He is result-driven and this is ultimately why clients return again and again.” “Ali Al Zarooni is a local advocate and an excellent UAE lawyer.” “Ali is reliable, experienced and an excellent lawyer.” **Areen Jayousi** (see p.2988) advises on an array of litigation proceedings including numerous banking and financial services cases. He is trusted by several well-known international law firms to oversee disputes proceedings in the local Emirati courts. **Strengths:** “Areen Jayousi is a very intellectual and well-respected lawyer who is keen to achieve his clients’ objectives. His practical understanding of laws and his attention to detail are remarkable.” “He handles matters with great sensitivity and an understanding of the positions of the various parties. He is very knowledgeable about UAE laws and has great experience navigating local sensitivities.” “He comes from an in-house background so he is able to have a real understanding of our business and its specific challenges, thereby offering tailored advice and solutions.” “Mr Jayousi is an amazing lawyer, not only from a knowledge point of view, but also in his ability to give positive reassurance to clients.” “Areen Jayousi is not only a very experienced lawyer, he is also a great guy and goes above and beyond for his clients.”

OGH Legal

What the team is known for OGH Legal is a respected, UAE-headquartered law firm which has recently expanded significantly through several lateral hires, as well as the opening of an additional office in Cairo. The firm is active on a wide variety of disputes arising from oil and gas projects. It also has a vibrant financial disputes practice and includes government agencies as

well as sovereign wealth funds among its clientele.

Strengths

“OGH Legal understand that legal proceedings have to achieve a commercial objective and they tailor their services accordingly.”

“The team at OGH Legal are strong in all kinds of disputes. They are specialised in the field of law but also have a commercial approach which is vital. They possess institutional knowledge and a consistency in quality.”

Work highlights OGH Legal represented the Danish Tax Authority in Emirati court proceedings arising out of its high-value fraud claims against British-Indian businessman Sanjay Shah.

Notable practitioners

Sherif Hikal is highly capable when it comes to acting on litigation matters in Dubai and elsewhere within the UAE. His experience includes the representation of well-known clients in the real estate and hospitality spheres. **Strengths:** “Sherif has great gravitas and is a senior lawyer that local clients are grateful to have on their side. He is a serious guy and hugely capable.” **Mohamed El Ghatit** is active on a wide variety of contentious matters, ranging from construction and intellectual property to oil and gas disputes. He is regularly cited as a first choice among international law firms in regard to his work coordinating litigation in the Emirati courts. **Strengths:** “Mohamed El Ghatit continues to impress us due to his service delivery, efficiency, and the way in which he is so commercially savvy.” “He is very professional and knows the subject matter well.” “Mohamed is our go-to for local litigation counsel. He knows what clients need and how to talk to them.”

Band 3

ADG Legal

What the team is known for ADG Legal maintains offices in Dubai and Abu Dhabi, from where its team offers extensive experience representing clients before the domestic courts of the UAE. The firm is typically instructed to handle disputes occurring in sectors such as real estate, construction, shipping, insurance and finance.

Strengths

“Their expertise, dedication, and commitment to achieving outstanding results for their clients are truly commendable. Moreover, their firm’s track record of successful outcomes in high-stakes cases speaks volumes about their capability to handle even the most challenging and intricate matters.”

“Their strategic approach, combined with their keen attention to detail, enables them to craft robust arguments and present compelling cases on behalf of their clients.”

“Their ability to stay abreast of the ever-changing legal landscape in the UAE ensures that they are well equipped to tackle the most complex and cutting-edge matters.”

“ADG Legal are one of the most diligent law firms in the UAE.”

Notable practitioners

Ahmed AlKotby is a key client contact.

Al Aidarous Advocates & Legal Consultants

What the team is known for Al Aidarous Advocates & Legal Consultants is an independent boutique law firm which focuses on dispute resolution. Its compact team is regularly highlighted for its broad-ranging domestic litigation practice, with a strong track record of success before the courts of Dubai and Abu Dhabi. The team assists with joint venture and commercial contract disputes, and is also well versed in representing clients in medical negligence matters.

Work highlights Al Aidarous Advocates & Legal Consultants represented a British investor in a multi-stranded, AED58 million dispute with a leading real estate developer before the Dubai Courts.

Notable practitioners

Ali Al Aidarous is regularly noted as leading figure for litigation before the domestic Emirati courts. His practice extends to real estate, construction and banking disputes, and he also frequently acts as arbitrator in arbitrations held under the auspices of institutions such as the DIAC.

BSA Ahmad Bin Hezeem & Associates LLC

What the team is known for BSA Ahmad Bin Hezeem & Associates is a prominent regional law firm in the Middle East. It is especially noted for its domestic litigation practice, with full rights of audience before the UAE's local courts. The team handles a number of banking and financial services cases, as well as real estate and construction disputes. BSA's membership of leading global legal network Meritas is an important source of work for the firm.

Strengths

"Their expertise and strategic approach to intricate challenges consistently exceed our expectations. BSA has demonstrated an impressive capacity to navigate through convoluted legal scenarios with precision and innovation."

"The depth of knowledge exhibited by BSA's attorneys in tackling multi-faceted issues has been truly remarkable. Their ability to analyse intricate legal details, coupled with their proactive approach to identifying potential obstacles, has proven invaluable."

"BSA are well qualified and they know how to handle cases and the client."

Work highlights BSA defended Octavia in a lawsuit filed by Astalia Investment in relation to the enforcement of a disputed, USD70 million foreign judgment through the Dubai Courts.

Notable practitioners

Asim Ahmed is a key contact.

Habib Al Mulla & Partners

What the team is known for Habib Al Mulla & Partners is a noteworthy Emirati law firm with a strong history of work before all levels of the UAE courts, including the Court of Cassation. It is frequently instructed on taxation litigation, representing major local clients in appeals against penalties issued by the Federal Tax Authority. It

has further experience handling recovery claims on behalf of financial institutions, and is also very capable of assisting with white-collar criminal matters.

Notable practitioners

Habib Al Mulla is a veteran practitioner who is one of the most well-recognised and experienced Emirati disputes lawyers. In addition to his domestic litigation practice he is also well known for his handling of arbitration.

M&CO Legal

What the team is known for M&CO Legal is a respected law firm which is highly recommended for its domestic litigation practice. It has strong experience overseeing litigation cases conducted in parallel to arbitration. In addition, it has experience assisting with the enforcement of arbitral awards within the UAE, as well as providing guidance on the enforcement of Emirati judgments abroad. The team often acts for noteworthy clients in the real estate, banking, hospitality and healthcare sectors, as well as assisting international law firms as local counsel.

Strengths

"The team at M&CO Legal are appropriately organised to handle a significant number of sophisticated, technical disputes. They are knowledgeable about the local laws and good at applying them to the case. They are good at managing complex situations."

"They are professional, well organised and always meet the deadlines, putting in high-level legal submissions."

"The team of attorneys at this firm are highly skilled and bring a diverse range of expertise."

"They possess in-depth knowledge and the capability to deconstruct intricate issues, providing comprehensive insights via thorough research and staying up to date with legal developments."

"M&CO are very responsive and attentive to details."

Notable practitioners

Mahmood Hussain is well regarded for his work as a litigator in the UAE's local courts. He frequently acts on real estate and construction disputes, typically representing developers, and has further experience in insurance matters.

Strengths: *"With over 20 years of experience, he is aware of the local laws and is technically sound. He has experience acting on behalf of numerous clients across the Middle East and can handle complex matters well."* *"Mahmood Hussain is professional and well organised, with extensive legal knowledge."* *"Mahmood Hussain really has a deep understanding of our sector. He also understands that a legal issue does not exist in a vacuum but is tied to the commercial realities of the business."*

Mohamed Alserkal Advocates and Legal Consultants – MAS Advocates

What the team is known for MAS Advocates is a commendable Emirati law firm which is regularly engaged to represent clients in banking and real estate matters. The team has further experience assisting with the enforcement of overseas judgments in the Emirati courts, as well as

representing clients in criminal proceedings and licensing disputes.

Strengths

"MAS Advocates provide clear advice on technical issues, all the while appreciating the nuances of clauses in the Arabic language."

"MAS Advocates have a high level of sophistication as a result of the background of specific partners. They have seen different kinds of complex matters and are capable of identifying the correct path to a resolution."

Work highlights MAS Advocates represented GII Islamic REIT in two separate rental dispute cases.

Notable practitioners

Mohamed Alserkal is a key contact.

PRIMECASE – Hamad Al Rahma Advocates and Legal Consultant

What the team is known for PRIMECASE is a well-established Emirati law firm which is frequently recommended by market sources as a sound choice to represent clients in the local courts. Recent work includes a number of real estate matters, as well as representing individuals in disputes against the UAE's Federal Tax Authority.

Strengths

"PRIMECASE has extensive knowledge, a practical approach and provides excellent service. As a client you always feel that you are in good hands and extremely well taken care of."

"The PRIMECASE team was professional from the start. They educated me about the legal process in the UAE, the stages the case would go through, the different scenarios that might happen and the options we would have, but also recommended which option to take."

"PRIMECASE has provided professional and timely support on complex and sophisticated matters. We are very satisfied with their support and service."

Work highlights PRIMECASE successfully acted for Suleiman bin Muhammad bin Wali Al-Din Suleiman in obtaining a judgment against DAMAC Star Real Estate for the termination of a sale and purchase agreement.

Notable practitioners

Founding and managing partner **Mohammad Alshraideh** (see p.2985) has wide-ranging experience advising on commercial and contractual disputes, including notable cases arising from real estate sales. **Strengths:** *"Mohammad Alshraideh is an excellent lawyer you can totally rely on to handle your litigation."*

Other Ranked Lawyers

Ghassan El Daye heads the Middle East civil law team of Charles Russell Speechlys. He is frequently called upon to assist clients with banking, real estate and white-collar criminal litigation before the local Emirati courts.

Employment

Employment	Employment
Leading Firms	Senior Statespeople
Band 1	Senior Statespeople: distinguished older partners
Al Tamimi & Company	Laubach Charles S <i>Afridi & Angell*</i>
Clyde & Co LLP	
Band 2	Leading Individuals
DLA Piper Middle East LLP	Band 1
Hadef & Partners	Barr Gordon <i>Al Tamimi & Company</i>
Pinsent Masons LLP	Ford Rebecca <i>Clyde & Co LLP</i>
Stephenson Harwood Middle East LLP	Kantaria Samir <i>Al Tamimi & Company</i>
Band 3	Khoja Sara <i>Clyde & Co LLP</i>
Addleshaw Goddard LLP	Tapp Luke <i>Pinsent Masons LLP</i>
Baker McKenzie LLP	Band 2
Dentons	Brown Ben <i>Addleshaw Goddard LLP</i>
Eversheds Sutherland (International) LLP – Dubai	Lawrence Sarah <i>Squire Patton Boggs</i>
Band 4	Lucas Kiersten <i>Stephenson Harwood Middle East LLP</i>
Afridi & Angell	Matthews-Taylor Joanna <i>Baker McKenzie LLP</i>
Gateley Legal	Band 3
PwC Legal Middle East	Ahern Geraldine <i>Eversheds Sutherland (International)</i>
Squire Patton Boggs	Hill Rachel <i>Hadef & Partners*</i>
* Indicates individual with profile.	McGettigan Ivor <i>Al Tamimi & Company</i>
◇ (ORL) = Other Ranked Lawyer.	
Alphabetical order within each band. Band 1 is highest.	
Band 1 Employment	Employment: Immigration Specialists
	Leading Firms
	Vialto Partners
	Alphabetical order within each band. Band 1 is highest.
	Foreign Desks
	Employment
	Based in United Arab Emirates with expertise in countries listed below
	Saudi Arabia Clyde & Co LLP
	Foreign Experts
	Employment
	Based in United Arab Emirates with expertise in countries listed below
	Saudi Arabia Brown Ben <i>Addleshaw Goddard LLP</i>
	Saudi Arabia Khoja Sara <i>Clyde & Co LLP</i>
	Saudi Arabia Lawrence Sarah <i>Squire Patton Boggs</i>
	◇ (ORL) = Other Ranked Lawyer.
	Foreign Experts (Based Abroad)
	Employment: DIFC & ADGM Litigation
	United Arab Emirates expertise based in countries listed below
	UK Bickford Smith James <i>Littleton Chambers</i>
	UK Kemp Edward <i>Matrix Chambers (ORL) ◇</i>
	UK Sethi Mohinderpal <i>Littleton Chambers</i>
	Foreign Desks (Based Abroad)
	Employment: DIFC & ADGM Litigation
	United Arab Emirates expertise based in countries listed below
	UK Littleton Chambers

Band 1 Employment

Al Tamimi & Company

What the team is known for Al Tamimi is a regional law firm that has one of the best employment practices in the UAE, with an impressive bench of vastly experienced lawyers in Dubai and Abu Dhabi. The firm is active on behalf of a diverse set of clients, including both public and private sector organisations. It further has the ability to represent clients in employment disputes at all levels of the local courts, as well as the courts of the DIFC and ADGM. The firm is recognised for its work on behalf of leading names from the IT, retail and financial services sectors and is additionally noteworthy for its expertise in employee benefits work.

Strengths

"The Tamimi employment team are able to advise on a wide range of matters due to the nature of the make-up of the team, which includes strong legal support across all levels of seniority."

"It is an advantage that they have offices throughout the Middle East and North Africa and can provide consolidated advice for the region."

"Al Tamimi is our number one law firm in the region for employment."

"Responsiveness is a real strength of the team."

Work highlights Al Tamimi advised on the Middle East employment aspects of Google's USD5.4 billion global acquisition of Mandiant.

Notable practitioners

Leading lawyer **Gordon Barr** is well known among his peers for his deep knowledge concerning a range of employment matters, including post-M&A workforce integrations and labour law implementation, as well as his frequent advice on employee benefits and executive compensation-related issues. In the latter field he has particular expertise in the financial services sector. **Strengths:** "He is a very experienced professional

who delivers on his commitments and possesses a high level of business acumen." "His best quality is his super-responsiveness. We never have to wait more than a couple of hours for acknowledgement."

Samir Kantaria is a pre-eminent lawyer who provides clients with strong technical advice on compliance matters in addition to a range of other employment issues, such as employee transfers. He works on both contentious and non-contentious mandates, acting for a number of multinationals and government entities. **Strengths:** "Samir is the best in class as an external counsel. He is experienced, responsive and commercially minded, which is all you can ask for in an adviser. He is definitely a trusted partner." "It's a pleasure to work with Samir. He is knowledgeable and extremely commercial." "He is extremely well versed in the local legal framework." Abu Dhabi-based **Ivor McGettigan** has particular experience in employment policy advice and regulatory employment matters, often representing IT and governmental clients. He is well known among fellow lawyers for his strengths in ADGM matters. **Strengths:** "Ivor is able to consistently provide excellent legal advice that is nuanced and commercially relevant." "Ivor is the one to approach for any UAE employment law questions."

Clyde & Co LLP

What the team is known for Clyde & Co's Dubai office boasts a sizeable employment team featuring some of the foremost lawyers in the UAE. The firm offers extensive experience across a variety of sectors, including energy, technology, banking and education. Its work assisting clients with the employment aspects of corporate transactions is widely viewed as an area of particular strength. It is also well equipped to assist with employment litigation, leveraging the strengths

Foreign Desks

Employment

Based in United Arab Emirates with expertise in countries listed below

Saudi Arabia Clyde & Co LLP

Foreign Experts

Employment

Based in United Arab Emirates with expertise in countries listed below

Saudi Arabia Brown Ben *Addleshaw Goddard LLP*

Saudi Arabia Khoja Sara *Clyde & Co LLP*

Saudi Arabia Lawrence Sarah *Squire Patton Boggs*

◇ (ORL) = Other Ranked Lawyer.

Foreign Experts (Based Abroad)

Employment: DIFC & ADGM Litigation

United Arab Emirates expertise based in countries listed below

UK Bickford Smith James *Littleton Chambers*

UK Kemp Edward *Matrix Chambers (ORL) ◇*

UK Sethi Mohinderpal *Littleton Chambers*

Foreign Desks (Based Abroad)

Employment: DIFC & ADGM Litigation

United Arab Emirates expertise based in countries listed below

UK Littleton Chambers

of the firm's top-tier Middle East disputes practice. The team is often seen advising free-zone authorities, as well as other well-known governing bodies.

Strengths

"They have a very broad network of experts throughout the region and they work internally to make sure I am provided with the most practical and efficient advice. I appreciate that they are accessible; when I am under time constraints they answer immediately."

"I find the team to be responsive and to have an appreciation of a client's internal deadlines."

"I am impressed by their ability to handle complex and sophisticated matters."

“They are very knowledgeable about their regions and very involved in the DIFC courts. They have on-the-ground, first-hand experience and their knowledge, particularly in Dubai, is fantastic.”

Work highlights Clyde & Co advised DHL on its implementation of an employment model whereby individuals could be employed within the UAE and subsequently seconded to various locations across Africa.

Notable practitioners

Rebecca Ford has a strong presence in the market and is acknowledged by sources for her deep understanding of employment matters in the UAE. She regularly handles employment disputes in the DIFC as well as advising on the implementation of new employment regulations. She often acts on behalf of financial services clients.

Strengths: *“Rebecca is a great partner to us and she has fast become a trusted adviser on strategic employment matters.” “She is very professional and courteous. We feel we can trust her and that she is giving the right advice, looking out for us and being very proactive in letting us know if there are changes in the law.”* **Sara Khoja** is a distinguished employment lawyer who is highly experienced in contentious employment matters, with her recent work including disputes arising from team grabs. She regularly provides support on issues relating to secondments and the employment implications of major M&A transactions. She has become especially well known for handling Saudi Arabian employment mandates, splitting her time between Dubai and Riyadh. **Strengths:** *“Sara is very responsive. She comes off the fence and has lots of regional experience to support sound decision-making in grey areas.” “Sara is the go-to lawyer when we have delicate employment situations.” “She is an expert who always has the right answer. She is aware of the constantly changing legal environment in the Middle East, keeps up to date on recent laws and knows how best to structure an employment agreement to protect the company.”* **Samantha Ellaby** has a growing profile in Dubai. She is a legal director and leads Clyde & Co’s Middle East workplace health and safety practice. She has additional experience relating to a wide variety of employment issues, including implementation of the UAE’s new labour law, harassment claims and contract terminations. **Strengths:** *“Samantha is our go-to person. She has safeguarding expertise which is quite niche in the sector but very valuable to us.” “She gives smart, clear, pragmatic advice.” “Sam is brilliant; she knows her stuff.”*

Band 2 Employment

DLA Piper Middle East LLP

What the team is known for DLA Piper’s Dubai office fields a respected team of lawyers with particular expertise relating to employment issues in the pharma and life sciences, technology and financial services sectors, often representing big-name international players. The department is active on a wide range of matters, including executive recruitment, change management and the employment issues arising from M&A and corporate restructurings. It further benefits from the

firm’s extensive global footprint and has considerable experience regarding workplace investigations into possible employee malfeasance.

Strengths

“The team are very effective and knowledgeable. The lawyers have a good network in the region and we are able to obtain advice quickly.”

“The DLA Piper team are incredibly knowledgeable, responsive, pragmatic in their approach and considerate in their advice.”

“The team are excellent service providers.”

Notable practitioners

Iain Skinner (see p.2990) is widely recognised for his skills in non-contentious employment matters, including advising on contracts, policies and the employment implications of group restructuring. He also regularly advises international clients on UAE employment regulations. **Strengths:** *“Iain is an absolute pleasure to work with. He’s very prompt and knowledgeable, and a pleasant personality as well.” “Iain is an excellent partner to work with as external counsel. He is responsive, commercial and has a clear understanding of his clients’ needs and values. He is supportive and goes above and beyond to deliver excellent-quality work.”*

Hadef & Partners

What the team is known for Hadef & Partners is a respected UAE law firm with a growing client base of major multinationals hailing from a range of sectors. The firm is adept at handling employment disputes in the local courts, as well as in the offshore courts of the DIFC and ADGM. Its lawyers regularly advise on HR policy matters and the drafting of employment contracts, in addition to providing support on issues arising from recruitment and performance management. The firm has notable expertise in employee benefits and executive compensation, and is also capable of assisting with dismissals and workplace investigations.

Strengths

“They deal with us as a business partner rather than just another client, and they are always available when we need them.”

“One of the things we like is their clarity and the fact they are very prompt. They give a quick response and understand what our challenges are.”

“They are very responsive; everything is delivered on time. They are available for quick calls and they are attentive to the client relationship. Their depth of knowledge of the UAE market is very impressive.”

Work highlights Hadef & Partners advised adidas on a variety of employment matters, including with regard to the exit of a senior Emirati employee, as well as in connection with the implementation of numerous consultancy and part-time working arrangements.

Notable practitioners

Head of employment **Rachel Hill** (see p.2987) is widely recognised for her specialism in employment disputes. She is also well versed in non-contentious matters such as the drafting of employment contracts and HR policy advice.

Strengths: *“Rachel Hill is our go-to lawyer for employment advice. She has years of experience in the market. She has kept up to date with the complex legislative changes that have occurred in the UAE.” “Rachel is a lawyer you want to have on your*

side for any contentious employment work.” “She is very confident and knows the market well. All conversations are very frank – she gets to the point quickly.”

Pinsent Masons LLP

What the team is known for Pinsent Masons has an impressive employment offering in Dubai covering matters as diverse as employee transfers and workplace investigations into alleged instances of harassment. The team acts for an impressive and growing list of key market players in several sectors, including financial services, energy and education. It is adept at both contentious and non-contentious matters, with its lawyers regularly appearing before the DIFC courts in high-stakes employment disputes. The team is also very well versed in the provisions of the UAE’s 2021 labour law and its amendments.

Strengths

“The team are very knowledgeable and provide a thorough analysis of the new laws.”

“Working with them is a very good experience. They do a very good job of explaining things.”

“They are always prompt and upfront about billing and fees.”

Work highlights Pinsent Masons acted for a major oil and gas contractor on a multi-stranded employment dispute concerning end-of-service gratuity payments.

Notable practitioners

Middle East employment head **Luke Tapp** has quickly cemented his reputation as one of the top employment lawyers in Dubai. He is especially noted for his handling of DIFC and ADGM matters, with clients turning to him regularly for advice on HR policy and contract review. His practice also sees him act on executive termination mandates and other exit-related issues. **Strengths:** *“Luke is always charming and easy to deal with, and of course he knows his stuff.” “Luke leads the way in terms of anticipating client needs and providing a highly professional opinion.” “He is very experienced and knowledgeable.”* Senior associate **Ruth Stephen** continues to build a strong profile in Dubai. She has extensive experience advising on DIFC employment matters, and has recently assisted numerous high-profile clients with undertaking comprehensive reviews of their employment policies in light of the ongoing implementation of the UAE’s new labour law. **Strengths:** *“Ruth is an excellent lawyer and is very pleasant to work with.”*

Stephenson Harwood Middle East LLP

What the team is known for Stephenson Harwood has a substantial team of employment lawyers in Dubai. The department is best known for advising employers on non-contentious contractual mandates such as those arising from market entry or corporate restructuring. In addition, it offers extensive knowledge regarding implementation of the UAE’s recent labour law and the employment implications of the DIFC’s data protection laws. The team is also capable of assisting with employment issues arising from M&A and is noted for its in-house Arabic-language capabilities.

Strengths

“The team are very commercially aware and are able to address the complexities of an internation-

ally diverse workforce subject to the local employment laws, which at times vary from the laws of their home countries.”

“Service levels are excellent.”

Work highlights Stephenson Harwood advised the London-based independent insurance broker Ardonagh Specialty on the UAE employment aspects of its acquisition of the Oxford Insurance Group (which included the acquisition of Oxford’s Dubai-based subsidiary, Antarah).

Notable practitioners

Kiersten Lucas maintains a wide-ranging employment practice but is especially noteworthy for her in-depth knowledge in the area of restrictive covenants. She also has considerable experience advising on M&A-related employment issues and employee transfers. She has additionally assisted numerous clients with implementation of the new UAE labour law. **Strengths:** “Kiersten is a superb employment lawyer with excellent commercial awareness and a strong dedication to client care. She works relentlessly on her client engagements and gets the best outcomes possible.” “Kiersten tailors her advice according to the specific industry she is advising in, while always making her clients feel comfortable and at ease. The service is seamless, which provides confidence when executing stressful legal matters.” **Emily Aryeetey** joins the up-and-coming rankings following her promotion to partner in 2023. She has particular experience advising on employment issues resulting from M&A transactions, such as the transfer of employees. She is equally well placed to advise on terminations. **Strengths:** “Emily is extremely knowledgeable and approachable. I highly recommend her to any client seeking an employment lawyer within this region.” “She is very diligent, very helpful, prepares all tasks well and covers them from A to Z.”

Band 3 Employment

Addleshaw Goddard LLP

What the team is known for The Dubai office of Addleshaw Goddard maintains a group of skilled employment lawyers whose work has a notable emphasis on employment litigation, particularly within the DIFC and ADGM. The department is experienced advising on executive terminations and is also well versed in matters arising from claims of harassment and discriminatory conduct. On the non-contentious side, the employment team is frequently tasked with advising on the employment aspects of acquisitions and liquidations.

Strengths

“What we value highly is how well rounded, practical and commercial the advice we receive is. It is always relevant, up to date, and includes extremely useful market intelligence.”

“They are incredibly responsive. They understand that if I am reaching out to them, the matter is urgent. They are also very good at explaining their advice.”

“They have acclaimed, well-qualified and sharp lawyers. As and when we require support for other jurisdictions, they are very prompt in providing it.”

Work highlights Addleshaw Goddard acted as

defence counsel to Standard Chartered Bank in a DIFC employment dispute involving accusations of discrimination, harassment and victimisation brought by a former senior employee.

Notable practitioners

Ben Brown is a well-regarded lawyer who is active on a wide range of DIFC employment issues, including workplace investigations. Having acted for a variety of international clients, he also excels at advising on the employment aspects of corporate acquisitions and cross-border employee transfers. **Strengths:** “He is very analytical, very sharp and very practical in his advice.” “He is excellent at cutting through the complex work and providing a simple and commercial approach.” “Ben is excellent at understanding the needs of his client and delivering advice that is practical, relevant and exceeds expectations. We can have very practical and informative discussions about market practice, risk and strategy.”

Baker McKenzie LLP

What the team is known for Baker McKenzie has a skilled group of lawyers in Dubai who provide a full-service offering within the employment sphere. The firm is able to give in-depth advice on a wide variety of employment matters, including those arising out of M&A transactions. It is mandated regularly on employee transfers, workplace investigations and immigration matters. The team also has considerable contentious expertise, often counselling clients on harassment cases.

Strengths

“The employment team are acutely aware of the challenges that companies face in the UAE in hiring and retaining employees, whether they are local or expatriate. I feel this commercial awareness means their advice is both rounded and balanced.”

“The team are impressively proactive in anticipating and managing the next actions required in our case.”

“Their general service levels and responsiveness are strong. The team always set clear expectations on lead times when taking on a particular piece of work.”

“They have a good grasp of complex and sophisticated issues.”

Notable practitioners

Joanna Matthews-Taylor rises up a band in this iteration of the rankings. She is noted for her comprehensive practice and is able to offer clients a wealth of knowledge concerning employment contracts, immigration issues and the employment aspects of major M&A transactions. Her wider experience includes assisting clients with the rollout of diversity and inclusion programmes.

Strengths: “Joanna is very responsive and is able to articulate complex legal issues in a concise, clear and understandable way.” “Joanna is knowledgeable regarding all aspects of our case and works collaboratively with her colleagues to ensure we receive the expertise we need.” “Joanna is an exceptional lawyer with a client-focused approach. She is direct yet courteous, and understands the vision of the organisation.”

Dentons

What the team is known for The employment department at Dentons in Dubai comprises several

highly experienced lawyers who are especially noted for their litigation expertise in the DIFC. Other areas of strength include advising on executive terminations and cross-border employee transfers, in addition to drafting employment contracts and advising on employment policies. The firm often acts as employment counsel for international clients newly entering the UAE market.

Strengths

“Dentons’ ability to navigate the complexity of UAE employment law is excellent. They are able to explain key differences in a concise and lucid manner.”

“I am thoroughly impressed with Dentons’ service levels and responsiveness. From the very start, they demonstrated a genuine commitment to our success, and their high level of professionalism and expertise is evident in every interaction.”

“They give commercial and practical advice that provides clear guidance.”

Work highlights Dentons acted for the Jebel Ali Free Zone Authority on a full-scale review of its employment policies, procedures and contract templates.

Notable practitioners

Shiraz Sethi is a seasoned Dubai-based lawyer who is deeply experienced in DIFC employment laws. He handles a wide range of work, including matters pertaining to diversity and inclusion initiatives. He also regularly advises on visa-related issues and the visa cancellation process.

Strengths: “Shiraz demonstrates a deep understanding of the law and an unwavering commitment to achieving the best possible outcome. What impresses most is his dedication to understanding our unique situation and tailoring his advice to meet our specific needs.” “He is highly responsive and has a great ability to translate the key differences between UK and UAE employment law in a way that is easily digestible.” “Shiraz is a true partner to our company. We are thankful for the great work he does.” “He is very good with follow-up and outlining things in easy-to-grasp ways.” “He is well known for DIFC contentious matters and does good work on behalf of individuals.” **Ali Al Assad** is a rising star in the employment law arena in Dubai. He offers considerable experience advising on the revision of employment policies, cross-border team transfers and the implementation of the UAE’s new labour law. He has additional expertise in internal investigations and executive terminations. **Strengths:** “He gives quick answers and responses.” “He provides a great level of service and is highly commercially aware and helpful.” “Ali is very good. He knows his field very well.”

Eversheds Sutherland (International) LLP – Dubai

What the team is known for The UAE employment team at Eversheds stands out particularly for its strong understanding of immigration matters. It is often retained by prominent local organisations, as well as large multinational companies, to advise on cross-border mandates. In doing so the team often coordinates with other offices across the Eversheds network, as well as with law firms located throughout the Middle East. The firm offers extensive sector expertise in finance, TMT and education. It has a wide-ranging offering, with

the capacity to advise on both contentious and non-contentious employment matters onshore as well as in the DIFC and ADGM.

Strengths

“Eversheds provides an employment team which is experienced and responds in a timely manner; we never have to chase for advice.”

“Eversheds has brought in teams with experience and understanding, which is critical when dealing with new and complex situations.”

Work highlights Eversheds advised Chubb on a variety of employment matters in the DIFC. This encompassed advice on immigration and the issuance of visas, employment-related data protection concerns, terminations and end-of-service repatriation obligations.

Notable practitioners

Abu Dhabi managing partner **Geraldine Ahern** is deeply involved in cross-border employment and immigration issues alongside her broader expertise in commercial contract work. She is well versed in representing clients from the technology and education sectors. **Strengths:** *“Geraldine is always such a pleasure to work with, bringing expertise and pragmatism to every matter.”* *“Geraldine takes the necessary time to understand the requirements of the brief and ensure the advice delivered addresses the needs of the company.”*

Band 4 Employment

Afridi & Angell

What the team is known for Afridi & Angell has a solid employment practice in Dubai that is instructed by a number of multinational organisations. The firm regularly represents clients in wrongful dismissal and executive termination disputes. On the employee benefits side, the team’s lawyers have experience regarding the implementation of employee share plans. The firm is well accustomed to representing clients in the DIFC courts and is additionally notable for its significant arabophone capabilities.

Strengths

“The speed of delivery of their very clear answers is impressive.”

“They are very experienced and skilled in handling labour and employment concerns, especially in the changing legal landscape of the UAE.”

“The team provides excellent, clear advice and a commercial approach.”

Notable practitioners

Charles Laubach (see p.2988) is a highly experienced US attorney who is well known in the Dubai market and deeply capable when it comes to handling UAE employment matters. In this regard he is able to leverage his strengths as a fluent Arabic speaker to assist a wide range of clients. He is further complimented for his in-depth understanding of local court procedures. **Strengths:** *“Charles has been in the country for over 30 years. He is very knowledgeable, and his insight into the UAE is second to none.”* *“His knowledge of international law is outstanding.”* *“He is very responsive, available, client-centric and budget-conscious.”*

Gateley Legal

What the team is known for Gateley Legal has a compact but respected employment team in Dubai which joins the rankings in recognition of its significant and wide-ranging experience. The team is well versed in contentious employment cases involving allegations of discrimination, harassment and unfair termination. Its non-contentious work covers assistance with cross-border employee transfers, as well as undertaking in-office training sessions on topics such as diversity and inclusion. Gateley acts for a varied client list that includes private individuals as well as tech and energy companies and educational establishments.

Strengths

“The team’s responsiveness stands out. Labour matters are urgent and often involve displaced people and families. It’s quite high-stress, so responsiveness is the best quality you can have.”

“We are always able to get a quick response from Gateley over telephone or email. The team are personable and approachable, which makes us more comfortable when reaching out to them.”

Work highlights Gateley represented an individual employee in significant DIFC proceedings against their former employer (Frankfurt-headquartered Commerzbank) involving claims of racial discrimination, false representation and unlawful deduction of wages.

Notable practitioners

Thenji Moyo ascends to the numerical rankings in reflection of her increasingly notable market status. She has a strong track record in employment litigation and workplace investigations, in addition to further experience assisting with in-office training and advising on the employment consequences of market exits. **Strengths:** *“Thenji is an amazing and passionate lawyer. She is dedicated, extremely technical and knowledgeable about the law.”* *“She is very responsive, knowledgeable, patient, concise and practical. Thenji is a trusted adviser to our company and its regional leadership.”* *“Thenji is very proactive in sharing her knowledge of employment law.”* *“Thenji is a reliable lawyer who is an expert in the services she provides, and we rely on her for all legal advice.”*

PwC Legal Middle East

What the team is known for The Dubai office of PwC Legal has a robust employment department which is viewed as a rising force within this practice area. It offers frequent assistance with employment contract review, in addition to advising on employment issues arising as a consequence of M&A. The team has notable experience relating to market entry and UAE pensions matters. It is also capable of advising on executive terminations.

Strengths

“They offer great responsiveness. If I contact them now, I know they will have answers for me in a few hours.”

Work highlights PwC Legal counselled a global oilfield services company on the interrelation between pension contributions and end-of-service gratuity payments for its Emirati employees.

Notable practitioners

Natalie Jones heads the Middle East employment

practice at PwC Legal. She often acts for clients operating in the financial services and technology sectors, providing advice on a variety of matters. These range from the employment consequences of strategic acquisitions and regional group restructuring plans to assisting with secondments and compliance with UAE labour law. She has further experience providing counsel on pension schemes. **Strengths:** *“It is wonderful working with Natalie – she is just great: polite, professional and quick.”*

Squire Patton Boggs

What the team is known for Squire Patton Boggs fields a notable employment team in its Dubai office. The group represents major clients hailing from a diverse range of industries and is highly experienced regarding employment-related issues arising in the DIFC. The team is accomplished at developing and reviewing employment contracts as well as providing advice on immigration and employee benefits. It also offers considerable know-how in employer data protection obligations.

Strengths

“The team have provided pragmatic and considered advice on the new labour laws in UAE, often at short notice. They’ve handled the ambiguity and pressure that comes with interpreting a new law that has not yet been widely tested in the courts.”

Work highlights The Dubai office of Squire Patton Boggs was engaged by Raytheon to act as its key global coordinator for employment law advice.

Notable practitioners

Sarah Lawrence has experience assisting clients with internal investigations as well as providing workplace training on issues such as bullying and harassment. She has an equally high level of experience assisting with the drafting and review of employment contracts. In recent years, her wider work has included advice on cross-border market entry and DIFC employee data protection issues. Based in Dubai, she is also noted for her regular handling of employment matters in Saudi Arabia.

Band 1 Employment: Immigration Specialists

Vialto Partners

What the team is known for Vialto Partners is a global boutique law firm focused on immigration work, which was formed by lawyers previously based at PwC Legal. The files handled by its Dubai team includes mandates relating to residency permits and visas, in addition to assisting clients with their preparation for audits conducted by the Emirati immigration authorities. It acts for clients hailing from a wide range of industries, including insurance, technology, and oil and gas.

Strengths

“The team take ownership of everything assigned to them and they always go above and beyond. I can leave a matter in their hands and know they will consider it from every angle. They have a really clear understanding of what the client needs.”

“The team are very responsive and readily available.”

Notable practitioners

Anir Chatterji and Rekha Simpson are principal contacts at the firm.

Foreign Desks (Based Abroad)

Littleton Chambers

What the team is known for London-based set Littleton Chambers is home to a number of barristers who have considerable experience appearing in employment litigation before the DIFC courts and those of the ADGM. Its lawyers are equally capable of representing employers and individual employees. Key cases undertaken by the set's members have included whistle-blowing claims, discrimination disputes and commercial employment injunctions.

Strengths

"The set has good commercial employment credentials. The juniors are experienced in many jurisdictions."

Notable practitioners

James Bickford Smith is based in London and has a significant track record in employment litigation before the courts of the DIFC and ADGM. He is an accomplished barrister whose experience includes major cases relating to talent poaching.

Strengths: *"James is excellent to work with and a real team player." "He's very good on the law. He*

knows how to deal with the more complicated parts of a case and develop evidence. I find him approachable, personable and quick to respond; he also gives a full, thorough answer, which is very helpful." London-based **Mohinderpal Sethi KC** is well known for his regular engagement on DIFC employment cases. He is experienced in representing both employers and individual employees. **Strengths:** *"We find him to be a really good KC and really rate him."*

Other Ranked Lawyers

Bushra Ahmed of KBH is adept at handling significant DIFC employment disputes, and she has an especially strong reputation for her work representing individual claimants, including executives, in proceedings against their former employers.

Strengths:

"She can go into the finer details while also bringing her analysis back to the wider context."

"She has been in the DIFC for a long time and understands the regulations and employment laws. She has a great amount of experience."

Nazanin Aleyaseen of K&L Gates has a practice which sees her advise on the drafting of employment contracts, the employment aspects of mergers and acquisitions, and workplace inves-

tigations into alleged instances of employee misconduct. With particular experience in the DIFC, she regularly acts for international clients operating in the technology, financial services and healthcare sectors.

Strengths:

"She knows all about our company. She is detail-oriented and also able to give a commercial perspective."

Benjamin Hopps is an of counsel who heads up the Middle East employment group at Herbert Smith Freehills. He often handles contentious employment matters, with further experience relating to employment contract drafting as well as the data protection obligations contingent upon employers. He represents a number of high-profile regional and international clients.

Foreign Experts (Based Abroad)

Edward Kemp of Matrix Chambers in London is very active on employment cases in the DIFC courts, with recent experience relating to employee whistle-blower cases, discrimination issues and breach of contract claims. He also has extensive knowledge of ADGM court systems.

Strengths:

"We are really impressed by how approachable he is."

Insurance

Insurance
Leading Firms
Band 1
Clyde & Co LLP
HFW
Kennedys
Band 2
Norton Rose Fulbright
Band 3
Al Tamimi & Company
BSA Ahmad Bin Hezeem & Associates LLC
DWF (Middle East) LLP
Ince & Co Middle East
<i>* Indicates individual with profile.</i>
<i>◇ (ORL) = Other Ranked Lawyer.</i>
<i>Alphabetical order within each band. Band 1 is highest.</i>

Band 1

Clyde & Co LLP

What the team is known for Clyde & Co has a market-leading insurance practice with a deep bench of lawyers advising on the full gamut of insurance law. Its expertise ranges from corporate insurance mandates and M&A deals to regulatory investiga-

Insurance
Leading Individuals
Band 1
Ellingham Peter <i>Kennedys</i>
Hodgins Peter <i>Clyde & Co LLP</i>
Wakerley Sam <i>HFW</i>
Band 2
Bicknell Tom <i>Pinsent Masons LLP (ORL) ◇</i>
Boahene Brian <i>DWF (Middle East) LLP</i>
Jones Wayne <i>Clyde & Co LLP</i>
Band 3
Ballantine Stephen <i>Galadari Advocates & Legal (ORL) ◇</i>
Barlow John <i>HFW</i>
Idir Adjou Ait Ben <i>Norton Rose Fulbright</i>
Isgar Simon <i>BSA Ahmad Bin Hezeem & Associates LLC</i>
Karim Shabnam <i>Norton Rose Fulbright</i>
Thornton Alfred <i>Clyde & Co LLP</i>
Whelan Justin <i>HFW*</i>
Up-and-coming individuals
Clucas Victoria <i>DWF (Middle East) LLP</i>
Darlington Olivia <i>Clyde & Co LLP</i>
Singh Anand <i>Al Tamimi & Company</i>
Associates to watch
Neighbour Thomas <i>HFW*</i>
Seadon Mehdi <i>Kennedys</i>
Sengupta Rishi <i>Kennedys</i>

Foreign Experts (Based Abroad) Insurance
United Arab Emirates expertise based in countries listed below
UK Beswetherick Mark <i>Clyde & Co LLP</i>

tions and insurance litigation. The firm's enviable client roster includes international and local insurers and reinsurers, as well as brokers and regulatory authorities. The team adeptly handles property damage claims, in addition to energy, marine, construction and life insurance matters. It is also noted for its experience in Shari'a-compliant insurance products (takaful).

Strengths

"Clyde & Co possess very strong knowledge of the subject."

"They are able to handle and explain complex and sophisticated matters in a way that makes them easy to understand."

"Clyde & Co provide clear, concise and speedy advice. Their depth of knowledge is evident."

Work highlights Clyde & Co represented Al Buhaira Insurance before the DIFC Court of Appeal in a USD70 million marine coverage dis-

pute.

Notable practitioners

Practice co-head **Peter Hodgins** is extremely well versed in non-contentious insurance matters. He advises insurers, reinsurers and brokers on M&A and corporate structuring, as well as regulatory compliance issues. **Strengths:** “Peter is a brilliant lawyer. He is very knowledgeable and experienced. He always provides pragmatic advice and extremely useful guidance.” “He understands the core of any issue straight away and is able to explain the legal intricacies of the most complex problems.” “Peter Hodgins is very responsive and helpful, and it makes him an invaluable asset.” **Wayne Jones** co-heads Clyde & Co’s Middle East insurance and reinsurance practice from Dubai. He represents a raft of major insurance clients in an impressive array of mandates, including coverage disputes and reinsurance matters spanning the Middle East and Africa. Abu Dhabi-based **Alfred Thornton** frequently acts on coverage and reinsurance disputes in the energy and construction sectors. **Strengths:** “Alfred has a very strong knowledge of how this region operates and how to tackle matters. We feel at ease if Alfred is handling the matter.” “Alfred Thornton’s technical ability is well up there in terms of expertise in the Middle East and English law. For me, Alfred is the go-to guy for large energy and construction claims.” **Olivia Darlington** has particular experience in advising on fire insurance risks and insurance policies in the financial sector. She recently joined Clyde & Co as a partner, having previously been the head of insurance for the Middle East and Africa at Simmons & Simmons. **Strengths:** “Olivia Darlington has an excellent ability to distil complex legal matters into clear, comprehensible advice. She is responsive and manages expectations and deadlines diligently.” **Mark Beswetherick** has developed deep expertise representing reinsurers in disputes. He has recently been particularly active in the field of cyber and data protection insurance. He splits his time between the UAE and the UK.

HFW

What the team is known for HFW maintains a skilled contentious insurance practice in the UAE, with lawyers based in both Dubai and Abu Dhabi. The team is best known for its work on behalf of policyholders and its strong experience relating to aviation insurance. It also acts for a wide range of Middle East insurers. The firm has considerable abilities in marine and construction insurance, in addition to growing strengths in computer crime and cyber liability claims. Team members also advise on non-contentious issues, such as the transfer of portfolios.

Strengths

“HFW have well-developed specialist reinsurance expertise and track record. They are very strong commercially as well as legally.” “The HFW team are extremely responsive. The service levels provided to us are incredible and they will always support us when we need them to be there.” “HFW were extremely good at advising on the commerciality of our claim.” “HFW are able to grasp a brief quickly and provide balanced advice with a practical, problem-solving

approach.”

“They are prompt and reliable. They are available for calls at short notice.”

Work highlights HFW acted for Qatar Reinsurance in a dispute with Orient Insurance relating to the terms of a reinsurance contract.

Notable practitioners

Sam Wakerley heads the firm’s regional insurance and reinsurance department from his base in Dubai. He is a leading lawyer for contentious issues within the field, including under marine insurance, construction all-risk and business interruption policies. He also acts on liability insurance and treaty reinsurance disputes. **Strengths:** “Sam provides balanced and practical advice on the most complex insurance disputes, and clients value his ability to clearly communicate the pros and cons and the way forward. Without doubt he is one of the top insurance lawyers in the region, and his reputation is such that it can make a difference when representing clients.” “Sam Wakerley is an excellent insurance law practitioner who is able to offer quality advice on the most complex matters.” “He is pragmatic, experienced and extremely knowledgeable about the insurance sector.” “Sam Wakerley is an excellent lawyer.” **John Barlow** advises a variety of insurers and insured parties on indemnity proceedings and trade credit policies. He also acts on non-contentious matters as head of HFW’s regulatory team in Dubai. **Strengths:** “John Barlow has incredible industry knowledge. He is also experienced and sensible, which gives us confidence.” “John is an insurance expert. He is our to-go person for more complex matters.” “John Barlow is fantastic. His knowledge of the UAE is amazing and there is a lovely manner about him. He is very experienced and we really feel he is a safe pair of hands. He provides a great service and is focused on what we need.” **Justin Whelan** (see p.2990) operates out of Abu Dhabi and has experience assisting clients with business interruption cases. He is also noted for his handling of insurance and reinsurance litigation, with a particular focus on cybersecurity and data protection claims. **Strengths:** “Justin Whelan is a top-class lawyer.” “Justin Whelan is a very competent and committed lawyer. We are very satisfied with the quality of his work.” “He has solid technical knowledge and is tenacious.” “Justin is an approachable guy who is practical and gives us the right advice.” **Thomas Neighbour** (see p.2989) has advised on a number of high-profile business interruption, construction and liability claims. He also assists clients with the insurance aspects of cybercrime matters. **Strengths:** “Thomas Neighbour is a star with UK and Middle East experience in insurance and reinsurance disputes.”

Kennedys

What the team is known for Kennedys is a specialist insurance law firm with global expertise in the industry. Its Dubai office is very active in contentious matters, with mandates in a wide range of industry sectors, including energy, construction and healthcare. The team advises on a wide variety of insurance disputes, including business interruption, medical malpractice, professional indemnity, liability claims, property damage coverage, retrocession agreements and subrogated claims.

Strengths

“Kennedys is the leading insurance law firm in the region. They deal with the simplest to the most complex issues.”

“Kennedys has expert lawyers, from the partners to the associates.”

“I like Kennedys’ approach to complex matters. They are detailed, and that helps us form a clear holistic view of the matter at hand. Possible outcomes are predicted at an early stage with a greater degree of accuracy. This helps to determine the best course of action to be taken.”

Work highlights Kennedys acted for an international insurance broker in a professional negligence claim brought by a group of retail companies in the DIFC Courts under property all-risk and business interruption policies.

Notable practitioners

Peter Ellingham is a market-leading insurance lawyer with a broad practice that entails providing coverage advice to an impressive list of international insurers and reinsurers on business interruption claims, medical malpractice insurance cases and professional indemnity disputes. He often assists with property insurance, health insurance, marine insurance and liability claims. **Strengths:** “Peter Ellingham is the eminent insurance practitioner in the region. In our view he is the leader in the field and runs the best team.” “Peter Ellingham is one of the best law firm partners in the region.” “Peter Ellingham is a highly experienced and pragmatic lawyer. He covers a broad range of insurance disputes work and is a recognised market leader.” “Peter Ellingham is a true professional. He is very good at managing complex situations and brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the table. Peter is approachable and extremely prompt.”

Mehdi Seadon is a rising star who specialises in assisting insurers and reinsurers with significant coverage disputes. His has notable experience advising on insurance matters in the aviation industry, including subrogated recovery proceedings and constructive total loss cases. **Strengths:** “Mehdi Seadon is a great insurance lawyer who has extremely good technical knowledge and expertise.” “Mehdi is a very capable advocate and a good technical disputes lawyer. He is highly organised and very capable at handling complex disputes.” “He is very prompt, clear and to the point in his advice. He has a rare ability to explain legal jargon in the simplest of terms. He is also transparent, upfront, dependable and always delivers on time.”

Rishi Sengupta has a broad contentious insurance practice, advising insurers and reinsurers on professional indemnity, medical malpractice and business interruption claims. He also acts on retrocession agreements and subrogated claims. **Strengths:** “Rishi Sengupta is very knowledgeable on technical insurance issues and the local laws. He is extremely approachable and always ready to help out.” “Rishi Sengupta is a rising star.”

Band 2

Norton Rose Fulbright

What the team is known for Norton Rose Fulbright’s Dubai office advises across a range of contentious and non-contentious insurance man-

dates. Its team has particular expertise in warranty and indemnity policies, as well as a growing practice in cyber liability matters. In addition, team members act on medical malpractice claims and professional liability disputes. The firm is also well versed in the development of Shari'a-compliant insurance products.

Strengths

"They are able to advise us on key issues in a clear and concise format."

"Norton Rose have evidenced their expertise and supported us in complex cases."

"Norton Rose possess great subject matter experts with a focus on solving problems in a pragmatic manner."

"The team has advised on a number of complex transactions across multiple jurisdictions in the MENA region and always provides clear, commercial advice within challenging timelines."

Notable practitioners

Adjou Ait Ben Idir is a well-established corporate lawyer who is well versed in assisting with acquisitions and the structuring of joint ventures in the industry. She also has experience advising clients on insurance issues relating to ransomware incidents. **Strengths:** *"Adjou Ait Ben Idir is excellent to work with and is our go-to lawyer for deals in the region. She is very hands-on, responsive and always offers pragmatic and commercially minded advice."* *"Adjou is an all-round professional who is dedicated to her clients."* *"Adjou is well respected in her area of expertise."* **Shabnam Karim** leads on contentious insurance mandates. She has experience advising insurers on policy coverage issues arising out of investigations into alleged criminal behaviour. She also assists clients with cyber incident liability cases, in addition to D&O claims and professional liability disputes. **Strengths:** *"Shabnam Karim is an excellent lawyer and well respected in the market. She has very strong technical capabilities and delivers coherent, cogent advice."* *"Shabnam Karim is an excellent, dedicated professional."*

Band 3

Al Tamimi & Company

What the team is known for Al Tamimi maintains a strong insurance team with experience representing global, regional and domestic Emirati insurers, in addition to acting for insured parties. It is frequently engaged on negligence claims and business interruption disputes as well as counselling on issues relating to property all-risk policies. Team members additionally assist with non-contentious commercial and transactional matters in the insurance sector, such as proposed market entry initiatives.

Strengths

"Al Tamimi has a professional team with good knowledge of the applicable laws and processes."

"The insurance department of Al Tamimi is very strong, with experts such as Anand Singh who have a deep understanding of insurance contracts and local laws."

"The service provided is exceptional and their turnaround time is very quick."

Work highlights An Al Tamimi team acted for a UK-based litigation funder in a subrogation

recovery matter relating to the collapse of a mobile land rig.

Notable practitioners

Anand Singh has notable experience advising on contentious and non-contentious insurance mandates, including M&A transactions in the insurance sector. He offers considerable sector knowledge to a client base that includes Islamic insurers from across the Middle East. He has further experience representing insurtech companies. **Strengths:** *"Anand Singh is very professional and has deep insight into the insurance industry and its legal requirements."* *"He is a great professional and is thorough with regard to the applicable laws and procedures."* *"Anand Singh has handled some very important and time-sensitive matters for us and has been always accessible and replied promptly."* *"Anand was very responsive during the whole process and has guided us very well."*

BSA Ahmad Bin Hezeem & Associates LLC

What the team is known for BSA is a UAE-headquartered law firm with offices across the Middle East. Its insurance team frequently advises insurance companies on contentious matters, including medical and professional negligence claims, as well as property and construction all-risk policies. In addition, the team acts on healthcare insurance and marine insurance disputes.

Notable practitioners

Simon Isgar leads BSA's Dubai-based insurance team. He has a broad practice advising insurers and reinsurers on health insurance, marine insurance, professional negligence claims, contractors all-risk policies and property coverage. He also acts on subrogated claims and reinsurance treaty matters. **Strengths:** *"Simon Isgar is user-friendly, responsive and easy to deal with."*

DWF (Middle East) LLP

What the team is known for DWF has a well-established global insurance practice with a growing presence in the UAE. The team is noted for its advice on contentious and non-contentious issues, including coverage disputes and insurance regulatory matters. In 2023, DWF further strengthened its Dubai bench with the addition of multiple lateral hires from Kennedys.

Strengths

"We have been impressed with DWF's professional approach, work ethic and responsiveness. They always strive to deliver a superior service throughout the whole process. They have a strong technical grasp of the issues and a pragmatic approach to dispute resolution."

"DWF has a great team with in-depth knowledge and proficiency."

"The DWF partners have good experience in the local market and are abreast of commercial developments."

Work highlights DWF acted for the reinsurers in a claim concerning damage to offshore energy infrastructure, which was valued at more than USD100 million.

Notable practitioners

Brian Boahene receives considerable attention for his expertise representing insurers in contentious maritime matters. He also advises on liability

disputes, product contamination claims and insurance issues arising from international sanctions.

Strengths: *"Brian Boahene is a top lawyer and someone I have worked with over several years."*

"Brian Boahene has a strong market presence. He is always responsive and accessible. Brian provides us with strong technical input, sound advice and meets deadlines. We appreciate the assistance he has given us on various matters that has enabled us to achieve a favourable result."

Victoria Clucas has expertise in international insurance and reinsurance coverage issues, advising on property damage claims and recovery actions, particularly following fires and other catastrophic events. She also assists clients with business interruption disputes. She joined DWF in 2023 after leaving Kennedys. **Strengths:** *"Victoria Clucas is extremely responsive. She always goes above and beyond to deliver exceptional service, always striving to provide regular updates and meet deadlines. Victoria's global experience, technical capabilities and dynamic personality are invaluable."*

"We appreciate her professional manner, sound technical guidance and pragmatic approach to dispute resolution." *"Victoria Clucas always provides clarity to our queries in a very professional manner. The best factor is that she always responds very quickly in spite of her busy schedules."*

Ince & Co Middle East

What the team is known for Ince Middle East represents insurers and reinsurers in a wide range of mandates, including property damage and liability claims. Ince additionally offers a particular specialism in maritime insurance. Team members act on contentious issues regarding premiums and reinsurance, as well as business interruption and professional negligence cases.

Strengths

"Ince are tremendous in their efforts to advise us and in obtaining successful judgments. They manage the matters with extreme professionalism and attentiveness, giving sound advice and bringing the matters to finality on commercially sound terms."

"Ince provide timely advice and recommendations."

Work highlights Ince Middle East represented Al Sagr Insurance in an approximately USD4 million claim against Nigeria Reinsurance concerning sums it alleged were owed under certain reinsurance contracts.

Notable practitioners

Mohamed El Hawawy is a key contact at the firm.

Other Ranked Lawyers

Stephen Ballantine of Galadari Advocates & Legal Consultants is a well-reputed litigator who focuses on medical negligence and malpractice cases. He represents an impressive list of medical insurers in proceedings against hospitals and individual medical professionals concerning issues such as misdiagnosis and other medical errors.

Strengths:

"Stephen Ballantine provides excellent service and is an experienced lawyer in his subject matter area."

“Stephen Ballantine is a trusted partner when it comes to giving legal advice on medical malpractice matters. He always goes an extra mile to ensure success for his clients.”

Tom Bicknell is based in Pinsent Masons’ Dubai office and is known for his handling of insurance regulatory matters and his contributions to insurance jurisprudence across the GCC.

Strengths:

“Tom Bicknell is a genuinely excellent lawyer with an in-depth knowledge of the financial services and insurance regulatory landscape in the UAE. He is one of the few individuals in the UAE that I trust to advise on complex issues in the sector. He has an established practice and is known for his pragmatic and commercial approach.”

Intellectual Property

Intellectual Property
Leading Firms
Band 1
Al Tamimi & Company
Clyde & Co LLP
Gowling WLG
Rouse
Band 2
Bird & Bird (MEA) LLP
Hadef & Partners
Band 3
Charles Russell Speechlys
DLA Piper Middle East LLP
Band 4
BSA Ahmad Bin Hezeem & Associates LLC
Cedar White Bradley
Eversheds Sutherland (International) LLP – Dubai
Saba & Co
Simmons & Simmons
Eminent Practitioners
Eminent Practitioners
Holder Sara Rouse
Leading Individuals
Band 1
El Turk Bassel Rouse
Obeidat Omar Al Tamimi & Company
Parker Jon Gowling WLG
Band 2
Deans Rob Ownership (ORL) ◊
Devaney Mark Abion (ORL) ◊
Dunne James Hadef & Partners*
Murray Melissa Bird & Bird (MEA) LLP
Young Joycia Clyde & Co LLP
Band 3
Al Sultani Saba DLA Piper Middle East LLP*
Haidar Lara Charles Russell Speechlys
Hill Mark Charles Russell Speechlys
Khasawneh Nasser Ali Eversheds Sutherland
Khawand Hady Saba & Co
Rizvi Raza Simmons & Simmons
Saleh Ahmad Al Tamimi & Company
Suboh Munir Taylor Wessing (Middle East) LLP (ORL) ◊
Up-and-coming individuals
Armstrong Rachel Gowling WLG
Associates to watch
Giblin Nicole Abion (ORL) ◊
Khoury Christine Eversheds Sutherland (International)
* Indicates individual with profile.
◊ (ORL) = Other Ranked Lawyer.
Alphabetical order within each band. Band 1 is highest.

Band 1

Al Tamimi & Company

What the team is known for Leading regional law firm Al Tamimi maintains an exceptional IP practice in Dubai, which has recently grown following internal promotions. It is held in high regard for its strength in trade mark, copyright and patent disputes, and is also sought after by clients to coordinate the management of regional portfolios. Further, the firm is strong in IP-related commercial contract work, such as licensing and franchising. The team represents international technology and telecoms players, as well as clients from the pharmaceutical, engineering and education sectors.

Strengths

“The Al Tamimi team is very efficient. They handle complex matters with ease, because they are not shy to ask questions, and they have a thorough understanding about the work that needs to be completed.”

“Their biggest strengths are their regional presence, and of course having experts in various fields.”

Work highlights Al Tamimi’s Dubai office advised FIFA on the IP aspects of the 2022 FIFA World Cup held in Qatar, including with regard to its brand protection programme and related ticketing rights.

Notable practitioners

Department head **Omar Obeidat** handles both contentious and non-contentious matters, advising on issues ranging from registration and enforcement to legislation and policy. Clients frequently seek his advice in relation to novel IP issues arising within the technology and media spheres. In addition to his IP practice he is also increasingly active on competition work. **Ahmad Saleh** is a prolific patents lawyer with a wealth of experience concerning filing, prosecution and disputes stemming from instances of patent infringement. Key clients include educational establishments and big-name pharma companies. **Strengths:** “Ahmad Saleh is a fantastic patent lawyer. He is an extremely helpful and good lawyer who is great at knowledge sharing.”

Clyde & Co LLP

What the team is known for Clyde & Co’s Dubai office is home to a market-leading IP practice whose lawyers advise on all key areas of intel-

lectual property. The department is highly adept when it comes to IP-related commercial issues such as brand protection, portfolio management, franchise agreements and licensing. It has a strong track record in cross-border patent litigation and enforcement, with further skills in trade mark opposition and anti-counterfeiting. Its clientele includes international media brands in addition to companies from the aviation and retail sectors.

Strengths

“They are adept at distilling complex facts into simple and clear observations and distilling legal advice into practical and business-friendly solutions.”

“They are excellent at coordinating complex international patent prosecution. They have great commercial awareness and knowledge of local laws.”

Work highlights Clyde & Co advised Wheel Pros LLC on its design and trade mark portfolio including protection and enforcement in the UAE and Jordan.

Notable practitioners

Joycia Young is frequently retained by significant international clients to assist with brand protection, licensing and franchise agreements as well as the commercialisation of their portfolios. She is noted for her significant trade mark practice, with further experience relating to patents and copyright. **Strengths:** “Joycia is extremely knowledgeable about IP in the Middle East. She is very commercially minded and responsive.” “She’s good at turning things around quickly.”

Gowling WLG

What the team is known for Gowling’s Dubai team handles a broad array of matters including patent filing and copyright issues as well as trade mark clearance, prosecution and enforcement. The firm is acclaimed for handling the trade mark portfolios of many well-known regional and global clients. Its lawyers are particularly adept at assisting with commercial IP, including franchising and licensing matters, and are well versed in representing clients from industries such as hospitality, real estate, technology and fashion.

Strengths

“The team has been extremely efficient with an enormous task. They are very knowledgeable about local law across jurisdictions and have a good relationship with the patent office.”

"We always rely on Gowling's IP advice. The team is knowledgeable and approachable."

Work highlights Gowling represented Santos in the enforcement of a 3D trade mark via administrative and criminal actions brought against the company's former distributor.

Notable practitioners

Jon Parker is a distinguished lawyer who acts across the full spectrum of issues in the intellectual property space, both contentious and non-contentious. He is frequently mandated to advise on high-value international matters, catering to an impressive client roster hailing from a wide range of sectors. **Strengths:** *"Jon provides unparalleled strategic advice and obtains great results for his clients." "He's always commercially minded and will consider your specific industry; his advice is always specific to you." "On all levels, Jon is very strong at what he does."* **Rachel Armstrong** is a well-respected IP lawyer whose work covers commercialisation and contentious matters within the practice area. She has considerable experience advising a variety of internationally recognised companies within sectors such as e-commerce, fashion and technology. **Strengths:** *"Rachel is one of those practitioners who is very well rounded in the scope of her capabilities. She is extremely competent and a rising star. I really enjoy working with her."*

Rouse

What the team is known for Rouse is a highly reputed boutique law firm acting on the full scope of contentious and non-contentious IP matters. Its Dubai office is widely agreed to house an outstanding team, and it regularly handles large-scale matters originating throughout the Middle East and Africa. Rouse's contentious capabilities encompass trade mark and patent infringement, anti-counterfeiting and brand protection initiatives as well as unfair competition issues. The firm is also praised for its skill set in non-contentious matters such as IP-related marketing and advertising advice, in addition to assisting with issues of trade mark clearance and applications.

Strengths

"Rouse is a very longstanding presence with a depth of international and local knowledge."

"When I need a structured, complex strategy, I go to Rouse. You're getting a high-end boutique which provides top-notch knowledge."

"They cover a case from all perspectives, taking into account how the court will look at an argument. They have excellent skills and are very responsive and organised."

Work highlights Rouse advised Starbucks on its trade mark disputes across the MENA region, in addition to supporting with the broader management of its regional portfolio.

Notable practitioners

Sara Holder is most frequently praised for her extensive knowledge and experience regarding patents, with an equally strong understanding of trade mark matters. She is well known and highly respected within the legal community. **Strengths:** *"Sara Holder is very responsive, extremely knowledgeable and practical." "She's well known for her patent practice."* **Bassel El Turk** is a well-known lawyer with considerable strength in trade mark

litigation and enforcement matters. He heads the Dubai dispute resolution team within Rouse and is also the managing partner of its Middle East and Africa business. **Strengths:** *"Bassel is a very logical lawyer who will always try to find you several solutions. He is pragmatic and his approach is very structured." "He's very knowledgeable, not just on IP in the UAE and Saudi Arabia, but worldwide. He's always updated on legal issues." "Bassel is very proactive and a pleasure to work with."*

Band 2

Bird & Bird (MEA) LLP

What the team is known for Bird & Bird has an established IP practice in Dubai which earns a high level of commendation for its trade mark work. The firm advises on filing strategies, portfolio management, prosecution and enforcement issues, and is able to assist with regulatory questions in relation to trade mark registration. Its respected team of lawyers acts for an array of international and domestic clients, with a strong focus on the retail, technology and hospitality spheres. The firm also offers complementary strengths in franchising.

Strengths

"They are very good at unpacking the pros and cons. They understand what we are trying to protect from a branding perspective. They have a holistic, long-term approach; they understand our brand and business."

"Bird & Bird is comfortable with cross-border dynamics."

"They respond quickly and always deliver on time. They understand what the franchisee wants as well as what is important for franchisors."

Work highlights Bird & Bird advised The Grooming Company on the expansion of its various brands beyond the UAE to new markets in the Middle East.

Notable practitioners

Melissa Murray enjoys a notable reputation for her handling of trade mark portfolios, with experience advising a long list of significant international clients from the hospitality and retail sectors. She is also particularly noted for her franchising expertise. **Strengths:** *"Melissa has the judgement and experience to guide you through the unpredictability of markets and manage your expectations." "She's technically very strong, as well as engaging and approachable. She's been in the region a long time, so she understands its dynamics. She has a mature and sensible commercial approach and she's always available."*

Hadef & Partners

What the team is known for UAE law firm Hadef & Partners is renowned for its strength in all aspects of trade marks, including registration, enforcement and commercialisation. Its Dubai-based lawyers are also adept at handling issues relating to licensing, with notable experience acting for entities in the food and beverage, retail and hospitality sectors. The firm frequently assists foreign brands with market entry to the UAE.

Strengths

"Everything is well explained and on time. We trust

them completely."

"The team at Hadef is very knowledgeable and experienced with trade mark filing and prosecution in the Gulf region. They present solutions to complex queries in a commercially focused and collaborative manner."

"I am extremely impressed with the depth of their strategic and commercial awareness for putting together a strong commercial strategy, and I'm also impressed by their knowledge of my industry. Equally, I am appreciative of being prepared for future complex situations that I had not thought of."

Notable practitioners

Dubai-based head of trade marks and brand protection **James Dunne** (see p.2986) is renowned for his expert handling of trade mark applications and registration issues, as well as for representing clients in contentious opposition proceedings.

Strengths: *"James consistently delivers a high level of service. He is responsive, pragmatic and at all times clear in his advice. He remains my go-to IP counsel of choice in the Middle East and Gulf region." "He is knowledgeable, communicates effectively and is very responsive." "He's very good at translating the particularities of each jurisdiction and making them easy to understand." "I was incredibly impressed with James's knowledge, his strategic and commercial expertise, his availability and the amount of time and effort he spent to diligently explain complex matters." "He has a brilliant legal mind."*

Band 3

Charles Russell Speechlys

What the team is known for Charles Russell Speechlys (CRS) is well placed to leverage the firm's strengths in sport, media and entertainment when it comes to intellectual property. It advises a number of notable clients in all of these fields, providing counsel on a broad array of contentious and non-contentious matters. This includes trade mark registration, portfolio management and the signing of licensing agreements.

Work highlights Charles Russell Speechlys represented the International Cricket Council (ICC) in numerous trade mark matters, including with regard to the registration of two of its marks for a new crypto NFT offering.

Notable practitioners

Lara Haidar is an experienced lawyer who counsels a variety of well-known clients on copyright and trade mark issues. She is well versed in contentious and non-contentious matters occurring in sectors as diverse as media and aviation. **Mark Hill** is commended for his deep understanding of trade mark and copyright issues in the sport, media, entertainment and technology spheres. His clients include international film production companies operating in the MENA region. **Strengths:** *"Mark is completely on the ball and advises on the IP's greater commercial potential. He has great commercial acumen and cuts through potential wooliness."*

DLA Piper Middle East LLP

What the team is known for DLA Piper has a respected IP group in Dubai with a strong focus

on the technology, media and entertainment sectors. It has recently bolstered its 'soft' IP offering, advising several big-name international clients on the management of their trade mark portfolios across the region. It also acts for a range of significant brands on contentious IP matters.

Notable practitioners

Saba Al Sultani (see p.2984) focuses on trade marks, with extensive experience concerning both registration and enforcement. Based in Dubai, she advises a variety of international and local clients operating within the hospitality, fashion, education and energy sectors, among others. She joined DLA Piper in September 2022 after leaving Cedar White Bradley. **Strengths:** "She covers the whole MENA region and she's excellent at understanding the idiosyncrasies between countries. She'll jump on the phone at any time. She has great relationships with brand owners and in-house counsel." "She brings a wealth of local and international experience to the table and she provides sagacious IP advice throughout the region."

Band 4

BSA Ahmad Bin Hezeem & Associates LLC

What the team is known for BSA Ahmad Bin Hezeem & Associates (BSA) is a well-known regional law firm whose Dubai-based intellectual property practice is well versed in trade mark prosecution, and also regularly assists with enforcement and opposition proceedings. The firm has further experience in contentious copyright and patent matters and is able to leverage its impressive regional footprint to great effect on multi-jurisdictional instructions.

Strengths

"BSA gives excellent detailed advice and very quick responses."

Work highlights BSA advised the MBC Group on the rebranding and international registration of its O3 trade mark, as well as related opposition proceedings, in addition to providing wide-ranging guidance on trade mark protection, enforcement and strategic brand advisory issues.

Notable practitioners

Amala Atieh is a key contact.

Cedar White Bradley

What the team is known for Dubai-based Cedar White Bradley has a well-established regional IP practice in the MENA region, advising on a range of matters including trade marks, copyright infringement, patents and anti-counterfeiting. It acts for a well-recognised roster of local and global players in the media, retail, food and beverage, and hospitality industries.

Strengths

"Cedar White is very good at giving the analysis we need and looking around metaphorical corners. They're thoughtful, responsive and have a depth of knowledge."

"Cedar White Bradley demonstrates commercial awareness and a broad understanding of the legal issues that need consideration."

Notable practitioners

Theuns van de Merwe is a key contact at the prac-

tice.

Eversheds Sutherland (International) LLP – Dubai

What the team is known for Eversheds Sutherland has a diverse team with considerable experience in IP, technology and commercial contracts. Key clients originate from the pharma, media and IT sectors, with the firm capable of providing guidance on both contentious and non-contentious matters. This work also extends to wide-ranging regulatory compliance mandates.

Strengths

"They have solid lawyers with great expertise and knowledge of the external environment in the GCC. Their team has the ability to conduct in-depth research into any IP query."

"They are very responsive and always available at short notice, and they are very well connected and aware of commercial matters in the UAE."

Work highlights Eversheds Sutherland advised Philip Morris International Management on various IP-related matters, including the negotiation of an agreement with Abu Dhabi Customs to combat imports of counterfeit tobacco products into the UAE.

Notable practitioners

Nasser Ali Khasawneh is highly recommended for both contentious and non-contentious matters concerning issues of trade mark and copyright law. Notably, he acts as arbitrator at the World Intellectual Property Organization in relation to domain name disputes, and he further demonstrates an excellent understanding of IP matters in the technology sphere. Based in Dubai, he is Middle East chair of Eversheds Sutherland. Principal associate **Christine Khoury** is recognised within the market as an increasingly active adviser on IP issues. Her work of late has included a number of matters concerning the enforcement of trade mark and patent rights. She is trilingual in English, French and Arabic. **Strengths:** "Christine Khoury is a very solid IP lawyer. She's pragmatic and always available at short notice to efficiently assist her client." "Christine is a rising star in IP."

Saba & Co

What the team is known for Saba & Co provides comprehensive support to its clients in relation to IP registration and filing. Further, the firm is proficient in assisting with contentious IP and anti-counterfeiting matters. It acts for both domestic clients and significant international brands, drawing on the support of its offices across the Middle East and Africa as needed.

Notable practitioners

UAE country manager **Hady Khawand** provides IP advice to well-known international brands as well as domestic clients. He also regularly handles anti-counterfeiting matters. **Strengths:** "Hady is extremely knowledgeable. He likes working with everyone and he's great at knowledge sharing." "He has high-value expertise and is a very well-respected IP lawyer in the region."

Simmons & Simmons

What the team is known for The Dubai office of Simmons & Simmons houses a team of lawyers with a wealth of IP knowledge, and which is a reg-

ular adviser to various pharma and healthcare clients. On the healthcare side, the team frequently assists with issues such as market entry, patent protection and brand development. Tech and media clients benefit from the firm's strong experience in data protection and in questions related to licensing.

Strengths

"Simmons & Simmons have a harmonious and extremely efficient team."

"The team has an impressive breadth across complex licensing models and is able to advise effectively on all categories of IP. The team's IP focus on commercial matters is very strong."

"The team has delivered strong advice in a timely manner, demonstrating strong commercial awareness, and providing innovative options, where it is apparent they really are fully aware of the marketplace."

Notable practitioners

Raza Rizvi frequently advises clients from the technology and healthcare sectors on commercial IP issues including brand protection, infringement and software licensing. **Strengths:** "Raza has unmatched experience and expertise in the region on the most complex issues arising from copyright laws, including novel issues arising from AI. He is our go-to lawyer on tricky copyright and IP commercialisation matters." "Raza is a brilliant lawyer with a business-and technology-strong acumen."

Other Ranked Lawyers

Contentious IP specialist **Rob Deans** is noted for his many years of experience in this field, having built up a practice that is chiefly focused on cross-border trade mark and copyright infringement matters. He is also well versed in handling anti-piracy and anti-counterfeiting issues on a regional level.

Mark Devaney acts on contentious as well as non-contentious IP matters, with experience relating to both trade marks and copyright. He works on behalf of a wide variety of clients, from startups to large multinationals, and is a well-regarded lawyer within the market. In February 2024 he left Clyde & Co to co-found the Dubai office of Abion.

Strengths:

"Mark is lovely to work with. He's efficient, commercially driven and good at negotiating desired outcomes for the client."

"Mark is a known name in the field and always our first port of call for any matters in the UAE or Middle East."

"Mark is a wonderful practitioner. He is adept at navigating and distinguishing between the more-important versus less-important matters. He is highly persuasive and flexible in his approach."

Nicole Giblin is an increasingly notable name. She advises regional and international clients within the aviation, fashion, hospitality and real estate industries on a variety of trade mark protection and enforcement mandates. In February 2024 she left Clyde & Co to co-found the Dubai office of Abion.

Strengths:

"Nicole is one to watch out for in the future. She's

moving the business forward. She's energetic, committed to her work, and always in tune with the needs of the client."

"Nicole is an extremely smart lawyer and a joy to work with."

Munir Suboh is noted for his years of experience handling both commercial and contentious IP matters. He is highly sought after by significant

media and broadcasting companies to advise on brand creation and brand management, as well as handling trade mark clearance and infringement issues. He recently joined Taylor Wessing after leaving BSA Ahmad Bin Hezeem.

Strengths:

"Munir is a great lawyer with a detailed professional approach."

Offshore

Offshore
Leading Firms
Band 1
Maples Group
Walkers (Dubai) LLP
Leading Individuals
Band 1
Belmontes Manuela <i>Maples Group</i>
Bohnacker Ciaran <i>Walkers (Dubai) LLP</i>
Wood Daniel <i>Walkers (Dubai) LLP</i>
Band 2
Cochrane Tom <i>Walkers (Dubai) LLP</i>
Ireland Philip <i>Maples Group</i>
Up-and-coming individuals
Petith Luke <i>Walkers (Dubai) LLP</i>
<i>Alphabetical order within each band. Band 1 is highest.</i>

Band 1

Maples Group

What the team is known for Maples Group is an elite offshore law firm whose Dubai team advises on the full gamut of matters relating to Cayman and British Virgin Islands investment funds, including the formation of private equity, hedge and real estate funds. It is also well versed in issues arising from Shari'a-compliant funds. The firm maintains a strong offshore M&A practice, and continues to be acknowledged for its Islamic and aviation finance expertise. It regularly acts as issuers' counsel on high-value sukuk issuances. The team represents a blue-chip client base, including leading financial institutions and asset managers. It maintains strong relationships with numerous end-user clients and onshore counsel across the region.

Strengths

"Maples have proved commercial and responsive with regard to large sovereign investors, and are particularly efficient in engaging with regulators." "Maples provides excellent service and its lawyers have top-level experience." "They are always aware of the practical commercial issues that are driving the deal." "Maples can handle Shari'a structures, as well as investment fund documentation."

Work highlights Maples Group was Cayman Islands counsel to El Sukuk Company on a AED1 billion sukuk issuance.

Notable practitioners

Manuela Belmontes is highly sought after for her expertise in Islamic and aircraft finance matters, with further notable experience in sukuk issuances. She is joint managing partner of the firm's Dubai office. **Strengths:** "Manuela Belmontes is an excellent lawyer and is very client-friendly." "Manuela Belmontes and the team are very experienced and understand clients' needs." Dubai joint managing partner **Philip Ireland** enjoys a strong reputation for investment fund matters. He has expertise relating to a wide range of asset classes and is experienced advising on Shari'a-compliant fund launches as well as on venture capital and equity funding mandates. **Strengths:** "Philip Ireland provides excellent client service. He is a hugely knowledgeable and practical lawyer."

Walkers (Dubai) LLP

What the team is known for Walkers has a seasoned Dubai team which is a popular choice among onshore lawyers seeking Cayman or British Virgin Islands counsel. The group offers specialist expertise in investment funds, M&A and finance. It is also able to provide on-the-ground Jersey law advice from Dubai. The team is well versed in Islamic and aviation finance, having advised on some of the MENA region's most significant transactions in these fields. It acts for a range of financial institutions, sovereign wealth funds and well-known corporations. Walkers also represents clients in a variety of commercial and shareholder disputes.

Strengths

"They are very responsive. They give quick and efficient advice and support, as well as being approachable and easy to deal with. They understand what we need and don't take unnecessary time providing it." "Walkers is assiduous at client care and good at handling things sensitively. They are focused and they are team players." "I value their commercial approach to solving problems."

"The Walkers team has strong technical knowledge and an insight into market standards, which is helpful in handling complex matters."

"Walkers stands out for its availability, depth of experience and knowledge."

Work highlights Walkers acted for cloud kitchen platform Kitopi on the BVI law aspects of its Series C funding round, which totalled USD715 million and was led by SoftBank Vision Fund 2.

Notable practitioners

Ciaran Bohnacker enjoys a sterling reputation among onshore counsel in Dubai. He is known for his assured handling of many very high-value finance transactions, including acquisition and aviation finance matters, as well as advising on bond issuances. **Strengths:** "Ciaran Bohnacker is very proactive and provides great advice on complex matters." "Ciaran Bohnacker is an excellent lawyer." **Daniel Wood** is particularly noted for his deep experience advising on investment fund, M&A and venture capital matters. He is managing partner of Walkers' Dubai office and enjoys great acclaim for both his rigorous client service ethic and his admirable leadership of the team. **Strengths:** "Daniel is up to date on market developments. He has strong business development and client-relationship skills and is also a great team leader." **Tom Cochrane** is noted for his impressive capabilities regarding investment fund launches and venture capital investments. He has a wealth of experience acting for leading asset management firms. **Strengths:** "Tom Cochrane has a depth and breadth of expertise in investment funds. He shares market insights and developments, is approachable and responsive, and we very much enjoy working with him." "Tom Cochrane is very responsive and pragmatic." "I am impressed with Tom's responsiveness and his team's ability to handle complex matters." **Luke Petith** heads up Walkers' insolvency and dispute resolution practice in Dubai. He assists clients with the Cayman and BVI aspects of a wide variety of commercial and shareholder disputes. **Strengths:** "Luke Petith is excellent, one of the brightest and most dynamic offshore partners I have worked with."

Real Estate

Real Estate
Leading Firms
Band 1
Al Tamimi & Company
Clyde & Co LLP
DLA Piper Middle East LLP
Band 2
Allen & Overy LLP
Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner LLP
Clifford Chance LLP
Band 3
Baker McKenzie LLP
Eversheds Sutherland (International) LLP
Hadef & Partners
Pinsent Masons LLP
Band 4
Addleshaw Goddard LLP
Afridi & Angell
CMS (UAE) LLP
Dentons
King & Spalding LLP
Wisefields
Leading Individuals
Band 1
Henderson Steven <i>Eversheds Sutherland (International)</i>
Pickering Duncan <i>DLA Piper Middle East LLP*</i>
Thomson Andrew <i>Al Tamimi & Company</i>
Waller Alexis <i>Clyde & Co LLP</i>
Band 2
Bevan Ian <i>Allen & Overy LLP*</i>
Imam Tariq <i>Clifford Chance LLP</i>
Kelly Stephen <i>Greenberg Traurig Limited (ORL) ◇</i>
Scott Jeremy <i>Addleshaw Goddard LLP</i>
Band 3
Corfield-Smith Philip <i>Pinsent Masons LLP</i>
Lynch Louisa <i>Pinsent Masons LLP</i>
Mahood Sarah <i>Greenberg Traurig Limited (ORL) ◇</i>
Nunn David P <i>Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner LLP</i>
Safai Shahram <i>Afridi & Angell</i>
Said Moustafa <i>Wisefields</i>
Smith Geoff <i>CMS (UAE) LLP</i>
Band 4
Ambikapathy Bilal <i>Wisefields</i>
Arnott Ian <i>Al Tamimi & Company</i>
Beretta Joby <i>The Bench FZE (ORL) ◇</i>
Greatrex Peter <i>Clyde & Co LLP</i>
Parks Jerry <i>Taylor Wessing (Middle East) LLP (ORL) ◇</i>
Sadiq Farida <i>Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner LLP</i>
Vun Louise <i>White & Case LLP (ORL) ◇</i>
Up-and-coming individuals
Al Rifai Malek <i>King & Spalding LLP*</i>
Sayed Ashraf <i>Hadef & Partners*</i>
Watkins Keri <i>Baker McKenzie LLP</i>
Associates to watch
Carroll Joe <i>Dentons</i>
George Emma <i>Eversheds Sutherland (International) LLP</i>
<small>* Indicates individual with profile.</small>
<small>◇ (ORL) = Other Ranked Lawyer.</small>
<small>Alphabetical order within each band. Band 1 is highest.</small>

Band 1

Al Tamimi & Company

What the team is known for Al Tamimi's top-tier real estate group acts for several leading regional

Foreign Experts (Based Abroad)
Real Estate
United Arab Emirates expertise based in countries listed below
China Green Simon <i>Charles Russell Speechlys (ORL) ◇</i>

developers and also advises an impressive list of well-known corporate clients on the real estate aspects of their businesses. The team is adept at matters relating to commercial leases, as well as assisting with acquisitions in the retail and hospitality sectors. It is also able to provide representation in various real estate-related disputes. The firm leverages its extensive regional coverage on cross-border work.

Strengths

"The practice group is always efficient and precise, and the advice they give is on-point. They are very responsive."

"Al Tamimi is solid, experienced and very responsive. The team has a robust and deep understanding of the real estate and hospitality sectors."

"The law firm has a strong grasp of the regulations while also being very commercially oriented. The team turns around high-quality work very quickly."

Work highlights An Al Tamimi team assisted Abu Dhabi Commercial Bank with the USD122.5 million sale of the Al Maryah Tower.

Notable practitioners

Andrew Thomson heads the real estate team at Al Tamimi. He draws high praise from market commentators for his expertise in development projects and leasing work. His client base includes financial institutions as well as REITs.

Strengths: "Andrew Thomson is very well rounded with a great balance of legal sophistication and commercial awareness." "He is responsive, pragmatic, knowledgeable and commercial. He stands out in the market as one of its leading individuals."

"Andrew is a very strong lawyer with good experience as well as being very available." **Ian Arnott** is an experienced real estate lawyer who heads the hospitality development group. In this capacity he regularly counsels well-known hotel brands interested in expanding their portfolios. He is also well versed in the negotiation of hotel management agreements. **Strengths:** "Ian Arnott delivers outstanding service and support."

Clyde & Co LLP

What the team is known for Clyde & Co has a well-established regional real estate practice that is further aided by its respected global capabilities in construction and related areas, including insurance. Its UAE-based team offers expertise in a wide range of matters, including leasing, office and retail developments, and property investment structuring. The practice has a strong focus on hospitality and education, and maintains several long-term client relationships in these sectors.

Strengths

"The Clyde & Co practice group is always responsive, meets deadlines, and the team is always available. They possess detailed knowledge of the local market."

Work highlights Clyde & Co acted for Aldar Prop-

erties on its USD210 million acquisition of the Rixos Bab Al Bahr Hotel.

Notable practitioners

Alexis Waller heads the Middle East real estate team. She operates a market-leading practice and is lauded by clients for her longstanding experience and extensive knowledge. She regularly handles leaseings, developments and financings on behalf of developers and entities in the hospitality sector. **Strengths:** "In my view, she is probably the best real estate partner in the region. She is just excellent. There is no situation she hasn't faced." "She is one of the market-leading lawyers for real estate." "Alexis has been in the region for years and is well regarded." **Peter Greatrex** is very experienced in the hospitality arena, with experience acting for hotel brands as well as other stakeholders, including government entities, on matters across the region. He also assists with real estate fund formation.

DLA Piper Middle East LLP

What the team is known for DLA Piper has a first-rate real estate team in the UAE which leverages the extensive global footprint of the wider law firm to service clients throughout the Middle East. It is able to advise on real estate matters from both Abu Dhabi and Dubai, possessing noteworthy expertise relating to the hospitality, leisure and retail sectors. It further demonstrates a wealth of experience handling matters on behalf of government entities.

Strengths

"DLA displays a detailed knowledge of UAE law along with significant attention to detail. All team members are thorough and readily available. They offer excellent service and responsiveness."

"The team is attentive to the small details. They provide prompt responses."

Work highlights A DLA Piper team assisted the Abu Dhabi Ports Group with the real estate aspects of the merger of its KEZAD Communities operation with the Al Eskan Al Jamae Group.

Notable practitioners

Duncan Pickering (see p.2989) is a well-established lawyer whose work spans the breadth of the real estate market. This includes handling leaseings relating to mixed-use developments as well as advising on the management of properties in the hospitality sector. He heads the firm's real estate practice from Abu Dhabi. **Strengths:** "Duncan is outstanding. He is the guru of landlord and tenant, and of real estate law generally. All bases are covered with him."

Band 2

Allen & Overy LLP

What the team is known for This law firm fields one of the most respected real estate practice in the UAE. It services an impressive range of clients hailing from sectors such as hospitality and finance, in addition to acting for well-known real estate developers. It is frequently sought out for its expertise in multi-stranded transactional man-

dates. In 2024 Allen & Overy is set to merge with US law firm Shearman & Sterling, giving a further boost to the team's overseas connections.

Strengths

"The firm is super-efficient. They are very responsive and turn things around incredibly quickly. They can solve even very unusual problems and come up with an innovative but practical solution."

"Allen & Overy is excellent and always prompt."

"A&O always provides excellent service and is innovative with their solutions while still managing the risk appropriately. The firm has a strong presence in the UAE and access to relevant partners is easy."

Work highlights An Allen & Overy team assisted Mubadala with the AED4.3 billion sale of four prime commercial towers located in the ADGM.

Notable practitioners

Ian Bevan (see p.2985) is widely recognised for his longevity in the Dubai market. He is particularly known for his work advising clients on sale and leasebacks and commercial lettings. He also has considerable knowledge regarding real estate-related financing issues. **Strengths:** *"He always makes himself available even at short notice and tackles issues positively with a solution-based approach."* *"Ian Bevan is always unflappable. He knows the sector back to front because he has been here for so long. He gives pragmatic advice."* *"Ian goes above and beyond."*

Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner LLP

What the team is known for Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner offers a noteworthy real estate team in the UAE, with senior lawyers based in both Dubai and Abu Dhabi. It advises a wide variety of clients, including major developers, and is notable for its in-depth zoning and planning capabilities. The firm offers extensive knowledge of residential and hospitality matters. It is also well versed in real estate litigation.

Strengths

"The Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner team is accessible and responsive. Being a global law firm gives them a global commercial awareness."

Work highlights BCLP acted for Al Tamouh Investments on the structuring of its Reem Hills Villas development.

Notable practitioners

David Nunn is based in Abu Dhabi and possesses a wealth of experience across the real estate market. He provides structuring and leasing advice relating to a variety of residential, hospitality and retail sites. **Farida Sadiq** is a Dubai-based lawyer who enters the rankings in recognition of her specialist expertise in planning and zoning. She has experience advising project companies and government entities on a variety of regulatory issues pertaining to the development of new real estate sites, including the environmental considerations. **Strengths:** *"Farida is an engaging, smart and experienced lawyer."*

Clifford Chance LLP

What the team is known for Clifford Chance has a respected real estate team in Dubai which is frequently active on behalf of some of the market's best-known developers. It also acts for an impressive list of hotel operators, financial entities and regulatory authorities. The team advises on the

acquisition and sale of major real estate assets, as well as providing structuring and development guidance in relation to high-end residential and resort properties. Further expertise concerns leasing and hotel management agreements.

Strengths

"Clifford has excellent commercial knowledge and the ability to provide sound advice."

"They are a team that exceeds expectations and provides realistic and achievable time lines. They have a full knowledge of real estate-related agreements and know exactly how to differentiate between similar concepts in other jurisdictions and how to implement them in the UAE."

"Clifford Chance is highly knowledgeable and able to provide both innovative ideas and simple solutions. The standard of work is excellent and their responses are detailed."

"The team has a clear understanding of transactions. They are also well experienced in handling transactions involving multiple counterparties."

"They have highly committed and effective lawyers in the relevant areas of need. They deliver on time and the firm has a proven track record."

Work highlights A Clifford Chance team assisted Wynn Resorts with its development of a multibillion-dollar resort.

Notable practitioners

Tariq Imam is head of the firm's Middle East real estate team and is based in Dubai. He often advises on major developments and financings across the hospitality, commercial and residential real estate sectors. He is also significantly experienced in cross-border projects. **Strengths:** *"Tariq is a great lawyer with undisputed skills in real estate laws and regulations. He has the skills to understand both the common law and civil law aspects, with the ability to clarify things for the client in a very simple and straightforward manner."* *"Tariq is a highly skilled real estate lawyer with a depth of detailed technical knowledge."* *"Tariq is a very calm voice of reason and provides very sound advice throughout any engagement. His knowledge of the market and the legal framework is also very robust."* *"Tariq is our go-to lawyer when it comes to real estate matters. He understands our issues and comes up with the best solutions."*

Band 3

Baker McKenzie LLP

What the team is known for Baker McKenzie fields a compact real estate team in Dubai, but one which represents an impressive list of clients. These include well-known property developers in addition to regional business conglomerates and Emirati family groups. The practice also regularly advises major hotel and hospitality brands on issues relating to management agreements, and is noted for its significant experience concerning joint ownership.

Strengths

"They are strong at handling complex hotel deals within tight time frames. They are always quick to respond and helpful."

"Baker is able to provide sound advice on complex matters pertaining to both mainland transactions as well as those in the UAE's free zones."

"Baker is responsive and delivers very high service levels."

Work highlights Baker McKenzie acted for Aldar Properties on its acquisition, alongside Mubadala, of the Al Maryah Tower from Abu Dhabi Commercial Bank.

Notable practitioners

Keri Watkins has a growing reputation among her peers in Dubai, having recently been promoted to partner. She regularly advises on land acquisitions, as well as assisting clients with the negotiation of hotel management agreements.

Strengths: *"Keri is a top-notch real estate lawyer who is very knowledgeable, connected and commercial."* *"She is extremely knowledgeable and experienced across the Middle East. Her market awareness makes her an integral part of any transaction team."* *"She is very approachable and down to earth. Very responsive as well."* *"Keri's local knowledge is second to none."* *"She is very personable and helpful. She is dedicated to her profession and to client needs."*

Eversheds Sutherland (International) LLP

What the team is known for Eversheds Sutherland is a renowned international law firm with a solid footing in the Middle East. Its Dubai-based real estate lawyers act for a number of commercial landlords and tenants, and provide a wide range of advice on portfolio management matters. The team is also able to offer guidance with regard to the sale and purchase of major real estate assets. It regularly assists with cross-border matters in the wider Middle East, making use of the firm's extensive network of offices across the GCC and Levant.

Strengths

"The firm offers great guidance on complex legal issues as well as sophisticated high-level advice."

"Eversheds Sutherland is an excellent law firm to deal with. They are very knowledgeable and offer out-of-the-box solutions to complex real estate issues."

"The team demonstrates tremendous professionalism and an understanding of the legal dynamics of transactions."

Work highlights Eversheds acted for IWG on issues relating to its GCC real estate portfolio, as well as on matters in Egypt, Jordan and Pakistan. This included the rollout of its 'Signature' and 'Spaces' brands.

Notable practitioners

Steven Henderson is acclaimed by clients for his wealth of knowledge in local real estate law. He also demonstrates strong capabilities in real estate M&A as well as developments in the hospitality sector. He acts for major real estate developers and hotel brands as well as providing real estate guidance to market-leading entities from an array of sectors. **Strengths:** *"Steven Henderson is the best. He's a go-to lawyer for real estate, a true business partner with eyes on the ground. He understands the business perfectly."* **Emma George** is a principal associate who is highly commended for her work in the real estate space. She assists an international clientele with property acquisitions as well as leasing agreements. **Strengths:** *"She is an excellent commercial property lawyer who*

has great commercial acumen and is an effective negotiator." "Emma is a fantastic lawyer. She is commercially aware, proactive and knowledgeable. She provides value-added advice throughout the transaction process." "Emma is a pleasure to work with. Responsive, smart and keen to find solutions."

Hadef & Partners

What the team is known for Hadef & Partners is a well-established UAE law firm fielding dedicated real estate lawyers in both Abu Dhabi and Dubai. The team assists clients with a range of matters, including the development of mixed-use sites and strata ownership concerns. It is also well versed in the sale and purchase of properties, with further expertise in leasing, portfolio audits and property management agreements. Its work relates to residential, commercial and hospitality assets. The team has further experience advising prominent Emirati clients on real estate acquisitions outside the Middle East.

Strengths

"Hadef & Partners has a strong team across all levels. They offer excellent client service in addition to being very responsive and giving good commercial advice."

Work highlights Hadef & Partners assisted Reeve Realty with issues arising from its mixed-use 'Fairmont' project being developed in association with the Accor Group.

Notable practitioners

Ashraf Sayed (see p.2990) leads the firm's real estate team in Dubai. He services a range of clients including global manufacturers and investment agencies, regularly advising on the acquisition of real estate sites as well as on matters pertaining to the structuring of ownership and management agreements.

Pinsent Masons LLP

What the team is known for Pinsent Masons is a respected law firm leveraging its market-leading global construction expertise to assist with a range of high-profile real estate projects. Based in Dubai, the team has an expansive reach across the Middle East and is frequently called upon for advice on cross-border matters both within the region and further afield. It is also noteworthy for its handling of a high volume of real estate matters in Ras Al Khaimah. Its lawyers often work on behalf of banks, hotel operators, developers, educational establishments and government entities on mixed-use developments and leasing arrangements.

Strengths

"The real estate department is a capable and well-rounded team of professionals. They are commercially aware and pragmatic."

"Pinsent Masons' real estate team has a 360-degree view of all issues and deep experience of the hospitality market; it possesses great knowledge and know-how of market trends."

"The whole team goes above and beyond."

Work highlights A Pinsent Masons team assisted RAK National Hotels with the USD210 million sale of the Rixos Bab Al Bahr Hotel to Aldar Investments.

Notable practitioners

Philip Corfield-Smith is praised by commenta-

tors for his deep knowledge of real estate issues in the hospitality sector. As leader of Pinsent Masons' regional real estate group, he also has extensive experience in leasing matters as well as the restructuring of real estate finance arrangements. **Strengths:** "One of Philip's most commendable qualities is his ability to communicate legal concepts clearly and concisely to non-legal professionals. He has a talent for breaking down intricate legal jargon into easily understandable terms, allowing us to make informed decisions confidently." "Philip's attention to detail is truly commendable. He leaves no stone unturned." "I wouldn't hesitate to recommend him to anyone who needs legal support in the UAE for real estate and hospitality. He is excellent at marshalling his firm's resources." "Philip Corfield-Smith is a top real estate lawyer. Very knowledgeable and pleasant to work with." "He is an extremely talented legal mind." **Louisa Lynch** has experience counselling clients on mixed-use developments as well as real estate investments and property sales. She has further expertise in real estate regulatory matters. She joined Pinsent Masons in 2023 after leaving Norton Rose. **Strengths:** "Louisa is great. Very easy to work with." "She is very knowledgeable, responsive and reliable." "An excellent real estate lawyer."

Band 4

Addleshaw Goddard LLP

What the team is known for Addleshaw Goddard maintains a compact property team in Dubai. It assists clients with the acquisition of various real estate assets – including branded luxury residences, office buildings and industrial sites – and is also well versed in strata documentation and leasing. The team acts for major property developers as well as advising several well-known corporate clients.

Work highlights Addleshaw Goddard assisted SHUAA Capital with its co-development of the Ocean House luxury residential project located on the Palm Jumeirah.

Notable practitioners

Jeremy Scott is a highly experienced property lawyer who is especially accomplished in joint venture agreements and strata developments as well as advising clients on landmark projects. He has extensive real estate knowledge gained both in private practice and in-house with a major developer. **Strengths:** "Jeremy Scott is our go-to real estate lawyer." "He is pragmatic and available."

Afridi & Angell

What the team is known for Afridi & Angell offers a strong Dubai-based real estate team which regularly assists high-profile local entities and foreign investors with matters throughout the UAE. The firm acts for a range of private clients as well as government bodies such as the Dubai Land Department. The team also possesses significant expertise in acting for property developers.

Strengths

"It is well known throughout the country, at all levels of government and business, as a blue-chip and high-quality law firm."

Notable practitioners

Shahram Safai possesses strengths across the full gamut of real estate transactions, including leasing and sale and purchase agreements. Based in Dubai, he is a very experienced adviser on real estate issues and maintains a strong client following. **Strengths:** "Shahram Safai is very well known in the real estate industry as a go-to lawyer, offering depth and breadth of knowledge, a good sense of strategy and excellent technical skills." "He understands the business of real estate. He is razor-sharp and, as a legal adviser, he is practical, value-driven and to the point."

CMS (UAE) LLP

What the team is known for CMS houses a recognised real estate team known for providing a range of services in the field. The firm is principally active on transactions involving real estate assets in Dubai and Abu Dhabi, but is also capable of assisting with deals across the wider Middle East and further afield. It handles a variety of sale, acquisition and leasing matters, and offers a wealth of experience acting for prominent UAE-based developers such as Aldar.

Strengths

"Throughout the engagement with CMS, they have shown extensive expertise and capabilities, and provided us with solutions to overcome complex situations."

"CMS has outstanding experience in real estate matters – they are always up to date with recent market developments and provide their clients with exceptional solutions."

"The service level at CMS is strong and the team is extremely responsive."

Work highlights CMS represented Aldar Investment Properties in its acquisition of the Abu Dhabi-based Nurai Island Hotel and Resort.

Notable practitioners

Geoff Smith is well known in the market for his substantial practice, covering sale, acquisition and development advice, in addition to advising on the formation of real estate partnerships and joint ventures. His clients include multinationals from the education and hospitality sectors. **Strengths:** "Geoff is knowledgeable, attentive, commercially savvy and highly responsive." "He is one of the top real estate lawyers in the UAE – he has great experience in real estate matters."

Dentons

What the team is known for Dentons is a well-regarded law firm with a strong position in the UAE real estate market. It has a wealth of experience acting for clients on large-scale real estate developments and joint ventures. Its typical work involves the representation of developers and investors in cross-border matters within the GCC.

Strengths

"The Dentons team is very responsive and provides excellent service."

Work highlights A Dentons team comprising lawyers based in Riyadh, Dubai and Muscat continued to act for Saudi Cinema Company regarding its joint venture with AMC and the related leasing and development agreements for the rollout of cinema sites across Saudi Arabia.

Notable practitioners

Joe Carroll is a prominent senior associate who is well known within the UAE real estate market. Alongside financings and sales, he also acts on property developments and leasing documentation. He is most notably experienced in the hospitality sector. **Strengths:** “Joe Carroll always comes up with solutions. He’s a lawyer who gets things done.” “Joe is a lawyer with a good knowledge and understanding of the sector.” “He is an excellent adviser who understands the client’s business.”

King & Spalding LLP

What the team is known for King & Spalding’s real estate team in the UAE is particularly focused on cross-border matters involving real estate assets in Saudi Arabia. It is regularly active on development matters, as well as structuring, leasing and asset acquisitions. The firm is also noted for its complementary expertise in REIT formations and listings, leveraging the strengths of its market-leading Middle East investment funds team.

Strengths

“King & Spalding offers a strong team with the full scope of knowledge.”

Work highlights King & Spalding assisted Riyadh-based Arab National Bank with two real estate finance transactions which had a combined value of SAR3.7 billion.

Notable practitioners

Malek Al (see p.2984) **Rifai** (see p.2984) has broadening recognition for his work within the market. He is particularly active on matters relating to mixed-use development projects, as well as advising on the acquisition of major real estate assets. He has further experience concerning REIT listings. He recently joined K&S after leaving Al Tamimi. **Strengths:** “It is always a pleasure to work with Malek. He is extremely professional. If we have a sophisticated question, Malek is definitely the person we go to for advice.”

“Malek is an excellent, commercially oriented real estate lawyer who maintains great client relationships.” “Malek Al Rifai is extremely knowledgeable, responsive and aware of the commercial picture. He is always focused on finding practical solutions to difficult matters.”

Wisefields

What the team is known for Wisefields is a boutique law firm founded at the start of 2023 by lawyers from King & Spalding and Baker McKenzie. With a physical office in Fujairah, the firm already has considerable experience advising on the development of branded residences in the UAE and in Saudi Arabia. The firm has further experi-

ence assisting with real estate issues in the hospitality sector.

Strengths

“Wisefields offers a senior team with high levels of expertise in their area of focus. The lawyers are very responsive and always available.”

“The firm is extremely adept at handling complex and sophisticated matters. They are a highly capable team with specialist expertise.”

“All matters are handled in a timely and professional manner.”

Work highlights Wisefields advised the Select Group on the off-plan sale of five high-end apartment buildings within its ‘Peninsula’ development located in Business Bay, Dubai.

Notable practitioners

Moustafa Said assists a wide range of clients, including developers. He also has deep experience in the hospitality sector, having acted on a number of significant cross-border matters. He co-founded Wisefields at the start of 2023 after leaving King & Spalding. **Strengths:** “Moustafa communicates clearly and informs us of our options so there are no surprises. He also knows how to strike a balance between what is commercially viable and what is ideal in terms of risk. His knowledge is deep and his service excellent.” “He is a highly competent and capable real estate lawyer.”

Bilal Ambikapathy is one of the co-founders of Wisefields, having previously practised at Baker McKenzie in Bahrain. He is noted for his extensive knowledge of real estate issues in the hospitality sector. **Strengths:** “Bilal is extremely knowledgeable in terms of the hospitality and hotel sector. He is the best in the field. Working with him is a great experience.”

Other Ranked Lawyers

Joby Beretta of The Bench FZE operates from Fujairah. He is an expert in hospitality matters and is known for his considerable longevity in the UAE real estate market. He advises clients on mixed-use developments, regulatory issues and issues related to joint ventures.

Strengths:

“Joby Beretta has a huge network. He is incredibly approachable and always puts you into contact with the right people on real estate matters.”

“Joby is exceptionally professional and accommodating.”

Stephen Kelly garners substantial praise in the market for his in-depth knowledge of strata matters. He also possesses a deep understanding of

leasing and sales issues relating to mixed-use developments. Regular clients of his include hospitality groups, financial entities and real estate developers. In the latter half of 2023 he joined Greenberg Traurig as one of its first partners in Dubai, having left Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner.

Strengths:

“Stephen Kelly is one of the leading experts for mixed-use real estate developments and branded residences in the Middle East.”

“He is a guru in the development space.”

Sarah Mahood has a recognised practice encompassing a range of real estate issues. She is active on matters relating to hotel management agreements as well as mandates concerning the development of master community projects and manufacturing facilities. She joined Greenberg Traurig in 2023 after leaving Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner.

Strengths:

“Sarah Mahood is a technically exceptional real estate lawyer in the Middle East. Her expertise is equally matched by her leadership and mentorship in developing lawyers in the region.”

Jerry Parks leads the Dubai real estate team at Taylor Wessing. He handles a wide array of financing and leasing matters, as well as real estate acquisitions, and is also active on a multitude of development projects.

Strengths:

“Jerry is my go-to lawyer in Dubai and has first-class legal knowledge in the UAE.”

“He is accessible, practical and flexible. He is a very commercial lawyer.”

“Jerry Parks provides excellent advice and service.”

“Working with Jerry is always a good experience and he is my go-to person.”

Louise Vun is based in the Dubai office of White & Case, where she is regularly engaged on property sale and leaseback transactions and on development projects. She is also particularly experienced in the hospitality sector and real estate joint ventures.

Foreign Experts (Based Abroad)

Simon Green of Charles Russell Speechlys handles a variety of real estate matters for his clients. His work comprises purchases, disposals and leaseings, acting for well-known developers and a range of other clients. He divides his time between Hong Kong and Dubai.

Strengths:

“Simon is a very good operator in the hospitality industry.”

Regulatory Government & Public Affairs

Regulatory: Government & Public Affairs
Leading Firms
Al Tamimi & Company
Hadef & Partners
Leading Individuals
Ahnish Faraj A <i>Hadef & Partners</i> *
Mahdi Dina <i>Hadef & Partners</i> *
Tithecott Andrea <i>Al Tamimi & Company</i>
* Indicates individual with profile.
◇ (ORL) = Other Ranked Lawyer.
Alphabetical order within each band. Band 1 is highest.

Regulatory: Competition/Antitrust
Leading Firms
Al Tamimi & Company

Regulatory: Financial Services
Leading Individuals
Boustany Mazen <i>Baker McKenzie LLP (ORL)</i> ◇
Khan Muneer <i>Simmons & Simmons (ORL)</i> ◇
Norman Jodi <i>Allen & Overy LLP (ORL)</i> ◇ *
Shanahan Matthew <i>Norton Rose Fulbright (ORL)</i> ◇

ence advising international private sector clients on contractual agreements with the UAE federal government. **Strengths:** “Andrea is absolutely excellent. She is a leader in her field who is knowledgeable, approachable and responsive.” “Andrea is proactive and constructive in supporting our work.” “Andrea is a very good person to work with.”

Other Ranked Lawyers

Mazen Boustany heads the UAE financial regulatory practice at Baker McKenzie. Highly experienced in this field, his work covers advice on payment services and brokerage licences in addition to providing guidance on financial legislation.

Strengths:

“He is professional, knowledgeable, responsive and handles complex matters with the utmost skill.”

“Mazen is very supportive. He knows the market extremely well and is aware of the most recent updates to laws and regulations in Dubai, with further experience in DIFC regulations as well.”

Muneer Khan is the lead partner in the financial services regulatory team at Simmons & Simmons. He is well known for his comprehensive Shari’a expertise, particularly with regard to the formation of investment funds. He also has experience advising governments on the reform of Islamic finance frameworks.

Jodi Norman (see p.2989) acts for an extensive client list – including regulators, banks and asset managers – on the full gamut of financial services regulatory matters. She also offers clients complementary expertise in financial crime work and enforcement investigations.

Strengths:

“She is a skilled regulatory expert with a sophisticated commercial sense. She has an uncanny ability to discern clients’ needs and masterfully deliver clear, concise, complete and timely advice.”

Matthew Shanahan has considerable financial services know-how, drawing on his experience as a former in-house lawyer at financial regulatory bodies both in the UK and in Dubai. His broader regulatory practice is complemented by his representation of financial services clients in investigations proceedings.

Band I

Al Tamimi & Company

What the team is known for Al Tamimi is a leading regional law firm in the Middle East. It maintains a well-established regulatory team which is centred in Abu Dhabi, and which offers exceptional experience in issues of healthcare. In this field it represents an impressive list of international pharma, biotech and medical device companies. The firm has further experience advising government entities and is also well versed in providing assistance with legislative drafting. The firm also has a notable competition group which is regularly called upon for merger control filings, as well as for guidance on competition issues relating to business structuring and distribution arrangements.

Strengths

“The firm has a strong sense of the policy issues underpinning commercial healthcare opportunities in the UAE.”

“Their market knowledge and commercial awareness are second to none within the region.”

“They clearly have strong relations with the competition regulator in the UAE. Access to their regional teams can benchmark against regulations in the rest of the region, which adds great depth to their advice.”

Work highlights Al Tamimi assisted Blackstone (via its international counsel Kirkland & Ellis) with the UAE merger clearance for its acquisition of the VFS Group.

Notable practitioners

Andrea Tithecott is Al Tamimi’s head of regulatory and is based in Abu Dhabi. Her work has a strong focus on the healthcare and life sciences industries, where she has considerable experi-

Hadef & Partners

What the team is known for Hadef & Partners is a leading Emirati law firm which is a standout name in both Dubai and Abu Dhabi. The Abu Dhabi office is home to a growing regulatory and government advisory department which has substantial experience assisting with legislative drafting, as well as providing guidance on issues of trade and environmental law. The team complements its expertise in these areas with experience in public law and public international law.

Strengths

“They’re very professional and pay attention to detail. They’re extremely knowledgeable when it comes to UAE legislation and they keep up to date with it.”

“They always provide good-quality service, and are always efficient. If matters are complex, they will come back to us with a solid position very quickly.”

Notable practitioners

Faraj Ahnish (see p.2984) is one of the co-founders of Hadef & Partners, and is a pivotal figure in the development of its Abu Dhabi office. His extensive experience has encompassed advice on legislative drafting as well as seeing him play a key role in the formation of several commercial entities owned by the UAE federal government. **Dina Mahdi** (see p.2988) heads the regulatory and government advisory team within Hadef & Partners, and is based in Abu Dhabi. Her broad practice spans advice pertaining to international relations, as well as assisting with the drafting of legislation. **Strengths:** “Dina is really good in terms of follow-up and turnaround time, and she is meticulous in policy interpretation.” “Dina is very efficient and provides good information on a timely basis. She’s always ready and available to help, and gets back to us in a timely fashion with a solution to our issues.”

Restructuring/Insolvency

Restructuring/Insolvency
Leading Firms
Band 1
Clifford Chance LLP
DLA Piper Middle East LLP
Band 2
Addleshaw Goddard LLP
Allen & Overy LLP
Linklaters
Band 3
Al Tamimi & Company
Reed Smith
White & Case LLP
Leading Individuals
Band 1
Iremonger James DLA Piper Middle East LLP*
Reader Nicola Clifford Chance LLP
Band 2
Banks Adam Allen & Overy LLP*
Hickman Robin Addleshaw Goddard LLP
Meyer Hanif Haris Allen & Overy LLP*
Somekh Peter DLA Piper Middle East LLP*
Zaman Kieron Linklaters
Up-and-coming individuals
Dyson Matthew DWF (Middle East) LLP (ORL) ◇
* Indicates individual with profile.
◇ (ORL) = Other Ranked Lawyer.
Alphabetical order within each band. Band 1 is highest.

Band 1

Clifford Chance LLP

What the team is known for Clifford Chance offers a market-leading practice advising an enviable roster of global financial institutions, including banks and asset managers, on the restructuring of credit facilities. The team also acts for prominent regional banking syndicates on Shari'a-compliant restructuring mandates. Lawyers within the firm have additional experience representing sukuk holders in respect of the restructuring of their certificates.

Strengths

"Clifford Chance is one of the top law firms. We highly rate the teams we have worked with."

Work highlights Clifford Chance assisted an ad hoc committee of creditors, including First Abu Dhabi Bank, with the financial restructuring of state-owned property developer Limitless.

Notable practitioners

Abu Dhabi-based **Nicola Reader** acts for numerous prominent creditors on the financial restructuring of conventional and Islamic debt. She has also assisted with matters where the debtor has been undergoing UAE administration proceedings. **Strengths:** "Nicola Reader is brilliant – very knowledgeable about her subject and very intelligent." "She always provides excellent technical advice which is very user-friendly." "I have worked with her for years and she is fabulous. She really is a top restructuring lawyer in the UAE."

DLA Piper Middle East LLP

What the team is known for DLA Piper is widely noted as one of the first international law firms

to dedicate significant resources to restructuring and insolvency in the UAE. Its lawyers offer extensive experience assisting creditors, trustees and liquidators with financial restructuring and administration proceedings. The team also acts for company directors on the wind-down of entities and the related negotiation with creditors.

Strengths

"DLA Piper are a market leader in complex and sophisticated engagements, and the go-to player to provide detailed advice and support. The team are incredibly responsive and always available."

Work highlights DLA Piper represented the liquidators of Joannou & Paraskevaides (Overseas) in regard to disposal of the group's assets and in connection with enforcement proceedings in multiple Middle Eastern countries.

Notable practitioners

James Iremonger (see p.2988) has a market-leading practice assisting liquidators and trustees with the financial restructuring of significant regional companies. He heads the regional restructuring group at DLA from his base in Dubai. **Strengths:** "James Iremonger is an excellent restructuring lawyer." "He gives complete, holistic advice and supports us on incredibly complex matters while ensuring commercial and practical solutions are offered." "James has provided excellent strategic guidance on large cross-border insolvencies." **Peter Somekh** (see p.2990) is DLA Piper's managing partner for the Middle East and Africa, as well as co-chair of its global restructuring practice. He frequently acts on large-scale, cross-border financial restructurings, acting for company directors, administrators and trustees.

Band 2

Addleshaw Goddard LLP

What the team is known for Addleshaw Goddard has a prominent restructuring practice advising both regional and international financial institutions, in their capacities as creditors, on complex financial restructurings. Lawyers in the team also act for majority investors as well as alternative lenders on a wide range of matters in this space. The firm offers further experience acting for distressed borrowers on the restructuring of their finance facilities.

Strengths

"Addleshaw Goddard can handle restructuring processes in a commercial manner and has sufficient depth to deal with very complex matters while maintaining quality at all levels."

Work highlights Addleshaw Goddard represented the steering committee of creditors, including Barclays and National Bank of Fujairah, in the restructuring of payments company Finabl, which involved debts of approximately USD1.3 billion.

Notable practitioners

Robin Hickman represents a host of banks, investors and debtor companies in financial restructuring mandates. He acts for both creditors and borrowers. Hickman heads the Middle East

finance group within Addleshaw, complementing his restructuring work with an array of high-value bank finance matters. **Strengths:** "Robin Hickman is an exceptional lawyer with superbly developed commercial and legal skills, and is a genuine pleasure to work with."

Allen & Overy LLP

What the team is known for Benefiting from the firm's market-leading banking practice, this department acts for a number of prominent regional and international financiers on the restructuring of conventional and Shari'a-compliant facilities. The team has considerable expertise concerning the refinancing of projects in the energy and utilities sectors.

Notable practitioners

Adam Banks (see p.2985) is a renowned restructuring lawyer who advises on a wide range of mandates in this field. He has extensive experience acting for debtors as well as creditors.

Strengths: "He's sensible, easy to deal with and I'm really pleased whenever he's on the other side of the table." "I really think he's a star of tomorrow."

Haris Meyer Hanif (see p.2989) is a leading banking lawyer who frequently assists clients with the restructuring of debt obligations. He has a strong practice advising both borrowers and lenders on conventional and Islamic products. He recently joined the firm after leaving Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer.

Linklaters

What the team is known for Linklaters has a strong Dubai-based restructuring practice, leveraging the capabilities of its top-tier banking and finance group. Its lawyers represent a number of well-known regional corporate clients in the restructuring of their financial obligations. The team also assists financial institutions with the refinancing of credit facilities.

Notable practitioners

Kieron Zaman has a strong reputation for his representation of borrowers in the restructuring of both conventional and Islamic debt. He is also highly rated for his advice on lending transactions.

Band 3

Al Tamimi & Company

What the team is known for Al Tamimi & Company is a leading regional law firm which acts for a number of Middle Eastern and international banking syndicates on the restructuring of financial products. The team also assists with contentious restructuring issues relating to foreclosure applications and bankruptcy proceedings.

Work highlights Al Tamimi acted for a syndicate of domestic and international banks, as creditors, the restructuring proceedings of the KBBO Group, involving claims of more than AED3.2 billion.

Notable practitioners

Jody Waugh and **Naief Yahia** are key contacts for clients.

Reed Smith

What the team is known for Reed Smith is a well-respected US law firm with a compact UAE restructuring department based in Dubai. The group represents several prominent regional companies in the restructuring of high-value debt obligations. It also acts for administrators in complex insolvency proceedings.

Strengths

“Reed Smith offer lots of partner time and they staff deals well while still being really efficient.”

“The team provides hands-on practical advice that is integral to operationalising solutions for complex situations.”

Notable practitioners

Head of department Amir Ahmad is a key contact for clients.

White & Case LLP

What the team is known for White & Case is well known for its expansive Middle East presence and longstanding relationships with several major clients. Its Dubai-based finance practice often represents borrowers in the refinancing and restructuring of both conventional and Islamic debt products. The team also acts for lenders on the refinancing of credit facilities.

Notable practitioners

Claire Matheson Kirton is a key contact in the restructuring group.

Other Ranked Lawyers

Matthew Dyson acts for prominent regional banks, investors and companies on a wide variety of financial restructurings. He recently joined DWF as a partner, having previously been a senior associate at Pinsent Masons.

Strengths:

“Matthew Dyson has immense experience and is able to provide clear and practical solutions.”

Shipping

Shipping: Dispute Resolution
Leading Firms
Band 1
HFW
Band 2
Al Tamimi & Company
Ince & Co Middle East
Stephenson Harwood Middle East LLP
Band 3
Clyde & Co LLP
Fichte & Co
Hadef & Partners
Eminent Practitioners
Eminent Practitioners
Briggs Richard <i>Hadef & Partners*</i>
Leading Individuals
Band 1
Al Hawamdeh Yaman <i>HFW*</i>
Omar Omar <i>Al Tamimi & Company</i>
Tadros Rania <i>Stephenson Harwood Middle East LLP</i>
Band 2
Chadwick Adrian <i>Hadef & Partners</i>
El Hawawy Mohamed <i>Ince & Co Middle East</i>
Lawrence Robert <i>HFW*</i>
Strub Richard <i>HFW</i>
Band 3
Attallah Abdelhak <i>Galadari Advocates & Legal (ORL) ◇</i>
Jawani Ravi <i>Fichte & Co</i>
Jensen Natalie <i>Ince & Co Middle East</i>
Wood Wesley <i>Al Tamimi & Company</i>
Up-and-coming individuals
Almobideen Saif <i>Stephenson Harwood Middle East LLP</i>
Soudagar Leonard <i>Clyde & Co LLP</i>
<i>* Indicates individual with profile.</i>
<i>◇ (ORL) = Other Ranked Lawyer.</i>
<i>Alphabetical order within each band. Band 1 is highest.</i>

Shipping: Finance & Non-Contentious
Leading Firms
Band 1
HFW
Watson Farley & Williams LLP
Band 2
Dentons
Stephenson Harwood Middle East LLP
Eminent Practitioners
Eminent Practitioners
Jarvis Paul <i>Dentons</i>
Leading Individuals
Band 1
Baird Andrew <i>Watson Farley & Williams LLP</i>
Chung Ian <i>HFW*</i>
Tai Tien <i>HFW*</i>
Band 2
Armstrong Nathaniel <i>Dentons</i>
Joseph Nijoe <i>Stephenson Harwood Middle East LLP</i>
Savva Michael <i>Watson Farley & Williams</i>
Tricoli Alessandro <i>Fichte & Co</i>
Associates to watch
Knight Charlotte <i>Watson Farley & Williams LLP</i>

The editorial is in alphabetical order by firm name.

Al Tamimi & Company

What the team is known for Al Tamimi has a highly regarded shipping practice primarily noted for its disputes expertise, handling ship arrests, cargo claims, collisions and casualty cases. Fielding a number of experienced lawyers in Dubai, the team is very active in local litigation and highly experienced regarding insurance claims and collisions. The firm also assists with vessel purchases.

Strengths

“The lawyers at Al Tamimi are highly professional experts in their field.”

“Al Tamimi provides excellent service and always keeps to the schedule.”

“Al Tamimi always has a professional approach to

the issues, and they offer alternative solutions.”

“They are able to advise on not just the legal aspects but also the intricacies of dealing with local authorities in the UAE.”

Notable practitioners

Omar Omar heads up Al Tamimi’s transport and insurance practice, focusing on disputes work occurring within these sectors. He is an acclaimed lawyer whose wide-ranging shipping practice touches on cases arising out of sale and purchase agreements, sanctions and damages claims. **Strengths:** *“Omar Omar is always very helpful and solution-oriented.”* *“Omar Omar has provided us with excellent support for many years.”*

Wesley Wood is noted for his considerable experience in contentious shipping work. He retains an impressive practice, advising on ship arrests, charter party and trade finance disputes. He has further experience with bunker claims and the enforcement of arbitral awards and foreign judgments. In early 2023 he joined Al Tamimi after leaving Hadef & Partners. **Strengths:** *“Wesley Wood is very professional in both his knowledge and approach. He managed our case efficiently.”* *“Wesley Wood is a very solid lawyer.”*

Clyde & Co LLP

What the team is known for Clyde & Co leverages the twin strengths of its top-tier insurance and commercial disputes teams with regard to a significant caseload of multimillion-dollar shipping cases. It frequently acts for ship owners and P&I clubs, and its team is well versed in handling litigation and arbitration proceedings relating to such issues as charter disputes and collisions as well as on-board injuries and fatalities.

Strengths

“Clyde & Co has a very strong disputes practice, especially in the marine and offshore energy sector.”

“The service provided by Clyde & Co is outstanding. They are prompt, with excellent follow-up.”

“The firm’s knack for handling complex matters is

commendable, as is the way they always provide prompt and appropriate action.”

Work highlights Clyde & Co represented Al Buhaira National Insurance in a coverage dispute in the DIFC Courts relating to a lost vessel which was subsequently located in Iran, but is unrecoverable.

Notable practitioners

Leonard Soudagar was made partner at Clyde & Co in May 2023. He represents insurers and shipping companies in a wide range of contentious matters including collisions, charter party disputes, ship arrests and other commercial and contractual matters. **Strengths:** “Leonard Soudagar is outstanding. He listens, asks the right questions and focuses on achieving results.” “Strategically, Leonard Soudagar is unparalleled and he is also really user-friendly, responsive and commercial in his approach.”

Dentons

What the team is known for Dentons is a key name for ship finance in the UAE, advising a number of major financiers on sophisticated transactions. With its shipping expertise primarily based in Abu Dhabi, the firm’s lawyers provide advice on both Islamic and conventional financing, and are well versed in a broad range of mandates, including lease financing and syndicated loans. Its clients include national and international financial institutions.

Strengths

“Dentons have a can-do attitude to get a deal completed. Although recognising and maintaining a high legal standard they are also able to bring a commercial perspective to a transaction to get the deal closed.”

“The team at Dentons has very good knowledge of the shipping sector and its related legal issues.”

“The team at Dentons are experienced and thorough in dealing with complex transactions on highly structured lending; they can deal with highly sophisticated matters.”

“The Dentons team is very reliable and thorough and provides very prudent guidance on legal and commercial issues.”

Notable practitioners

Paul Jarvis is a highly experienced lawyer who is Dentons’ CEO for the UK, Ireland and the Middle East. He advises an impressive client base including many noteworthy banks, and he is well recognised for his longstanding expertise in shipping and asset finance. **Nathaniel Armstrong** is an accomplished member of the banking and finance team who is best known for shipping finance. He is most notably experienced in representing both domestic and international banks in syndicated facility arrangements, many of which contain Shari’a-compliant elements. He is based in Abu Dhabi, where he is office managing partner.

Strengths: “Nathaniel Armstrong brings a knowledge base from both a legal and a commercial perspective and is always willing to go the extra mile to get a deal across the line.” “Dentons’ Nathaniel Armstrong is very diligent and gets straight to the point. He can summarise things in a way that is very useful to the client and a wide range of lenders.” “Nathaniel Armstrong is prompt, clear and quick to respond.”

Fichte & Co

What the team is known for Fichte & Co is a boutique law firm which handles both contentious and non-contentious shipping work. The firm’s lawyers represent ship operators, P&I clubs and insurers, with experience advising on charter party disputes and ship arrests. On the non-contentious side, the firm regularly assists with ship financing agreements and sale and purchase matters.

Strengths

“The Fichte team is approachable and provides practical, constructive advice with a quick response time.”

“Fichte is fully across the complexity of the matter and can demonstrate significant insight and sophisticated alternatives.”

“The lawyers are always prompt to respond and offer excellent insight.”

“The Fichte team is very knowledgeable, not just from a legal perspective but, equally importantly, from a practical perspective.”

Work highlights Fichte assisted a major UAE ship owner in the negotiation of memorandums of agreement for the purchase of two Aframax tankers and two VLCCs, with a combined value of approximately USD80 million.

Notable practitioners

Alessandro Tricoli is an adept shipping finance lawyer who has additional expertise assisting with sale and purchase agreements, as well as contentious matters. **Strengths:** “Alessandro Tricoli is a delight to work with, he has a passion for shipping law and provides clear advice. He has a wide range of contacts to whom he can speak to assist clients with matters on the ground.” “Alessandro Tricoli has a rare skill set and is able to propose novel ideas.”

Ravi Jawani is an experienced lawyer who is noted for advising ship owners and insurers in damage claims as well as charter party and commercial disputes. **Strengths:** “Ravi Jawani is incredibly astute at managing both the legal complexities as well as political and commercial considerations.” “Ravi Jawani provides an impressive level of service and commitment to finding the best solution.” “Ravi Jawani is good if you are in a jam: he knows all the players, is brilliant in negotiations, is extremely responsive, and he provides excellent, succinct and understandable advice.” “Ravi Jawani is super experienced in maritime law and has good knowledge of UAE, UK and Indian law.”

Hadef & Partners

What the team is known for Hadef & Partners has a long-established team advising on a variety of shipping-related issues, such as charter parties and bill of lading disputes. The firm is further noted for its work in arbitration and its expertise in vessel arrests. The team frequently advises banks and energy clients.

Work highlights Hadef & Partners continued to represent IDBI Bank in ongoing proceedings against an energy company relating to defaulted payments towards a more than USD37 million loan, for which a ship mortgage had been registered as security.

Notable practitioners

Richard Briggs (see p.2986) is commended for his longstanding dispute resolution practice,

which encompasses shipping disputes. He is currently executive partner at HadeF. **Strengths:** “Richard is the doyen of shipping lawyers in Dubai.”

Adrian Chadwick possesses deep experience in shipping litigation and arbitration. He regularly acts for ship owners and financial institutions on proceedings in the DIFC Courts, and is well versed in the full gamut of contentious shipping matters. **Strengths:** “Adrian Chadwick is smart, commercial and savvy.” “Adrian is nice to work with. He is sensible and provides easily understandable advice.”

HFW

What the team is known for HFW’s distinguished UAE shipping practice was recently bolstered by multiple lateral hires from Clyde & Co. The newly enhanced team represents an array of clients, including P&I clubs, shipping lines and financial institutions. It specialises in admiralty and casualty response work, as well as advising on shipping finance, sale and purchase arrangements, and mortgage registration. Its lawyers also have complementary strengths in insurance matters. Clients benefit from the firm’s significant regional footprint, as well as its substantial Arabic-speaking team.

Strengths

“The main strengths of HFW are that they are extremely fast, their advice is suited for the audience and that they always provide practical solutions to issues, which then makes it easy for stakeholders to make decisions.”

“HFW has a great team. They stand out because of their understanding of the client; they respond well, provide tailor-made solutions and they are commercial in their advice.”

“One of the key positives for us is the commercial understanding of the HFW team and their ability to look at the big picture.”

“HFW’s team is very commercially minded and their advice is always in the best interests of the client.”

Work highlights HFW advised the Stanford Marine Group on a variety of vessel contracting and acquisition matters, cabotage issues and the group’s Middle East financing requirements in the context of its financial restructuring.

Notable practitioners

Yaman Al Hawamdeh (see p.2984) focuses his practice on shipping disputes, often advising on casualty matters. He also advises on corporate transactions such as the sale of stakes in shipping companies. He heads HFW’s shipping team. **Strengths:** “Yaman Al Hawamdeh at HFW is a very good lawyer.” **Ian Chung** (see p.2986) is an accomplished lawyer who undertakes a wide variety of corporate and finance work in the shipping sector. His practice frequently sees him acting on asset and trade financings, as well as debt restructuring. **Strengths:** “Ian Chung has a strong understanding of political and commercial drivers. He can also navigate political, country and corporate risk considerations with ease.” “Ian Chung is very proactive, has excellent commercial acumen and consistently provides a very high level of service.” “Ian Chung knows the stakeholders and knows what is expected.” **Tien Tai** (see p.2990) has considerable experience as a finance lawyer. His practice encompasses advice on shipping and commodity financing arrangements, including

with regard to ship mortgages. **Strengths:** “*Tien Tai has been in the region for a very long time and has great local market and legal knowledge as well as being very user-friendly and responsive.*” **Rob Lawrence** (see p.2988) is an experienced shipping disputes lawyer whose broad client base includes a number of high-profile ship owners. He is also noted for his expertise in marine insurance claims. **Strengths:** “*Rob Lawrence is smart and astute in litigation and he knows how to win cases.*” **Richard Strub** is an adept lawyer who is well versed in handling contentious shipping matters, including disputes relating to collisions. His client list features shipping companies, in addition to charterers and financial institutions. He heads the Middle East commodities team within HFW. **Strengths:** “*Richard Strub has been simply remarkable in every respect during my association with him.*” “*Richard Strub is approachable, very fast in providing responses, very commercial and very customer-oriented.*” “*Richard Strub is head and shoulders above others because he can explain things well, even to non-lawyers, and he gets involved on the client’s behalf before matters go to arbitration or to court.*”

Ince & Co Middle East

What the team is known for Ince Middle East acts on a range of significant contentious shipping matters. Its lawyers have profound experience advising on collisions and casualties, as well as ship arrests, sanctions issues and charter party disputes. It is also well versed in contract reviews and drafting. The team represents a broad client base that includes P&I clubs, transportation companies, ship managers and ship owners.

Strengths

“*Ince understands contracts. Their maritime expertise and local presence is key; they have a good commercial edge.*”

“*Ince provides quick, helpful responses in plain English and the team is always contactable when needed.*”

Work highlights Ince represented a leading P&I insurer in a more than USD300 million claim for repair costs arising from a collision between two vessels.

Notable practitioners

Mohamed El Hawawy is joint managing partner of Ince’s Dubai office. He has a considerable contentious shipping practice which sees him handle a variety of disputes arising out of collisions as well as damages claims. **Natalie Jensen** has a growing reputation in the market and is increasingly to be seen leading much of the firm’s standout work. She is a well-regarded shipping disputes lawyer whose recent matters include advice relating to sanctions, damages, collisions and allisions. **Strengths:** “*Natalie Jensen is responsive, helpful and thorough in how she responds to requests, prompt in delivering feedback and gives high-level responses quickly.*” “*Natalie Jensen understands her clients’ needs exceptionally well and has a drive to bring matters forward in a very efficient manner.*” “*Natalie Jensen is a very good shipping lawyer.*”

Stephenson Harwood Middle East LLP

What the team is known for Stephenson Harwood advises on a variety of contentious and

non-contentious shipping matters from its Dubai office. On the non-contentious side it is well versed in ship finance arrangements as well as corporate matters within the shipping sector. The dispute resolution team’s expertise encompasses cases arising from vessel financing agreements to ship arrests and claims for damages. The firm’s lawyers represent a wide range of high-profile clients including P&I clubs, ship owners and banks.

Strengths

“*The Stephenson Harwood team looks at the details very closely and never misses anything.*”

“*The entire Stephenson Harwood team shows huge interest in understanding and finding out more about any case they are looking at, and they show confidence and assertiveness given the level of knowledge they have.*”

“*Stephenson Harwood is very prompt in providing advice on any concerns, contractual queries or explanations of the law.*”

“*The Stephenson Harwood team is very responsive, quickly picking up urgent matters, and it has a very hands-on approach.*”

Notable practitioners

Rania Tadros is a distinguished shipping lawyer who is Stephenson Harwood’s Dubai managing partner. She represents an array of energy clients, ship owners, P&I clubs and transportation companies in a multitude of shipping-related disputes. She has considerable expertise in both arbitration and litigation. **Strengths:** “*Rania Tadros is spectacular. She is a very well-educated, experienced, well-rounded, confident, assertive and determined lawyer.*” “*Rania Tadros knows her law and delivers knowledge in an easy and user-friendly way. She can be trusted with complex matters and is dedicated to pursuing the client’s best interests.*” “*Rania Tadros knows what the client needs and is always on the same wavelength.*” “*Rania Tadros is excellent and very well known; she is a great shipping lawyer.*”

Nijoe Joseph is a highly regarded shipping lawyer who advises on a range of non-contentious shipping work, including leveraged buyout transactions, ship sales, purchases and financings, as well as advising on regulatory issues. **Saif Almobideen** was promoted to partner at Stephenson Harwood in May 2023. He is building a strong reputation in dispute resolution, advising ship owners and P&I insurers in matters arising from damage to vessels, ship arrests, ownership disputes and on-board accidents. **Strengths:** “*Saif Almobideen is an outstanding and knowledgeable civil-qualified lawyer with expertise in the English legal system, shipping matters and UAE laws.*” “*Saif Almobideen’s expertise in complex cross-border litigation – particularly in the areas of shipping, insurance and crisis management – make him a valuable asset to the team.*” “*Saif Almobideen consistently provides valuable insights and recommendations. His level of commitment and dedication to our case is impressive, making it clear that our success is his top priority.*”

Watson Farley & Williams LLP

What the team is known for Watson Farley & Williams is especially noted for its work in the area of shipping finance, representing an international roster of banks, ship owners and charterers. The team regularly advises on major transactions in

this space, including vessel financing and purchases. The finance group is supported by an increasingly respected disputes team which has years of experience in maritime cases.

Strengths

“*Watson Farley & Williams knows what needs to be done and is on top of it every step of the way.*”

“*What I personally like about Watson Farley & Williams is that when I call for a brief update I am up to speed within a couple of minutes.*”

“*Watson Farley & Williams’ main strengths are its knowledgeable lawyers, reliability and cooperative spirit.*”

“*The attention to detail and meticulous approach of the Watson Farley & Williams team ensures that all aspects of a file are thoroughly analysed and effectively addressed.*”

“*Their proficiency in handling complex matters is commendable.*”

Work highlights Watson Farley & Williams assisted shipping start-up Neonautica with a wide range of corporate structuring, financing and commercial matters, including the potential acquisition of a French manufacturer of marine technology.

Notable practitioners

Interviewees consistently highlight **Andrew Baird** as one of the leading lawyers for non-contentious shipping in Dubai. He has expertise in ship finance and also frequently advises on vessel sales and acquisitions, leasing structures and corporate transactions. **Strengths:** “*Andrew Baird is excellent – he is very experienced and commercial.*” “*Andrew Baird is very knowledgeable and very practical. He knows the client’s business and the shipping industry very well, which gives him a commercial edge.*” **Michael Savva** is a well-known name who has a growing reputation in asset finance matters. He is a frequent adviser to lenders on shipping mandates and is also noted for his handling of aviation work. **Strengths:** “*Michael Savva is very approachable, cooperative and knowledgeable.*” “*Michael Savva is a safe pair of hands and a key name in finance and non-contentious matters.*”

Charlotte Knight is a senior associate who earns strong praise from the firm’s clients. She assists with a variety of M&A transactions in the shipping sector, as well as ship finance matters and the purchase or sale of vessels and other marine assets. **Strengths:** “*Charlotte Knight has been very helpful. She is very much in control of the process and is good at keeping track of anything that may jeopardise timelines.*” “*Charlotte Knight knows her clients and the shipping sector very well.*” “*Charlotte Knight is an outstanding senior associate; she is hard-working and clever.*”

Other Ranked Lawyers

Abdelhak Attallah of Galadari Advocates & Legal Consultants is a respected litigator with a prolific shipping practice. He is known for his handling of matters such as ship arrests, as well as disputes stemming from ship finance and mortgage arrangements.

Strengths:

“*Abdelhak Attallah is well organised and knowledgeable, and thinks strategically to find the best*

practical and legal solutions.”

“Abdelhak Attallah knows all the details, laws and rules in global shipping and transportation. He always gives us clear feedback and information about our status and is always available.”

“Abdelhak Attallah is good in anticipating the opposition's tactics and how they might think. He is also very good in dealing with the court system – he keeps things clear and succinct.”

Tax

Tax
United Arab Emirates
Leading Firms
Al Tamimi & Company
Baker McKenzie LLP
Leading Individuals
El Baghdady Mohamed <i>Habib Al Mulla (ORL) ◇</i>
Hsieh Tina <i>Baker McKenzie LLP</i>
Khan Shiraz <i>Al Tamimi & Company</i>
Mezu Reggie <i>Baker McKenzie LLP</i>
Satardien Zain <i>Hourani & Partners (ORL) ◇</i>
van Doremalen Ton <i>DLA Piper Middle East LLP (ORL) ◇ *</i>
<i>* Indicates individual with profile.</i>
<i>◇ (ORL) = Other Ranked Lawyer.</i>
<i>Alphabetical order within each band. Band 1 is highest.</i>

Band 1

Al Tamimi & Company

What the team is known for Al Tamimi is a full-service law firm with a distinguished reputation and strong knowledge of the market. The firm wins acclaim for its dedicated regional tax practice, which primarily operates out of Dubai. It maintains a large bench of experienced lawyers who advise clients on all areas of tax, including customs duties and M&A-related tax issues. The team also offers expert counsel on VAT compliance. Clients hail from a range of sectors, including construction, technology and energy.

Strengths

“The team's answers are very clear, straightforward, to the point and on time, and the lawyers are very supportive in how they deliver the information.”

“Al Tamimi are very knowledgeable about local tax laws and procedures.”

Work highlights Al Tamimi advised fashion footwear brand Steve Madden on various tax-related issues relating to its expansion across the GCC, including with regard to corporation tax, Zakat and VAT.

Notable practitioners

Shiraz Khan leads Al Tamimi's regional tax practice from Dubai. He is highly qualified to advise on international taxation matters and has deep experience in multi-jurisdictional affairs. He regularly advises on tax structuring, as well as the tax implications of cross-border finance and M&A transactions, with particular experience relating to Saudi Arabia. **Strengths:** “He is very approachable and responsive, and very helpful in giving unbiased guidance and feedback.”

Foreign Experts
Tax
Based in United Arab Emirates with expertise in countries listed below
Saudi Arabia Khan Shiraz <i>Al Tamimi & Company</i>

Baker McKenzie LLP

What the team is known for Baker McKenzie fields a well-established tax practice from its Dubai office, with a deep knowledge of the UAE market. The firm is well equipped to handle the full range of tax matters, including VAT and customs duties mandates. Its lawyers regularly act on tax issues stemming from M&A transactions, representing several clients from the energy, technology and financial services industries.

Strengths

“The team works very closely with our personnel, which ensures no page is unturned. The advice we receive, from the very beginning of a journey to the end of the process, produces an excellent outcome and ensures risks identified initially are closed with little to no impact.”

“The team supporting the tax partner are functional experts within their respective disciplines and I have found them to be very knowledgeable.”

“The team have a strong level of expertise and experience across multiple jurisdictions. They are well equipped to handle complex challenges and navigate diverse legal landscapes.”

“I appreciate their experience, knowledge, breadth of view of the market and the technical expertise they have.”

“They are very responsive to any query and understand the level of urgency. Even where full responses can't be provided immediately, they are always able to give a steer on an issue in the meantime.”

Work highlights Baker McKenzie provided tax advice to Air Carbon following Air Carbon's receipt of a significant investment by the UAE sovereign wealth fund and its redomiciliation from Singapore to the UAE.

Notable practitioners

Tina Hsieh joined Baker McKenzie in Dubai towards the end of 2022, having previously held positions at both EY and PwC. She earns a Spotlight ranking in this table in recognition of her work advising on various tax-related matters, ranging from the tax requirements for new financial services products to VAT and transfer pricing concerns. **Strengths:** “Tina Hsieh makes sure to understand the business first, then to provide relevant and to-the-point advice, along with leveraging

her local and international experience to build a robust case.” “Tina's extensive experience in tax implementation across multiple jurisdictions means she has a strong understanding of the complexities of tax laws and regulations in different countries.” “I appreciate her technical knowledge, the way she guides the work and how detail-oriented she is, which is extremely important in tax.” Special counsel **Reggie Mezu** is an experienced and respected tax lawyer who advises clients on the full range of matters in this field. He is well versed in handling cross-border work across the Middle East, with experience regarding VAT as well as the tax implications of various business structuring and restructuring arrangements. **Strengths:** “He exhibits depth of experience and responsiveness, in addition to having a well-balanced approach and providing practical advice.” “He is excellent in terms of tax advice and very responsive in terms of getting back to us in a very short timeline.” “He has a very in-depth knowledge of tax matters throughout the region.”

Other Ranked Lawyers

Mohamed El Baghdady of Habib Al Mulla & Partners is well versed in contentious tax work and has overseen cases at all levels of the UAE's court system. He has notable experience assisting clients with challenges against the imposition of fines by the Federal Tax Authority.

Strengths:

“Mohamed is an experienced tax litigator.”

Zain Satardien is a counsel at Hourani & Partners, where he heads the tax and trade law team. He joins this Spotlight table as a reflection of his noteworthy work in the field, both within the UAE and in relation to the wider GCC region. He advises on a range of matters such as tax litigation, customs valuation and transfer pricing, and the tax implications of M&A.

Strengths:

“Zain understands the business and is strong technically, being able to advise us accordingly.”

“He is very responsive and easy to work with. He knows what we can and can't do; his advice is clear and concise.”

“The ease of communication stands out. You can just pick up the phone and reach out, and he establishes a comfortable working environment.”

“He has insights into the law that allow us to deliver.”

Ton van Doremalen (see p.2990) is Middle East head of tax at DLA Piper. Based in Dubai, he has

considerable experience advising on tax structuring issues relating to numerous jurisdictions across Europe and the Middle East. He possesses additional expertise in economic substance and transfer pricing issues. His client list includes manufacturing, energy and technology companies.

Strengths:

*"His level of expertise is really high."
"He is a very professional lawyer. Once you put a topic in front of him, he can zero in on the heart of the matter."
"He is proactive and detail-oriented."*

TMT

TMT
Leading Firms
Band 1
Allen & Overy LLP
DLA Piper Middle East LLP
Latham & Watkins LLP
Band 2
Clyde & Co LLP
Simmons & Simmons
Band 3
Al Tamimi & Company
Charles Russell Speechlys
CMS (UAE) LLP
Eversheds Sutherland (International) LLP – Dubai
Band 4
Addleshaw Goddard LLP
Baker McKenzie LLP
Bird & Bird (MEA) LLP
Gowling WLG
Hadef & Partners
Band 5
The Bench FZE
BSA Ahmad Bin Hezeem & Associates LLC
Cedar White Bradley
Karm Legal Consultants
Trowers & Hamlins
<i>* Indicates individual with profile.</i>
<i>◇ (ORL) = Other Ranked Lawyer.</i>
<i>Alphabetical order within each band. Band 1 is highest.</i>

Band 1

Allen & Overy LLP

What the team is known for Allen & Overy is a global powerhouse with a strong TMT practice in the UAE. The firm serves an impressive list of technology and telecoms clients and is well versed in overseeing the drafting of commercial agreements, including outsourcing contracts. The team is very strong on transactional TMT work, assisting major clients with key strategic acquisitions and disposals. It also advises on e-commerce, data protection and telecoms regulatory matters. It is notably commended for its fintech practice and has advised on payment services regulations.

Strengths

*"They are a very strong team, especially on software development agreements, data privacy and regulatory matters. They are excellent: responsive, engaged, professional and well tuned into the market and its trends."
"They have strong attentiveness and a custom-*

TMT: Media, Entertainment & Sport
Leading Individuals
Bainbridge Steven <i>Greenberg Traurig Limited (ORL) ◇</i>
Beretta Joby <i>The Bench FZE</i>
Bintliff David <i>Greenberg Traurig Limited (ORL) ◇</i>
Calder Lewis <i>Greenberg Traurig Limited (ORL) ◇</i>
Crawford Cameron <i>Cedar White Bradley</i>
Haidar Lara <i>Charles Russell Speechlys</i>
Hill Mark <i>Charles Russell Speechlys</i>
Ryder Jamie <i>Reed Smith (ORL) ◇</i>

er-service focus."

The team is cohesive, integrated and collaborative; they're fantastic. I will be going back to them for additional work."

Work highlights Allen & Overy advised Injazat Data Systems on the implementation of a digital primary healthcare platform in Abu Dhabi.

Notable practitioners

Tom Butcher (see p.2986) is commended for his strength in handling transactions in the technology industry, with experience advising on a plethora of M&A and joint venture mandates. He possesses further experience in regulatory issues related to data privacy and cybersecurity. He is based in Abu Dhabi. **Strengths:** *"Tom is great to work with; he goes beyond pure matters of law and actively advises on strategy and business issues, which we value a lot as a team. He is very knowledgeable when it comes to technology and early-stage investments, and brings much-needed expertise."* *"I find Tom and his team very knowledgeable, very flexible and very approachable, but also highly pragmatic, and with a keen sense for the commercial interest of the client."*

DLA Piper Middle East LLP

What the team is known for DLA Piper brings substantial experience, handling both contentious and non-contentious issues across the TMT spectrum. The firm is often sought out for high-profile projects of national and international importance. IT remains a source of many of the team's most impressive clients, who range from management consultancies to airlines, and the team possesses significant experience assisting IT companies with contract drafting. The firm's telecoms clients include major names from the UAE and beyond. DLA Piper's work includes the structuring of acquisitions, outsourcing contracts and data protection advice, and the firm is increasingly active on digital transformation projects.

Strengths

TMT: IT, Telecoms & Data
Leading Individuals
Band 1
Allen Paul <i>DLA Piper Middle East LLP*</i>
Butcher Tom <i>Allen & Overy LLP*</i>
Rizvi Raza <i>Simmons & Simmons</i>
Wilkinson Dino <i>Clyde & Co LLP</i>
Band 2
Beretta Joby <i>The Bench FZE</i>
Hill Mark <i>Charles Russell Speechlys</i>
Khasawneh Nasser Ali <i>Eversheds Sutherland</i>
Band 3
Bintliff David <i>Greenberg Traurig Limited (ORL) ◇</i>
Blyth Kellie <i>Addleshaw Goddard LLP</i>
Band 4
Adam Saleem <i>Trowers & Hamlins</i>
Alagh Kokila <i>Karm Legal Consultants</i>
Brazeau Alexandre <i>Gowling WLG</i>
Fawcett Andrew <i>Al Tamimi & Company</i>
Gibson Ben <i>CMS (UAE) LLP</i>
Hayward Martin <i>Pinsent Masons LLP (ORL) ◇</i>
Mrozinski Stefan <i>White & Case LLP (ORL) ◇</i>
Tymburski Kelly <i>The Bench FZE</i>
Woods Victoria <i>Hadef & Partners*</i>
Up-and-coming individuals
Bardawil Nadim <i>BSA Ahmad Bin Hezeem & Associates</i>

Foreign Experts (Based Abroad)

TMT
United Arab Emirates expertise based in countries listed below
Australia Holley Eamon <i>DLA Piper Australia*</i>
Saudi Arabia Meenagh Brian A <i>Latham & Watkins LLC</i>
Saudi Arabia O'Connell Nick <i>Al Tamimi & Company</i>
<i>* Indicates individual with profile.</i>

"The DLA lawyers assigned to our matter are fully embedded, thinking beyond the scope of a law firm and asking what the client wants and how they can contribute to make it better."

Work highlights DLA served as exclusive legal adviser to VARA (the Dubai Virtual Assets Regulatory Authority) on the creation of the Emirate's regulatory framework for virtual assets, published in early 2023.

Notable practitioners

Paul Allen (see p.2985) is a prominent name in the market, both in Dubai and across the wider Middle East. His wide-ranging practice regularly sees him advise on significant technology-related outsourcing, procurement and licensing matters. He is also especially visible on digital transformation projects, acting for clients in the telecoms,

technology and financial services sectors. **Eamon Holley** (see p.2987) is widely recommended for his work in the telecoms sector, which covers advice on service rollouts and licensing issues, among other matters. He has also advised on a number of major digital transformation projects. In early 2023 he relocated to DLA's Brisbane office, in the position of consultant, having previously been a partner in Dubai.

Latham & Watkins LLP

What the team is known for Latham & Watkins has a widely acclaimed fintech practice in Dubai which acts for well-established financial institutions in addition to emergent e-commerce companies. The firm advises on a range of IT-related commercial contracts as well as high-value M&A transactions involving technology and telecoms companies. Its transactional work also includes matters in the venture capital space. Latham's lawyers are well versed in regulatory compliance programmes and digital transformation initiatives.

Strengths

"Latham & Watkins are brilliant and practical. They have good commercial awareness."

Work highlights Latham advised Convergint on its USD1 billion acquisition of the MVP Group, a UAE-based IT infrastructure, security and software engineering company.

Notable practitioners

Brian Meenagh is Latham's Middle East head of TMT. He is commended for his deep understanding of fintech matters, frequently representing significant financial institutions and tech startups. He also demonstrates notable experience in cybersecurity and data privacy compliance. He recently relocated to Riyadh having previously been based in Dubai.

Band 2

Clyde & Co LLP

What the team is known for From its offices in Dubai and Abu Dhabi, Clyde & Co's TMT group works with clients on a broad spread of commercial and regulatory matters, such as the development or expansion of e-commerce platforms. In addition, it regularly assists with digital transformation initiatives, as well as procurement agreements relating to business-critical software. Clyde & Co is perhaps best known for its strong presence in the data protection field, where it has considerable experience counselling clients which are victims of data breaches or ransomware attacks. The core TMT group is backed up by the firm's market-leading arbitration team, which is well versed in representing media clients.

Strengths

"Clyde & Co has a critical mass of knowledge and lawyers."

"The team helped us with deep industry and domain insights, and steering decisions in the right direction."

"Clyde's team is well resourced and has a wide range of capabilities."

"They're good at simplifying technical language for non-legal people. They're very good at being collaborative, available, pragmatic, and at digesting feed-

back and coming back with a solution."

Work highlights Clyde & Co represented the Dubai International Financial Centre Authority in its negotiation of a 'data bridge' agreement with the UK Government to permit personal data transfers compliant with UK GDPR.

Notable practitioners

Abu Dhabi-based **Dino Wilkinson** receives especially high praise for his handling of data protection and cybersecurity issues. In addition to this work, he is regularly engaged to advise businesses on digital transformation projects, and has further experience relating to sponsorship contracts and telecoms regulatory issues. **Strengths:** *"Dino is the go-to lawyer for anything related to data privacy and data protection in the UAE. He has built up a strong team, has a stellar track record and has been entrusted with some of the largest matters in the region."* *"Dino is a balanced personality and he has full knowledge of the legal system in GCC countries, in addition to being well informed. He advises with an awareness of all the details in the client's interest."* *"He has been very impressive with domain knowledge; all our queries are answered in detail and with the required back-up of the statements which are made, so it becomes easy to take that forward within the organisation."*

Simmons & Simmons

What the team is known for Simmons & Simmons' Dubai office has balanced strengths across TMT, advising telecoms providers and operators on all legal, regulatory and commercial matters as well as assisting with data protection. The firm also continues to build a strong reputation in fast-developing fintech matters. It has significant regional and global strengths, and beyond specific TMT clients serves major oil and gas companies and financial institutions. Media clients rely on the team's deep regulatory expertise, and the firm is often engaged to assist clients with digitalisation strategies and online service rollouts.

Strengths

"Deadlines and timelines are accurately respected."

"The team always brings an international 'best practice' mindset."

"The individuals in the team have specific areas of expertise and Raza coordinates the output in a way that results in great support for our business."

Notable practitioners

Raza Rizvi receives impressive commendations for both his regulatory and commercial advice. Sources speak highly of his expertise in fintech and emerging technology matters across a range of industries. His client roster comprises both regional and international telecoms operators, as well as financial institutions. **Strengths:** *"Raza is a guru when it comes to complex TMT and emerging technology laws and regulations. He's always well grounded, approachable, and brings a way of working that truly adds value to every instruction."* *"He has a commercial awareness which helps drive projects forward. He unlocks difficult stalemate situations through solution-oriented thinking and we always want him at the table on complex TMT projects."* *"He is people-friendly, liked by his peers, colleagues and subordinates. It's been a pleasure working with him over the years."* *"He's a man with a granular grasp of the nitty-gritty when it comes to*

drafting legal contracts, large or small."

Band 3

Al Tamimi & Company

What the team is known for Al Tamimi is a leading Middle Eastern law firm with a strong TMT team in the UAE. The group acts on a number of e-payment matters, with complementary expertise in privacy and data protection. The firm also offers significant telecoms regulatory know-how and has further experience in media, representing global streaming platforms.

Strengths

"The TMT team is exceptional and dynamic, and always presents us with practical advice, embodying a legal position, but also factoring in our commercial requirements."

"The team offers a combination of local and international expertise that helps in providing a holistic view of the matters they handle."

Work highlights Al Tamimi advised the newly founded Dubai Academic Health Corporation on its establishment as a new public health entity, as well as the transfer of all data and technology from its predecessor body, the Dubai Health Authority (DHA).

Notable practitioners

Abu Dhabi-based **Andrew Fawcett** advises on a wide range of telecoms regulatory issues, with further experience in data protection. His practice also often sees him advising on sector-specific regulatory issues arising from capital markets or M&A transactions. **Strengths:** *"Andrew is our favourite, go-to lawyer for all things TMT. His in-depth knowledge of data privacy is very impressive."* Riyadh-based **Nick O'Connell** continues to handle a broad range of matters for UAE clients, with the scope of his advice covering the procurement of ICT services, data protection issues and service rollouts across the region. **Strengths:** *"Nick is very adept at picking things up quickly and is customer-focused."* *"He's very good. He's been in the region a long time and it's clear he understands the subject matter."*

Charles Russell Speechlys

What the team is known for The team at Charles Russell Speechlys is best known for its work in sport, media and entertainment. It is notable for a diverse client list that includes production companies and sporting associations as well as individual athletes and artists. The firm additionally acts for a number of government bodies across the Middle East, providing regulatory guidance that will be key to the development of the region's burgeoning creative industries, as well as assisting with specific film finance mandates. Tech and telecoms instructions typically relate to data protection and IT procurement contracts.

Strengths

"Charles Russell Speechlys offers excellent client focus and turnaround times."

Work highlights Charles Russell Speechlys acted for Image Nation Abu Dhabi on various content and licensing issues, and on the drafting of its production contract templates to be used for upcoming film projects in the Middle East.

Notable practitioners

Lara Haidar is a legal director who is regularly active on sports, media and entertainment matters. Her work in these fields often has an IP dimension, with experience concerning the development of NFT platforms. **Mark Hill** is noted for his three decades of experience in the media, entertainment and technology spheres. He is frequently retained by clients in these sectors to advise on a broad range of commercial and regulatory issues. **Strengths:** *“Mark gives commercially minded advice, always with a focus on the practicalities.” “His depth of knowledge in art, TV, film, sport and entertainment is immense.”*

CMS (UAE) LLP

What the team is known for CMS has a compact TMT team in Dubai which is well regarded by its peers in the market. The department handles a variety of IT procurement, cloud computing and data privacy matters on behalf of numerous commercial clients, including real estate developers, financial institutions and e-commerce platforms. The firm also has experience counselling media and tech companies on high-profile product launches, as well as advising global brands on promotional initiatives in the UAE.

Strengths

“CMS goes above and beyond in understanding our business, and in the application of law to how we operate.”

“CMS is very knowledgeable and can handle a variety of complex matters. Each of their team members is an expert in their area. They are always diligent in responding and attentive to our requirements.”

“They bring the best knowledge about tech and how other companies handle similar transactions.”

Work highlights The CMS offices in Dubai and Johannesburg jointly advised TikTok on its agreement with ThinkWiFi for the provision of TikTok-branded public WiFi hotspots in South Africa.

Notable practitioners

Ben Gibson is a respected figure with experience advising a number of leading global and regional clients. From his base in Dubai, he heads the firm’s UAE TMT department and is regularly mandated on major outsourcing, licensing and procurement matters, with further expertise in data transfers and data protection. **Strengths:** *“He’s very good at suggesting approaches that get us to a conclusion quicker and more effectively. He’s very commercial at delivering advice and packaging it in a way that is relevant to us.” “Ben has been excellent in supporting our journey. He understands our business and provides technically sound and commercially aware advice.” “Ben is a very strong and dependable adviser.”*

Eversheds Sutherland (International) LLP – Dubai

What the team is known for The senior lawyers in Eversheds Sutherland’s Middle East TMT team have distinct in-house experience gained at high-profile tech companies, lending clients significant commercial insight. The firm acts for industry leaders across the spectrum of regulatory matters, including with regard to data protection and data privacy issues. It also provides

advice across the media and telecoms sectors and is notably active on mandates relating to cryptocurrency and blockchain regulations.

Strengths

“They are commercial in attitude and able to draft succinct and user-friendly documents.”

“They are able to consistently turn documents around very quickly and they make themselves available to attend calls even at the last minute. I have received a faultless service.”

“Eversheds provides useful advice in a timely matter.”

Work highlights Eversheds Sutherland advised Microsoft, in its capacity as a cloud service provider, on its outsourcing agreements with several financial institutions in the Middle East, with a particular focus on the UAE.

Notable practitioners

Nasser Ali Khasawneh is Middle East chair of Eversheds and heads the firm’s global TMT group. He counsels telecoms operators as well as tech and media companies, typically advising on data privacy and data protection issues. His wider practice encompasses guidance on digital assets and outsourcing agreements. **Strengths:** *“Nasser is a real expert in telecoms. He has a commercial mindset and understands exactly what we need or want.” “Nasser offers a wealth of experience in the region. I like the fact that he’s both a disputes lawyer and a commercial TMT lawyer and can look at things through two different lenses. He’s able to offer really good insight.” “He delivers advice in a clear and focused way.”*

Band 4

Addleshaw Goddard LLP

What the team is known for Addleshaw Goddard has invested significant resources in the TMT field of late, following recent lateral hires. The newly expanded team has experience in data protection, advising various notable businesses on their obligations in this regard. It is also well placed to assist clients who are victims of ransomware attacks. The firm’s corporate team is well versed in joint ventures, spin-offs and acquisitions occurring in the tech and telecoms sectors.

Strengths

“Addleshaw Goddard is extremely thorough, pragmatic and very quick to understand the nuances and commercial considerations of the transaction.”

“The advice is concise and practical. They’re incredibly responsive.”

Work highlights Addleshaw Goddard assisted ServiceSouk with the sale of its home services business to the Etisalat Group.

Notable practitioners

Kellie Blyth joined Addleshaw Goddard in April 2023 after leaving Baker McKenzie. She has a wealth of experience advising financial institutions and government entities on regulatory issues in the technology space. She is also noted for her e-payment expertise. **Strengths:** *“Kellie has excellent legal knowledge. She is commercially astute and practical.”*

Baker McKenzie LLP

What the team is known for Baker McKenzie is well versed in corporate and commercial matters arising within the technology sector. It regularly assists startups with venture capital investments, and is equally capable when it comes to advising on joint ventures. The firm advises numerous clients on compliance with data protection regulations, and has further experience concerning the establishment or sale of data centres. It regularly coordinates its work alongside Baker teams located in Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and Egypt.

Strengths

“Baker McKenzie is responsive and they spend the time necessary to understand the issues. They have good global expertise which means they are able to support on evolving areas and anticipate regulations.”

Work highlights Baker McKenzie advised ADNOC Distribution on a strategic joint venture with Abu Dhabi National Energy Company to facilitate the rollout of an electric vehicle charging network in the UAE.

Notable practitioners

Key contacts include Lucrezia Lorenzini.

Bird & Bird (MEA) LLP

What the team is known for Bird & Bird’s UAE offices are well positioned to leverage the firm’s global strengths in IP and TMT. The firm has experience acting for several major tech and fintech names on issues relating to data privacy, cloud computing and AI. The firm’s regional dispute resolution group is also well positioned to assist clients with disputes arising in the technology and media sectors.

Strengths

“They are quick, thorough and effective. They’re always available, at all hours of the day, and they understand the practicalities of our market.”

“The team members are knowledgeable, responsive and organised.”

Notable practitioners

Nona Keyhani is a key contact.

Gowling WLG

What the team is known for Gowling has built a dynamic team with significant experience in the technology sector. In this arena, the firm advises clients on digital transformation projects, tech procurement agreements and the operation of e-commerce platforms, among other matters. It acts for financial institutions, retailers and e-payments companies on digital product rollouts, licensing and data protection issues. The team has further expertise in telecoms regulatory work.

Strengths

“Gowling demonstrates a clear understanding of the industry. They pay a lot of attention and ask relevant questions.”

“The firm has a great set-up and well-structured teams to work on different matters.”

“Gowling gives good, clear advice and helps sift the important points from the detail. They respond well and work to very tight timeframes.”

“Their team of experienced lawyers has a deep understanding of the legal and regulatory landscape in the technology industry and is dedicated to helping clients navigate complex agreements

with confidence.”

Work highlights Gowling advised Dubai’s Museum of the Future on IT outsourcing and technology supplier agreements, as well as the legal issues underpinning development of software for the museum’s website and mobile applications.

Notable practitioners

Alexandre Brazeau is increasingly recognised for his experience advising on digital payments and e-commerce matters, acting for a roster of market-leading clients across the Middle East. His expertise also extends to digital assets and blockchain, as well as data protection. **Strengths:** “It’s an absolute pleasure working with Alex and his team. They provide prompt turnaround, strong knowledge, adaptiveness and the willingness to deliver a superior outcome.” “Alex is a star. His focus on the client’s needs is unmatched. Alex’s expertise, knowledge and business acumen make him the perfect partner for any tech project.” “He has a deep understanding of the commercial drivers behind instructions, and has the ability to apply common sense to deliverables – protecting the interests of the business, while delivering clear, concise and straightforward documents.” “Alex is instrumental in guiding us through the legal process, providing thoughtful and strategic advice at every turn.”

Hadeef & Partners

What the team is known for Hadeef & Partners is an independent Emirati law firm with offices in both Dubai and Abu Dhabi. Its international team of lawyers serves a number of notable regional and global companies in the tech space, providing frequent guidance on licensing, the establishment of joint ventures and other commercial matters, as well as their data protection implications. The firm’s transactional work is complemented by strengths in regulatory matters.

Notable practitioners

Victoria Woods (see p.2991) is a respected lawyer with deep experience in commercial contracts such as technology outsourcing and licensing agreements. She also offers guidance on data protection issues. **Strengths:** “Victoria is very experienced, commercial and really knows her stuff. She’s a personable, incredibly hard-working and diligent all-rounder.”

Band 5

The Bench FZE

What the team is known for The Bench is a uniquely structured virtual law firm with a physical presence in Fujairah, and which offers expert advice on a broad range of matters within the TMT space. It is especially well regarded for assisting startups and smaller enterprises with market entry to the Middle East, and related company setups. The firm is also known for its advice on technology licensing and commercial agreements. Significant international clients include telecoms providers, e-commerce specialists and media companies.

Strengths

“They’re very clear around fees and really good at responsiveness. They take the time to think through issues and their questions help me think in more

detail.”

“The Bench is direct and straightforward. They give pragmatic opinions based upon experience, with an eye to business results.”

Work highlights The Bench advised UAE podcast company Fynal regarding its acquisition by Jordan-based Sowt Media.

Notable practitioners

Senior consultant **Kelly Tymburski** is well known for her work in TMT, which has a particular emphasis on issues of regulatory reform. She also advises on the broader commercial aspects of TMT deals. Firm founder **Joby Beretta** has a wealth of experience spanning tech and telecoms in addition to sport and entertainment work. He is well versed in commercial and regulatory issues and is held in high regard for his frequent assistance to startups and smaller companies concerning market entry issues in the region. **Strengths:** “He has a huge network of contacts, which I find incredibly useful. He is incredibly approachable.” “He understands the business side of things well and is so easy to work with.”

BSA Ahmad Bin Hezeem & Associates LLC

What the team is known for BSA Ahmad Bin Hezeem is a Dubai-headquartered law firm with offices across the Middle East. Its compact TMT group advises local and international clients on a broad range of issues including data protection and data privacy matters. The team has experience concerning the launch of new fintech products and e-commerce platforms, and has a depth of knowledge in the region’s regulatory landscape.

Strengths

“The team is extremely knowledgeable and they execute tasks within the required timeframe. There is always someone within their team that has an answer or can find an answer.”

“Commercial issues remain at the heart of our discussions; conversations are very much geared towards ensuring our ability to execute our commercial strategy effectively under a construct that mitigates risk.”

“They can propose cost-efficient solutions to deal with legal issues from a business-oriented perspective. They are also good at coordinating and connecting legal practitioners in different jurisdictions.”

Notable practitioners

Nadim Bardawil leads BSA Ahmad Bin Hezeem’s TMT practice across the region from his base in Dubai. He is trusted by a range of regional clients for advice on fintech and emerging technology issues, with experience relating to both regulatory and transactional issues. **Strengths:** “Nadim is a great lawyer and partner to our business. He has helped us significantly accelerate a transaction with his focus and commitment.” “Nadim has excellent commercial awareness coupled with an in-depth understanding of technology laws in the region. Nadim remains our trusted adviser on all technology-related deals and delivers, in my opinion, unparalleled service.” “Nadim shows an understanding of the commercial relevance and time pressure of the project.” “Nadim is extremely professional and knowledgeable. He handles

complex situations with ease and goes above and beyond what we request. He is commercially astute, hands-on and keeps us up to date.”

Cedar White Bradley

What the team is known for Cedar White Bradley (CWB) is a specialist, Dubai-headquartered law firm which is increasingly noteworthy in the fields of IP and TMT. On the TMT side, it is especially strong on media and entertainment work. CWB advises an impressive roster of content platforms, producers and distributors on licensing and production agreements, in addition to counselling on data protection and various related regulatory concerns.

Strengths

“The Cedar White Bradley team is excellent and diligent. They are always on time and the advice is accurate.”

Notable practitioners

Cameron Crawford heads the firm’s technology, media and entertainment department. He offers two decades of experience in this arena, and his clients include production companies, in addition to startups in the cryptocurrency and fintech spaces.

Karm Legal Consultants

What the team is known for Karm Legal Consultants is a boutique law firm noted for its core expertise in fintech, blockchain and virtual assets. In this regard, it is well versed in matters relating to licensing, tokenisation and the launch of new products. The firm has additional strengths in data protection.

Strengths

“They get licences done quickly and are respected by the regulators.”

“They put options on the table and find ways to extra-protect the company.”

Work highlights Karm Legal Consultants advised cloud-based payments platform PayMate on a variety of licensing, regulatory and data protection issues across the Middle East.

Notable practitioners

Founding partner **Kokila Alagh** is well recognised for her expertise as a technology lawyer in the UAE. Her work has a particular emphasis on fintech, taking on instructions that frequently relate to NFTs, cryptocurrency and virtual assets.

Trowers & Hamlins

What the team is known for Trowers & Hamlins is noted for its longstanding experience in the Middle East. It maintains a strong TMT group based in Abu Dhabi which is frequently engaged to advise on IT procurement and outsourcing arrangements. The team has further experience advising on joint ventures and other commercial agreements, as well as providing counsel on data regulatory matters.

Work highlights Trowers & Hamlins assisted Al Waha Capital with several software maintenance contracts and other commercial agreements with IT contractors.

Notable practitioners

Saleem Adam is based in Abu Dhabi and advises on a wide spectrum of matters within the technology sector, including data protection issues

and IT procurement contracts. He is also well versed in handling M&A deals on behalf of technology clients.

Other Ranked Lawyers

Steve Bainbridge joined Greenberg Traurig in March 2023, as one of the lawyers to launch the firm's Middle East practice, following his departure from Squire Patton Boggs. He is a specialist in sports and entertainment, with experience acting on numerous commercial matters such as licensing and management agreements.

Strengths:

"He's a great sports lawyer – one of the best in the region."

David Bintliff has a strong track record in data protection and privacy, with further experience relating to digitalisation projects. He is active on various commercial contracts matters within the TMT field, including joint venture and procurement agreements. He is further notable for his media and entertainment work, which includes advising well-known brands on advertising and

promotional campaigns in the UAE. He recently joined Greenberg Traurig after leaving Bird & Bird.

Strengths:

"When I need specialised data protection input, he is – hands down – my go-to lawyer."

"David brings pragmatic and commercial thinking to knotty issues."

Lewis Calder is a former professional rugby player whose legal practice has a notable specialism in sports issues, including sponsorship agreements and other commercial contracts. He is also regularly active on media and entertainment matters. He joined Greenberg Traurig in December 2023 after leaving Bird & Bird.

Strengths:

"Lewis is very thorough, understanding, patient and communicative. He's diligent, practical, and with his sports background he 'gets it!'"

Martin Hayward is a seasoned legal counsel with many years of experience advising on issues in the tech sector, including data protection and digital transformation mandates. He joined Pinsent Masons in 2022 as its head of Middle East TMT after leaving Al Tamimi, and is also notable for having several years of experience as an in-house

lawyer.

Stefan Mrozinski leads the Middle East tech and data practice at White & Case and was promoted to partner in January 2023. He acts for a list of clients that includes big-name US tech companies as well as governments and government-owned entities. In addition to advising on M&A within the sector he also provides guidance on various data regulatory matters.

Strengths:

"Stefan is an exceptional lawyer with outstanding capabilities and his approachability and relatability are noteworthy. Stefan's exceptional commercial acumen makes him highly regarded among the legal community in Dubai."

"Stefan is super-responsive and has a great attitude. He's clearly good at what he does."

"Stefan is efficient and knowledgeable. He can meet the expectations of very demanding clients."

Jamie Ryder is commended for the depth of his knowledge in the media, sports and entertainment spheres. His clients include broadcasters, film studios and events organisers. He recently joined Reed Smith in Dubai after leaving DLA Piper.

Venture Capital & Emerging Companies

Venture Capital & Emerging Companies	
Leading Firms	
Band 1	
Baker McKenzie LLP	
King & Spalding LLP	
Latham & Watkins LLP	
Band 2	
Gowling WLG	
Hourani & Partners	
Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP	
Taylor Wessing (Middle East) LLP	
Trowers & Hamlines	
Leading Individuals	
Audi Osama	Baker McKenzie LLP
Casben Tim	Gowling WLG
Doha Adnan	Baker McKenzie LLP
Goldschmidt Rudolf	Hourani & Partners
Green Nick	Trowers & Hamlines
Knott Richard	Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP
Latif Eyad	Latham & Watkins LLP
Mutawi Abdullah	Taylor Wessing (Middle East) LLP
O'Sullivan Macky	King & Spalding LLP*
Sader Salim	Hourani & Partners
Stull James	King & Spalding LLP*
* Indicates individual with profile.	
Alphabetical order within each band. Band 1 is highest.	

Band 1

Baker McKenzie LLP

What the team is known for Baker McKenzie has a substantial UAE corporate department comprising lawyers located in both Dubai and Abu

Dhabi. In the venture capital realm, the team offers particularly significant experience concerning transactions in the technology sector. It has notable capabilities in acting for emerging companies and has acted on several very high-value acquisitions and financing rounds.

Strengths

"We are pleased with the support we get from them."

Work highlights Baker McKenzie acted for Dubai-headquartered cloud-kitchen unicorn Kitopi on its acquisition of AWJ Investments, the operator of food brands such as Awani and SushiDo.

Notable practitioners

Osama Audi leads the UAE corporate team at Baker McKenzie. As part of a broad transactional practice he is regularly mandated on venture capital matters, with a notable focus on technology deals. **Adnan Doha** is a capable M&A lawyer who handles a wide array of private equity and venture capital transactions, including a number of matters in the technology and e-commerce sectors. **Strengths:** *"Technically excellent, he is all over the commercial and legal issues and able to provide constructive, practical advice to break through challenges."*

King & Spalding LLP

What the team is known for King & Spalding's team in the UAE is well known for its focus on cross-border work relating to Saudi Arabia. Alongside fund formation and M&A, the firm regularly counsels clients on venture capital invest-

ments, exits and fund-raising rounds, as well as the related corporate structuring requirements. The team also has proven expertise assisting clients which are acting in the capacity of limited partner investor. Lawyers within the firm offer extensive experience advising on transactions relating to start-up companies in the tech and retail spaces.

Strengths

"They are very knowledgeable about the subject matter and are able to provide market insights."

Work highlights King & Spalding acted for the Saudi Arabia-based, technology-focused venture capital fund STV on its joint lead (alongside Sequoia Capital India) of the series C investment round for regional fintech platform Tabby, which raised USD58 million.

Notable practitioners

Macky O'Sullivan (see p.2989) is well versed in the representation of emerging companies and entrepreneurs, in addition to his work acting for VC funds and strategic investors. He handles an increasing amount of King & Spalding's most notable mandates in this area. **Strengths:** *"Macky O'Sullivan is always super-responsive."* **James Stull** is a go-to adviser for venture capital investments and fund-raising rounds occurring in the Saudi market. He acts for an impressive client base which includes a number of venture capital firms, funds and institutional investors. **Strengths:** *"He is one of the best lawyers I have worked with in the venture capital space."*

Latham & Watkins LLP

What the team is known for Latham & Watkins is widely agreed to have one of the leading practices for Middle East venture capital work. Its respected group of lawyers is active on the full gamut of acquisitions, financings and investments, and the team has an impressive track record when it comes to handling deals in key sectors such as technology and telecoms. The formation and structuring of venture capital funds is another area of strength.

Strengths

"We get fantastic support from a great and very responsive team."

"They understand time pressure and provide pragmatic advice."

Notable practitioners

Eyad Latif maintains a very strong reputation in the market, being consistently cited as one of the leading lawyers for venture capital transactions in the Middle East. **Strengths:** *"Eyad is probably the single best-known lawyer for venture capital in the region."* *"He's an excellent lawyer who is incredibly responsive and always delivers in a reliable manner."*

Band 2

Gowling WLG

What the team is known for Gowling WLG is a well-established presence in the UAE, with offices located in both Dubai and Abu Dhabi. Its Middle East corporate group frequently advises on venture capital mandates, demonstrating the versatility to act for start-up companies and their founders, as well as venture capital firms and investors. The UAE corporate team is also well placed to leverage the strengths of the firm's Middle East TMT and IP groups, advising on a number of matters in areas such as tech and healthcare.

Notable practitioners

Tim Casben is the UAE managing partner of Gowling. He has broad-ranging transactional experience, covering M&A and joint venture work in addition to IPOs. He is regularly called upon to assist clients with investments and funding rounds in the venture capital space. **Strengths:** *"Tim is technically brilliant and commercially aware."*

Hourani & Partners

What the team is known for Hourani & Partners is a respected law firm with deep roots in the Middle East. Its Dubai office fields a team with a wealth of experience in the venture capital space. It acts for a number of well-known venture capital firms on investments and acquisitions, with further proven capabilities assisting venture-backed companies. The team's work spans a variety of sectors, including retail and technology.

Strengths

"It is a deeply experienced team, with diverse back-

grounds and strong relationships in the Gulf markets."

"They offer a very high drafting quality and a strong ability to distil and resolve complex issues through commercial and practical solutions."

Work highlights Hourani & Partners acted for Rani Hassan, the founder of Tarboosh Games, regarding the sale of a controlling stake in the company to French video game developer Voodoo.

Notable practitioners

Rudolf Goldschmidt counsels clients on the full gamut of acquisitions, sales and investments. Admitted to the Paris Bar, he is capable of advising clients in English, French and German. **Strengths:**

"Rudolf is experienced, hands-on and he knows the way we work, the internal mechanisms of us as a client." *"He has a very broad understanding of both the Middle East and Europe."*

Salim Sader is a capable lawyer with a wide-ranging practice. He offers considerable experience advising on capital raises and strategic acquisitions, and his venture capital practice is complemented by further activity in the broader private equity space.

Strengths: *"He's a very solid attorney, with strong commercial acumen and top-tier drafting skills. He has a keen ability to identify key issues and propose actionable, commercial solutions to resolve them."* *"Salim is extremely responsive, diligent and helpful."*

Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP

What the team is known for The Morgan Lewis team in the UAE has significant experience acting for sovereign wealth funds on venture capital investments within sectors such as healthcare and fintech. The group has additional capabilities acting for venture capital firms on a wide range of matters. The firm also offers complementary strengths in investment fund formation, and is further well versed in advising on mergers and strategic alliances between asset managers.

Strengths

"They are highly rated, and excellent at boiling down complicated issues."

"They are outstanding in terms of knowledge and commercial awareness."

Notable practitioners

Abu Dhabi-based **Richard Knott** represents an impressive list of sovereign wealth funds and venture capital firms on matters such as investments and strategic partnerships. He has further experience acting on the company side in connection with growth capital raises. **Strengths:** *"He is responsive, unbelievably calm under pressure, and drives the process forward. He's a great guy to work with."* *"Richard's in-house experience with a sovereign wealth fund makes him a valuable asset to have on transactions."*

Taylor Wessing (Middle East) LLP

What the team is known for Taylor Wessing has a compact corporate practice in Dubai which is especially noteworthy for its in-depth experience assisting with venture capital matters. The team handles a wide range of acquisitions, investments and divestments, in addition to providing guidance on capitalisation and governance structures. With experience representing target companies as well as funds and investors, its recent deal list features transactions in the fintech and logistics sectors.

Strengths

"They're really good, very high quality. The biggest thing that strikes me is the response time, which is fantastic. They follow up and don't let pending items drop."

"They are one of the most knowledgeable law firms in terms of VC transactions in tech."

Work highlights Taylor Wessing assisted Arabic-language video learning platform Almentor with obtaining a USD10 million investment intended to support the company's immediate growth plans.

Notable practitioners

Abdullah Mutawi leads the UAE corporate team at Taylor Wessing, where his practice has a strong emphasis on venture capital. He offers comprehensive expertise in this arena, acting for a mix of funds, investors and venture-backed companies.

Strengths: *"He understands the balance between legal and commercial considerations, and how to structure a deal to keep both in mind."* *"He has a very good understanding of the market. He always knows what's happening, what makes sense and what doesn't. He's a busy man, but he responds and makes the time when needed."*

Trowers & Hamblins

What the team is known for Trowers & Hamblins is a well-established presence in the Middle East. It is well noted for its venture capital practice, with lawyers based in its Abu Dhabi and Dubai offices representing a pan-regional client base in respect of such work. The team advises on the structuring of VC funds in addition to transactional matters. Its lawyers in the UAE are also able to leverage additional expertise located in the firm's Oman and Bahrain offices as required.

Work highlights Trowers & Hamblins acted for the Bahraini Al Waha Venture Capital Fund of Funds I on numerous investments into start-up funds, as well as its negotiation of various commercial contracts in areas such as insurance and marketing.

Notable practitioners

Nick Green has broad-ranging venture capital expertise, assisting with the formation and structuring of VC funds as well as contractual and transactional mandates. **Strengths:** *"He is a great lawyer who is knowledgeable and always keen to help."* *"For him it's not just about the transaction but also about the relationship. He's as invested in what we do as are members of my team."*

Leaders' Profiles in United Arab Emirates

ABOU-ZEID, Thérèse

DLA Piper Middle East LLP, Dubai
Featured in Corporate/M&A (United Arab Emirates)

Career: Please see <https://www.dlapiper.com/en-gb/people/a/abou-zeid-therese> for further information.

AHMAD, Bilal

Allen & Overy LLP, Dubai
 971 4 426 7126
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Featured in Islamic Finance (Middle East-wide), Capital Markets (Middle East-wide), Capital Markets (Saudi Arabia), Banking & Finance (United Arab Emirates), Capital Markets (United Arab Emirates)

See under Capital Markets for profile.

AHNISH, Faraj A

Hadef & Partners, Abu Dhabi
 +971 2 627 6622
 f.ahnish@hadefpartners.com

Featured in Commercial Contracts (United Arab Emirates), Regulatory & Public Affairs (United Arab Emirates)

Practice Areas: Commercial Contracts (United Arab Emirates), Regulatory: Government & Public Affairs (United Arab Emirates)

Career: Dr Faraj Ahnish was recognised in 2023 with a Lifetime Achievement Award by Chambers and Partners. Dr. Faraj Ahnish has practiced for over 40 years and his experience in drafting and advising on UAE Government regulation is second to none. He is recognised in the business and legal community as a trusted and experienced adviser to governmental institutions and the private sector alike and his integrity and ethical approach to business is hugely admired. Dr. Faraj has unmatched relationships throughout the Abu Dhabi and Federal governments. He is responsible for drafting a significant amount of the current legislation and has advised on a wide range of governmental initiatives. As a result, he has advised on the preparation of various Abu Dhabi laws and Emiri Decrees concerning the establishment and incorporation of major governmental and semi-governmental institutions including leading entities such as Mubadala Development Company and Aldar Properties He graduated in law from the University of Benghazi and completed his LL.M, in International Law at Hull University. He completed a PhD in International Law at the University of Cambridge. Dr. Faraj is licensed to appear before all Federal Courts of Appeal and Cassation of the UAE. He has extensive experience in various company and commercial affairs including having assisted the founders in incorporating many of the premier governmental and public listed companies in the UAE. Dr. Faraj, one of two Founding Partners of our firm has been at the helm of our practice for four decades and during this time has become one of the most trusted and respected advisors to Federal and local Government and heads our Government Regulation practice. Hadef & Partners

has been involved in the highest profile matters in the UAE and remains the law firm of choice for the Federal Government as well as many major corporates operating in the region. Unlike many of our peers, we have been appointed by the Federal Government to advise on significant legislative drafting which have had and continue to have substantial impact upon the business landscape of the UAE.

AKHTAR, Pervez

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 pervez.akhtar@freshfields.com

Featured in Corporate/M&A (Middle East-wide), Corporate/M&A (Egypt), Corporate/M&A (United Arab Emirates)

See under Corporate/M&A for profile.

AL HAWAMDEH, Yaman

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 yaman.alhawamdeh@hfw.com

Featured in Shipping (United Arab Emirates)

Practice Areas: Yaman is the UAE Managing Partner and heads HFW's shipping and logistics team in the Middle East. He has more than 20 years of experience and has built a strong regional practice across the GCC and Middle East. Yaman is highly regarded for both his shipping and logistics experience. His practice focuses on regional marine and transport disputes across the region. This includes collisions and other types of marine casualties including salvage and pollution. He represents a number of International Group P&I Clubs, local banks, shipowners and Port & Terminal's operators in the Middle East region. He has successfully litigated a substantial number of disputes and acted in high profile marine casualties within the Middle East throughout the last 20 years. Yaman also regularly advises on non-disputes shipping and logistics' regulatory and contracts issues within the transport sector. In addition, Yaman has extensive experience of handling proceedings involving corporate fraud and various finance disputes related to commodities and trade. Yaman is a regular conference speaker, presenting papers locally and internationally on laws and regulations of the UAE and other civil law states within the Middle East. Publications include The Law Reviews, the Shipping Law Review United Arab Emirates.

AL RIFAI, Malek

King & Spalding LLP, Dubai
Featured in Real Estate (United Arab Emirates)

Practice Areas: Malek Al Rifai is a real estate partner in the Corporate, Finance and Investments Group based in Dubai. Malek has a diverse multidisciplinary practice focused on owners and operators in the real estate industry. He has represented developers, REITs, commercial and investment banks, private equity fund sponsors, family offices and institutional investors in

a variety of real estate and corporate transactions and regulatory matters across the GCC. Mr. Al Rifai's transactional experience includes direct and indirect real estate acquisitions across all types of property (including hospitality, industrial, educational and health-care assets), development transactions, hotel acquisition and management transactions, capital market and financing transactions involving real estate, representation of institutional investors and real estate funds in connection with the formation of real estate joint ventures, and turnaround of distressed off-plan projects.

AL SULTANI, Saba

DLA Piper Middle East LLP, Dubai
Featured in Intellectual Property (United Arab Emirates)

Career: Please see <https://www.dlapiper.com/en/people/a/al-sultani-saba> for further information.

AL ZAROONI, Ali

Horizons & Co Law Firm, Dubai
 00971 50 631 4431
 alisaeedi@horizlaw.ae
Featured in Construction (United Arab Emirates), Dispute Resolution (United Arab Emirates)

Practice Areas: Ali is the founder and managing partner of Horizons & Co., and a practicing Emirati lawyer. With almost 30 years of experience, Ali specialises in disputes resolution, notably litigation and arbitration, as well as providing sophisticated UAE local corporate and commercial legal advice. He has deep sector expertise especially in the areas of real estate and construction, financial institutions, and private clients. He has represented some of the most prominent companies, establishments and individuals before all levels of courts and various arbitration tribunals in the UAE, GCC region and around the world. Ali is also regularly appointed as both an Independent Expert and as an advocate on matters of UAE law and its applicability to disputes. Ali also leads the litigation team, supporting many prominent companies and individuals before all levels of the UAE courts. He is especially renowned for his real estate and construction sector expertise, where he advises on often very technical, complex and high-value cases for clients including government departments, developers, occupiers, lenders, contractors and consultants. A registered arbitrator with DIAC and a registered member of the Islamic Centre for Reconciliation and Arbitration (IICRA), Ali is also regularly appointed as an arbitrator or legal expert by both institutions along with the ICC, ADCCAC and the local UAE courts.

Career: Founder and Managing Partner of Horizons & Co. Law Firm, 1999 – Present

Professional Memberships:

- Arbitrator registered with Dubai International Arbitration Centre (DIAC)
- Arbitrator registered with Abu Dhabi

Global Markets (ADGM) •Chartered Arbitrator Fellow with the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (CIARB) •Registered with ADGMAC Panel of Mediators •Registered with ADGMAC Panel of Arbitrators •Arbitrator registered for the Saudi Centre for Commercial Arbitration (SCCA) •Arbitrator registered with Hong Kong International Arbitration Centre (HKIAC) •Registered Legal Practitioner with the DIFC Courts •Member of the International Bar Association, London •Member of the UAE National Committee for International Chamber of Commerce (ICC UAE) •Member of the International Committee of the Indian Council of Arbitration (ICA)

Publications: Highlights of recent speaking engagements:- Speaking at the ICC-YAAF Dubai Arbitration Week event on "Middle Eastern perspectives on cross-border disputes", November 2023. -Panelist at GAR Live during Dubai Arbitration Week, discussing a roundup of key court decisions in the region, November 2023. -Panelist at The Legal 500 (Legalease)'s Middle East Disputes Summit, discussing the new era of commercial agency disputes, September 2023. -Speaking at the Russian Arbitration Center seminar at Russian Institute of Modern Arbitration on "Arbitrating through the thorns: how to conduct international arbitration proceedings nowadays", July 2023. -Speaking at The Wealth Today's FoRe Summit, hosted by Forensic Risk Alliance, on the "Global and Regional Trends in the Legal and Regulatory Framework for Restructuring and Insolvencies", June 2023. -Providing training as part of the Dubai International Arbitration Centre (DIAC)'s comprehensive training program on how to handle arbitration cases under the DIAC rules, whether as counsel or arbitrators, June 2023. -Panelist at the Dubai International Arbitration Centre (DIAC) webinar on "The Challenges of Delivering Major Projects in the Middle East and their Impact on Disputes", May 2023 -Speaking to students at Al Ain University on the topic of "Careers in arbitration and ADR" with ICC YAAF in November 2022. -Speaker at the ICA-FICCI conference providing a meaningful overview of current developments in the field of domestic & international arbitration and its interplay between civil and common law, March 2022. -Speaker at the ICC and SCL Egypt Conference on 'Claims and Dispute Resolution Mechanisms: what's new in FIDIC 2017 compared to FIDIC 1999?' in Cairo, Egypt, November 2019 -Panelist at the ThoughtLeaders4: FIRE Middle East 2022 on the topic of "Enforcing Judgments in the UAE and the Middle East" in Dubai, November 2022. -Panelist at the L2 i-CON International Construction Claims and ADR Conference on "Expert Evidence in Construction Disputes: Problems and Safeguards" in Dubai, November 2022. -Panelist on the The GAR Live – UAE Federal Arbitration Act – Three years

into the UAE Federal Arbitration Act, discussed developments since the implementation of the law, February 2022 Speaker at the ICA International Conference on Arbitration in the era of globalization – The Fourth Edition, January 2022

ALLEN, Paul

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Featured in TMT (United Arab Emirates)

Career: Please see <https://www.dlapiper.com/en/people/a/allen-paul> for further information.

ALSHRAIDEH, Mohammad

PRIMECASE – Hamad Al Rahma Advocates and Legal Consultant, Dubai
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Featured in Dispute Resolution (United Arab Emirates)

Practice Areas: Dispute Resolution Arbitration Litigation

Career: ohammad Alshraideh is a seasoned legal professional with over 23 years of experience in the Middle East, renowned for his extensive expertise in commercial, banking, and Islamic finance litigation. Notably, he played a pivotal role as a partner in the dispute resolution practice at Baker Mackenzie Habib Al Mulla from January 2008 to March 2019, contributing significantly to the firm's success during his over 11-year tenure. At Baker Mackenzie, Mohammad served as the head of the Commercial, Civil, and Banking Department, where he demonstrated exemplary leadership and legal acumen. His profound knowledge and strategic approach were particularly evident in the numerous banking litigations he handled, enhancing his qualifications and making him a standout professional in similar disputes. Mohammad's notable achievements at Baker Mackenzie include his involvement in complex banking litigations, where he successfully navigated intricate legal matters. His experience extends to advising and representing a multitude of international clients, showcasing his prowess in the GCC and across the MENA region. Prior to his tenure at Baker Mackenzie, Mohammad commenced his legal career in Amman, Jordan, until 2007. During this period, he actively contributed to the development of laws and legislations in Jordan, showcasing his commitment to legal advancement. His work on high-profile cases and public opinion issues with complicating factors highlighted his ability to handle cases of great value. Mohammad's expertise extends to arbitration related to construction disputes, such as the Queen Alia International Airport dispute and King Abdullah Parks in Amman. He has also handled a diverse range of cases, including commercial maritime, compensation and tort law cases, and shipping vessels disputes under Hamburg Rules 1978, dealing with incidents of significance like the well-known "Benegas" vessel incident. In addition

to his legal practice, Mohammad has been actively involved in establishing private non-profitable organizations, associations, educational, and academic centers. His commitment to contributing to various sectors has further strengthened his skills and capabilities, enabling him to excel in complex litigations and arbitrations across different fields. Throughout his career, Mohammad has been instrumental in laying down unique judicial precedents in contemporary fields of law, solidifying his reputation as a legal luminary with a remarkable track record. His diverse experience, coupled with his leadership at Baker Mackenzie, continues to shape his role as a distinguished legal professional in the Middle East. **BANKING:** Mohammad Alshraideh's distinguished role as a partner in the dispute resolution practice at Baker Mackenzie Habib Al Mulla, spanning over 11 years, showcased his exemplary leadership as the head of the Commercial, Civil, and Banking Department. Throughout this period, Mohammad engaged in a spectrum of banking litigations, fortifying his qualifications in handling complex disputes. These litigations encompassed a diverse range of high-stakes matters: Islamic-Financed Project Dispute: Mohammad oversaw a dispute involving the recovery of AED 750 million, coupled with a precautionary attachment over one of the most sophisticated technology centers in the MENA region. Commercial Corporate Guarantee Dispute: Mohammad acted for a privately held diversified holding company facing a bank's claims of AED 90 million based on a Commercial Corporate Guarantee. The intricacies involved legal and factual challenges, leading to a counter claim of AED 500 million, citing bad faith and illegitimate side agreements. UAE Securities Company Cases: Serving as local counsel, Mohammad managed multiple cases for a UAE securities company, addressing claims arising from investors' failure to settle their accounts. Cross-Border Disputes for Class (A) Banks: Mohammad played a crucial role as local counsel, managing and supervising various local and international class (A) banks involved in cross-border multi-jurisdictional disputes. Litigations Involving Al Ghosaibi Family: As a partner, Mohammad worked on litigations filed by local and foreign banks against the Al Ghosaibi Family, with a cumulative worth reaching AED nine billion. Representation of Leading Banks: Mohammad represented several prominent banks, including Emirati Dubai National Bank, Emirates Islamic Bank, HSBC Bank, and others, in various litigations. **COMMERCIAL & CIVIL:** Mohammad worked on many disputes in the trade, commercial and corporate sector, including disputes between shareholders as well as claims for commercial companies, contracts as well as enforcement of local and foreign arbitration awards pursuant to New York Convention regarding Enforcement of Foreign Arbitration Awards, where he managed to success-

ful get conclusive judgments in favour of the clients he represented, which were from the intermittent cases that the UAE courts upheld enforcement of arbitration awards pursuant to said New York Convention. Mohammad has represented several prominent companies in their arbitration claims internationally and locally. He managed to win many cases, regardless its complicated nature. Mohammad also worked as a leading partner very high-profile cases including but not limited to the following matters: Acting for Fal Petroleum on a case worth more than 5 billion dirhams against Sharjah Electricity Authority and the Government of Sharjah. Acting for Arabtec in disputes that exceeded 3 billion AED. Advised and handled all matters of Abu Dhabi Investment company (ADIC). Acting for Al Razi and Ibn Khaldoun pharmacies and Khaleej Center for diagnosis, which exceeded 500 million dirhams. Acting for The Ministry of Finance and Real Estate Emirates Petroleum Corporation and the Emirates Foundation files. Acting for Sociedad cases that exceeded one billion AED. Acting for the Ministry of Finance, Emirates Petroleum Corporation and the Emirates Foundation in several complicated matters. **INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND CYBER CRIME:** Mohammad worked as a leading partner and supervisor on many intellectual properties, including registrations and prevent infringement of well-known and international trademarks as well as many cybercrime cases **CONFERENCES** Mohammad has participated in many conferences, on local, regional and international levels in arbitration in ecommerce trade, intellectual properties, construction disputes, maritime law, cybercrimes, negotiations, and alternative disputes resolutions. **MEMBERSHIPS** Mohammad is a member of the following bars and associations, Jordanian Bar Association, the Arab Bar Association, the International Bar Association, the Arab Society for the Protection of Intellectual Property and the Jordanian forum for Corporate Governance.

Professional Memberships: MEMBERSHIPS Mohammad is a member of the following bars and associations, Jordanian Bar Association, the Arab Bar Association, the International Bar Association, the Arab Society for the Protection of Intellectual Property and the Jordanian forum for Corporate Governance.

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Practice Areas: Dispute Resolution, Corporate Investigations

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Featured in Restructuring/Insolvency (United Arab Emirates)

Practice Areas: Adam has expertise covering distressed restructurings, bankruptcy related mandates and origination financings. He is based in Dubai from where he advises on situations across the wider Middle-East region. Adam's restructuring practice includes advising debtors, creditors (and creditors' committees), insolvency practitioners and other stakeholders in distressed situations (including some of the largest and most prominent restructurings in the Middle-East). Adam also regularly advises in relation to origination financings where his clients include corporate debtors, sponsors, arrangers and financiers in a range of sectors including real estate, education and hospitality and in relation to a range of financing structures (both conventional and Shari'ah compliant).

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Featured in Real Estate (United Arab Emirates)

Practice Areas: Ian is Head of our Middle East Real Estate and hospitality practice and has expertise in a broad range of commercial real estate and hospitality transactions. Ian is also involved in some of the largest real estate development projects in the Middle East. His real estate experience includes commercial lettings, sales and purchases (including sale and lease-back and opco/propco structures), development transactions and the property aspects of mergers and acquisitions. He has advised on cross border real estate funds, property financings and joint ventures. Ian also has considerable experience in the hospitality sector and regularly advises on hotel and leisure transactions throughout MENA.

BISCH, Mark E

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Featured in Commercial Contracts (United Arab Emirates)

Practice Areas: As a longstanding Partner in the Middle East, Mark Bisch has established himself as a trusted advisor to leading global entities and domestic businesses, guiding them through intricate corporate and commercial transactions across the Middle East and North Africa region. His expertise spans diverse areas including complex joint ventures, contracting and procurement, corporate governance, and regulatory compliance. Mark offers clients unparalleled local market insights and extensive corporate and commercial capabilities, offering invaluable guidance on a wide range of matters including: joint ventures (JVs); agency agreements (including franchising); mergers and acquisitions (M&A);

corporate formations and governance; technology, media, and telecommunications (TMT) transactions; energy transactions; public procurement (including defense); engineering, procurement, and construction (EPC) contracts; real estate transactions; regulatory compliance; immigration and employment advice; and dispute resolution, including arbitration. Mark's commitment to delivering market-leading solutions tailored to each client's unique needs underscores his reputation as a premier advisor in the region.

Career: Mark Bisch, the Corporate Department Chair for Baker Botts in the Middle East, and Partner-in-Charge of the Dubai Office, brings over 28 years of resident Middle East experience and market intelligence to his clients. Renowned for his practical, sound advice and unwavering commitment to his clients and colleagues, Mark is a trusted advisor sought after by global enterprises and local businesses alike. By now, Mark has nearly seen it all. Throughout his extensive career in the Middle East, Mark has excelled in navigating intricate legal landscapes, specializing in joint ventures, contracting, corporate governance, and regulatory compliance across the Middle East and North Africa. Mark's profound understanding of regional dynamics and nuanced approach to client representation have consistently placed him at the forefront of the legal profession. Mark's reputation is underscored by his consistent recognition as a leading practitioner, as reflected in his high rankings in esteemed legal publications such as Chambers Global. Mark's enduring dedication to shaping the legal framework in the Middle East highlights his role within the industry. Drawing on his vast experience, Mark is keenly attuned to the needs of in-house counsel, a perspective further enriched by his tenure at as a secondeé to PepsiCo, Inc.'s international law department. Testimonials from Chambers Global UAE, 2023, illustrate Mark's distinction and expertise: "Mark Bisch is a distinguished Dubai-based lawyer who has expertise in a range of matters, including joint ventures, commercial agreements, and corporate governance. He is accomplished in acting for multinationals as well as leading domestic and regional companies, with an especially strong client following in the defense sector." Clients have expressed to Chambers Global that "Mark Bisch understands very well the art of boiling down complex issues to their essence. He's a top-notch lawyer" and that Mark "knows a lot about the market, he knows a lot of people and he's really reliable. He knows his stuff and is the guy who'll answer the phone on the second ring," and commended Mark on his "responsiveness and excellent quality of work relating to joint ventures and contract issues," highlighting that Mark "has excellent client relations."

Professional Memberships: AmCham (Abu Dhabi); US-UAE Business Council; Defense Services Marketing

Council (DSMC) UAE; Missouri Bar; and Government of Dubai Legal Affairs Department (as a registered Legal Consultant).

Publications: Get to Work! Planning for Implementation of the New UAE Labor Law, Corporate Update, December 2021 Saudi Arabia's New Franchise Law; A Summary of What You Need to Know, September 2020 Saudi Arabian Labor Law; Explanatory Memorandum to Address COVID-19 Pandemic, Client Update, 7 May 2020 Saudi Arabia Updates Corporate Requirements for Closed Joint Stock Companies—Requires Submission of Shareholder Registers Within One Month, Corporate Update, March 2020 The UAE's New Offset Program Guidelines—Ten Things You Should Know, Corporate Update, July 2019 Data Protection and Patient Confidentiality Considerations for HealthTech Companies in the UAE, Corporate Update, April 2019

Personal: Education: St. Louis University School of Law, Juris Doctor (1994, cum laude). Staff Member, St. Louis University Public Law Review. University of Notre Dame, Bachelor of Business Administration (1991, with honors). Professional Mottos: Be practical, responsive, and concise. Clients don't care how much you know until they know how much you care. Interests: Family, friends, and clients. College football and playing sports, particularly padel tennis, golf, and squash. Yoga, hiking, and fishing. Travel. F&B. Sports, news, and entertainment podcasts. Listening to: The Grateful Dead. Watching: The Office, Big Bang Theory, Seinfeld, Christopher Guest movies, Shawshank Redemption, Glengarry Glen Ross, Goodfellas, Jerry McGuire, and most classic comedies. Likes: Grammar, the Oxford comma, and two spaces after a period. Dislikes: Timesheets, dieting, and social media.

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Featured in Dispute Resolution (United Arab Emirates)

Practice Areas: Nick is a dispute resolution partner in HFW's Dubai office, and has worked in the UAE since 2012. He has a broad commercial disputes practice with a focus on fraud and insolvency, as well as shareholder and joint venture disputes. Nick Braganza is based in the Dubai office and is also working closely with the BVI office. He has significant experience litigating in the DIFC, ADGM and UAE onshore Courts, as well as major arbitral venues in the UAE and internationally. In addition, Nick has experience in advising on white collar crime matters and conducting internal and regulatory investigations in the Middle East. Nick has advised clients and conducted investigations on a range of topics including cases of theft and fraud, bribery and corruption, defrauding government authorities, antitrust infringements, sanctions breaches, and money laun-

dering. Nick has also expertise in the enforcement of foreign court judgments and arbitration awards in jurisdictions in the Middle East, especially in the developing jurisdiction of the DIFC, in which he has acted in a number of the leading landmark cases. Nick is qualified in England and Wales.

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Featured in Shipping (United Arab Emirates)

Practice Areas: Dispute Resolution, Insurance, International Arbitration, Shipping

Professional Memberships: Richard is a member of the Law Society and a Practising Solicitor of the Supreme Court of England and Wales. He is also a member of the International Bar Association (IBA), the Inter Pacific Bar Association (IPBA) and ICC FraudNet Member for the UAE. Richard is the current President of the Inter-Pacific Bar Association (IPBA), and former Chairman of the Host Committee for the IPBA Annual Meeting and Conference held in Dubai from 7 to 10 March 2023. Richard has recently been appointed Board Member of the Dubai International Arbitration Centre (DIAC), and is also the Chairman of the Host Committee of the International Congress of Maritime Arbitrators (ICMA) Conference coming to Dubai from 5 to 10 November 2023. Richard was formerly the Chairman of the ICC FraudNet S&P Committee from 2017–2019 and member of the ICC FraudNet Advisory Board, and former Vice Chair of the IBA Maritime Committee from 2008–2014. Richard is also former Vice Chair and Board Member of the Emirates Maritime Arbitration Centre (EMAC).

BUTCHER, Tom
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Featured in TMT (United Arab Emirates)

Practice Areas: Tom is a partner in our international telecommunications, media and technology (TMT) group and leads our communications, technology and data privacy practice in the Middle East. He has been based in the UAE since 2008.

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Featured in Shipping (United Arab Emirates)

Practice Areas: Ian is a Partner in HFW's leading shipping practice in the Middle East, and acts on a wide range of matters including, mergers and acquisitions, financing and projects for regional and international clients. Ian has acted for a large number of regional and international offshore marine operators on a wide range of issues including establishing subsidiaries for activities in Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the UAE as well as in East and West Africa. He has also advised on a wide range of compliance and regulatory issues, particularly relat-

ing to cabotage and local requirements in the contracts with NOCs. He has also advised banks, financiers and operators on ship financing, fleet acquisitions and fleet deployment. He has acted for shipyards on newbuilds, repair issues, EPC contracts and conversions, primarily in the offshore energy sector and port operators in relation to port concessions and operations.

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Featured in Intellectual Property (United Arab Emirates)

Personal: James is registered as a legal consultant at the Dubai Legal Affairs Department and is a dual-qualified solicitor admitted in New South Wales (Australia) and England and Wales (United Kingdom). He holds a Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Laws and Master of Laws and, in addition to his private practice experience, has also undertaken a secondment in the trade marks department of one of the world's largest pharmaceutical companies.

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Featured in Construction (United Arab Emirates), Dispute Resolution (United Arab Emirates)

Practice Areas: Alain Farhad is a partner in the Litigation & Dispute Resolution practice and head of the dispute resolution practice in the United Arab Emirates. He acts as legal counsel or as an arbitrator in international arbitration proceedings arising out of commercial contracts, construction projects or investment protection treaties. He has experience in resolving disputes relating to many different business sectors, with a focus on the oil and gas, infrastructure, trading and real estate industries. He has also represented a number of governments, as well as state-owned entities in commercial or investment treaty disputes. Alain has been based in Dubai since January 2011. Prior to relocating to the Middle East, he practised international arbitration in Paris. He is a French qualified Avocat à la Cour and a member of the New York Bar. He holds law degrees from Paris Sorbonne University and Cornell Law School. Alain has been appointed to serve as a member of the ICC Commission on Arbitration and ADR. He is also a member of the Steering Committee of the ICC UAE Arbitration Commission. He is regularly invited to speak at a variety of international arbitration conferences

globally. In 2021, the Legal 500 EMEA described Alain as “exceptionally competent and knowledgeable on disputes concerning construction and wider commercial issues” and “a standout individual who is a true expert in international arbitration”, whilst the 2022 guide quoted “Alain Farhad is one of the leading arbitration lawyers in the Dubai market. He has great technical expertise both from common law and civil law perspectives having qualified in both New York and Paris. He is clever and highly strategic in his thinking.” He is fluent in English, French and Farsi. He joined Mayer Brown in 2019.

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FRASER, Simon

King & Spalding LLP, Abu Dhabi

Featured in Projects (Kuwait), Corporate/M&A (United Arab Emirates)

Practice Areas: Simon Fraser is a senior corporate partner based in the firm's Abu Dhabi office, focusing on mergers and acquisitions, joint ventures and corporate structuring for major projects and strategic investments. He has practiced in the USA, London, the Middle East, Asia and Australia, and has more than 25 years' experience structuring and executing complex cross-border transactions and projects for market leading clients around the world. Mr. Fraser represents sovereigns, corporate clients, family offices and investment banks on regional and international transactions and projects across a wide range of industries, with a particular focus in energy and resources (including renewables and petrochemicals), infrastructure, telecommunications, manufacturing and technology.

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Featured in Corporate/M&A (United Arab Emirates)

Practice Areas: Rupert Harper has a wide ranging practice across the

Middle East advising on mergers and acquisitions, joint ventures, private equity buy-outs, and strategic investment transactions across a number of industry sectors. Mr. Harper's clients include a number of regional sovereign wealth funds, banks, corporates and family offices based in the Middle East as well as large multinational corporations with investments in the region. Mr. Harper has particular experience in the financial services, oil & gas, telecoms, defense, logistics/transport, healthcare, real estate and infrastructure sectors.

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Practice Areas: Haitham Hawashin is a corporate partner with extensive international and regional experience in international and local securities offerings, private equity, public and private M&A and complex joint venture transactions. Haitham is highly experienced in public company work covering both equity and debt transactions including IPOs, bond issuances, block trades, mergers, public tender offers and strategic investor investments. Haitham's Middle Eastern background, strong relationships with the local regulators and understanding of the culture enables him to structure and execute local and regional transactions seamlessly.

Career: Haitham has been in the UAE since 2013 and prior to that held positions with leading international firms in Australia, Taipei, Jordan, London, Singapore and Hong Kong.

Professional Memberships:

Qualified Solicitor, England & Wales, 2017 Solicitor of the Supreme Court of Victoria, Australia, 2001

Personal: Bachelor of Laws, Deakin University; Master of Laws, University of Melbourne; B.A., Civil Law, University of Jordan Haitham is fully bilingual in English and Arabic.

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HOFFMANN, Anne

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Featured in Dispute Resolution (United Arab Emirates)

Practice Areas: Anne K. Hoffmann, LL.M. is a full-time independent arbit

trator who acts globally in international arbitrations. She is dual-qualified in Germany and England & Wales and has practised for more than two decades across the globe in both civil and common law jurisdictions. During that time, she worked at leading law firms and with internationally acclaimed arbitration specialists in London, Geneva and Dubai before focusing on her practise as a full-time arbitrator. Ms. Hoffmann acts in commercial disputes. She has been appointed in disputes in a great variety of areas and sectors such as sale and purchase as well as shareholder disputes, international trade, banking and finance, including guarantees and loan agreements, energy and mining, natural resources, medical, licensing and franchise agreements, construction, infrastructure and property. To date, she has acted as sole arbitrator, co-arbitrator, chair and emergency arbitrator in both institutional arbitrations under all major rules (including ICC, LCIA, Swiss Rules, DIFC-LCIA, SIAC, HKIAC, SCC, VIAC, DIAC, KCAB, CRCICA and DIS) as well as ad hoc, including UNCITRAL. She also specialises in investment arbitration and has acted both as co-arbitrator as well as presiding arbitrator in ICSID and non-ICSID investment disputes based on bilateral investment agreements (BITs) and the Energy Charter Treaty (ECT).

Career: Oct 2018 – present Independent Arbitrator, Hoffmann Arbitration, Dubai Jan 2017 – Sep 2018 Legal Director at Clyde & Co, Dubai Jun 2013 – Jun 2016 Special Counsel at Al Tamimi & Company, Dubai Apr 2005 – May 2013 Associate and Partner (from 2011) at Python & Peter, Geneva Jan 2003 – Mar 2005 Worked as assistant at the Bar in London, especially for VV Veeder, QC and Alan Redfern Nov 2000 – Dec 2002 Associate at Coudert Brothers, London

Professional Memberships: Ms. Hoffmann is on the Panel of Arbitrators of SIAC, HKIAC, AIAC, KCAB and ArbitrateAD and a member of the SIAC Users Council. She is a member of the MENA Committee of the Equal Representation in Arbitration Pledge. Ms. Hoffmann is also a member of ICCA where she currently acts as a Mentor in the Young ICCA Mentoring programme.

Publications: – Duty of Disclosure and Challenge of Arbitrators: The Standard Applicable Under the New IBA Guidelines on Conflicts of Interest and the German Approach, 21(3) Arb. Int'l 427 (2005) – Counterclaims by the Respondent State in Investment Arbitrations – The Award on Jurisdiction over Respondent's Counterclaim in Saluka Investments B.V. v Czech Republic, 6 SchiedsVZ, 317 (2006) – Book review on “International Investment, Political Risk and Dispute Resolution: a Practitioner's Guide” by Noah Rubins and Stephan Kinsella, 23(3) Arbitration International, 518 (2007) – The investor's right to waive access to protection under a bilateral investment treaty, 22(1) ICSID Review – Foreign Investment Law Journal, 69 (2007) – Indirect Expropriation, in:

Substantive Standards of Investment Protection (ed. A. Reinisch), Oxford University Press (2008); – The Relationship between International Tribunals and Domestic Courts (co-authored with J. van Harsoelte – van Hof), in: The Oxford Handbook of International Investment Law (2008) – Protection of Investments through Modern Treaty Arbitration – Diversity and Harmonisation, ASA Special Bulletin edited by Anne K. Hoffmann, May 2010 – Modern Forms of Expropriation, in: Protection of Investments through Modern Treaty Arbitration – Diversity and Harmonisation (ed. Anne K. Hoffmann), ASA Special Bulletin, May 2010 – Public policy versus private interest – has balance been maintained in investment protections in the Asia-Pacific region? in: Investment Treaty Arbitration and International Law – Volume 4, Ian A. Laird, Todd J. Weiler, Nina Mocheva (editors), Juris 2012 – Counterclaims in Investment Arbitration, 28(2) ICSID Review – Foreign Investment Law Journal, 438 (2013) – Selection and Appointment of Arbitrators, in: Arbitration in Switzerland – The Practitioner's Guide (ed. Manuel Arroyo), Kluwer 2013 (first edition); 2018 (second edition) – Denial of Benefits, in: International Investment Law – A Handbook (ed. M. Bungenberg, J. Griebel, S. Hobe, A. Reinisch), C.H. Beck-Hart-Nomos, 2015 – Counterclaims, in: Building International Investment Law – The First 50 Years of ICSID (ed. M. Kinnear, G. Fischer, J. Minguez Almeida, L. F. Torres, M. Uran Bidegain), Kluwer, 2016 – Middle Eastern Investors as Claimants in Investment Treaty Arbitrations, in: (2016) 3 BCDDR International Arbitration Review, 389, Issue 2 – The New Arbitration Law of the United Arab Emirates – Two steps forward?, in: 3 SchiedsVZ, 126 (2019) – Country Update: United Arab Emirates, in: Asian Dispute Resolution, October 2020, 179 – Iura Novit Arbitrator, in: Default in International Arbitration – Striking the balance, Reports from the CEPANI Colloquium held on 25 November 2022 (ed. Dirk De Meulemeester), Wolters Kluwer 2022, 109 – Awards, Orders and Deliberations, in: MENA Leading Arbitrators' Guide to International Arbitration (ed. G. Blanck, S. Corm-Bakhos, N. Comair-Obeid), Juris, 2023

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Featured in Commercial Contracts (United Arab Emirates)

Practice Areas: Corporate, Commercial, Family Business

Professional Memberships:

Member of the Legal Practice Division (LPD) Nominations Committee of the International Bar Association (IBA); Officer of the IBA's Law Firm Management Committee; Member of the Wealth Management Working Group of the Dubai International Financial Centre; Member of the Legislative Committee of the Dubai International Financial Centre Authority; Member of the Advisory Board of the College of Law, University of Dubai.

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Featured in Dispute Resolution (United Arab Emirates)

Practice Areas: Areen is a distinguished partner specializing in dispute resolution, with over 16 years of broad experience across the real estate, construction, and financial institutions sectors. His expertise centres around the effective management of commercial disputes in the Middle East, where he has honed his skills through a mix of private and in-house legal work. Areen excels in preparing and conducting arbitrations and litigation for notable and well-known disputes in the region. He represents a diverse group of clients, including developers, banking institutions, contractors, and high net worth individuals in the UAE, the MENA region, and internationally. He also possesses deep knowledge in the banking and financial services sector, offering advice on a wide spectrum of disputes, including those related to white-collar crime. Of late, Areen has a focused interest in onshore UAE based bankruptcy and insolvency proceedings, advising on several prominent and well publicised cases in the UAE. His involvement spans the full insolvency process for both creditors and debtors, from challenging or securing court decisions to consulting on stakeholder risks and liabilities. Proficient in both civil and common law legal systems, Areen often provides detailed and complex legal advice and written opinions on specific issues of UAE law to leading international law firms and private clients. He is a registered arbitrator with the Dubai International Arbitration Centre (DIAC), ICC, SCCA, and IICRA and has considerable experience in litigation

in both English and Arabic across all levels of the UAE courts.

Career: Partner - Horizons & Co. Law Firm: 2016 - Present Head of Dispute Resolution - Dubai Properties Group: 2011 - 2016 Senior Legal Consultant - Galadari Advocates & Legal Consultants: 2006 - 2011

Professional Memberships: Arbitrator registered with Dubai International Arbitration Centre (DIAC) • Arbitrator registered for the Saudi Centre for Commercial Arbitration (SCCA) • Arbitrator registered with the International Islamic Centre for Reconciliation and Arbitration (IICRA) • Member of the International Bar Association, London (IBA) • Member of the UAE National Committee for International Chamber of Commerce (ICC UAE)

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Featured in Dispute Resolution (United Arab Emirates)

Practice Areas: Dispute Resolution
Personal: Before joining Hadeef & Partners, Abdulrahman was an officer of the Immigration Department of the UAE Ministry of Interior. He is a graduate of Dubai Police College and is fluent in Arabic and English.

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Featured in Construction (United Arab Emirates)

Practice Areas: Sachin is a projects, energy and infrastructure specialist who has been based in our Dubai office for over ten years. He has a wide range of experience advising lenders, developers and government entities on solar, power, water, construction and infrastructure projects across the region. He has also advised on multiple large-scale mega projects.

KIRYUSHIN, Slava

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Featured in Construction (United Arab Emirates)

Practice Areas: Slava Kiryushin is a highly recognised construction dispute specialist in the MENA region having represented clients in multi-billion disputes related to energy, construction and infrastructure projects. His clients include national and international oil & gas companies, refining and petrochemical companies, EPC contractors, and oil & gas service companies. Slava advises on all complex aspects of construction and oil & gas projects from inception through to completion and on all as-

pects of dispute avoidance and resolution. He is a solicitor-advocate and frequently advocates on behalf of clients in international arbitration. His recent work includes oil and gas processing facilities, drilling contracts (onshore and offshore), power plants, LNG facilities, refineries, water desalination plants and major railroads. He has Part II appearance rights (restricted) to appear before the DIFC courts, is a member of most international arbitration bodies, is a founding member of the DMCC Energy Club and is regularly invited to speak at international conferences. Slava is also a certified PRINCE2 and PRINCE2 Agile project manager.

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Featured in Commercial Contracts (United Arab Emirates), Employment (United Arab Emirates)

Practice Areas: In addition to general corporate and M&A, Charles's advises on contracts and government procurements, project finance, employment (well versed in all aspects of UAE and DIFC employment matters including contentious matters), projects, military and offsets, and international trade controls.

Career: Charles is a partner at Afridi & Angell. He has been practicing in the UAE since 1986. He is professionally fluent in Arabic.

Professional Memberships: Pennsylvania Bar and District of Columbia Bar.

Publications: UAE chapters in the following titles: Labour & Employment and Anti-Corruption Regulation (Getting the Deal Through); Chambers Global Guide to Employment; Littler Mendelson Guide to International Employment and Labor Law; Legal Aspects of Doing Business in the Middle East (Juris Publishing); and Corporate Immigration Review (The Law Reviews).

Personal: JD, University of Pennsylvania Law School 1984 MA in Islamic Studies, University of Pennsylvania 1985 MA, University of London, School of Oriental and African Studies 1981 BA, Dartmouth College 1979

LAWRENCE, Robert

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Featured in Shipping (United Arab Emirates)

Practice Areas: Rob is a dispute resolution partner in HFW's leading shipping practice in the Middle East, where he has a particular focus on offshore marine, international trade and marine insurance. An English qualified lawyer, Rob has been based in the Middle East since 2006, splitting his time between the UAE and Saudi Arabia, where he has gained significant experience handling complex disputes centred around the marine and offshore industry. He has advised on some of the region's largest claims arising from offshore casualties (rig punch-throughs, fires/explosions,

collisions and allisions), EPC contracts, ship building/ship conversion projects as well as commodity trades. Rob also has experience advising on commercial disputes generally, including shareholder, JV, distribution and franchise. As well as litigating before the English Courts and various courts throughout the GCC, Rob regularly acts as counsel in both domestic and international arbitral forums including the DIAC, ADGM, SCCA, SCMA, ICC, LCIA, LMAA, GAFTA and FOSFA. Rob is likewise experienced in dealing with matters ancillary to arbitration, including obtaining freezing injunctions, obtaining and defending security for costs orders, as well as both enforcing awards and challenging defective awards.

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Featured in Construction (United Arab Emirates), Dispute Resolution (United Arab Emirates)

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Featured in Regulatory & Public Affairs (United Arab Emirates)

Practice Areas: Regulatory & Government Advisory

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Featured in Islamic Finance (Middle East-wide), Banking & Finance (United Arab Emirates)

See under Banking & Finance (including Islamic Finance) for profile.

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Featured in Corporate Compliance & Investigations (United Arab Emirates)

Practice Areas: Zara Merali is a senior lawyer, based in Dubai, who helps lead Freshfields' global investigations practice in Middle East and North Africa (MENA). Zara focuses her practice on white-collar criminal defense, crisis management, anti-fraud enforcement and investigations, asset recovery and related litigation.

Career: Zara helps clients navigate critical issues involving allegations of bribery, fraud, market manipulation, and reporting obligations. Zara also advises clients on GCC economic sanctions and export controls, data privacy and cybersecurity, as well as matters related to anti-corruption and anti-money laundering compliance. Zara has worked in MENA for 13 years, and prior to that, she worked for leading firms in London and Toronto.

Personal: Zara serves on the DIFC Courts' Pro Bono Committee and represents some of the firm's pro

bono clients which include leading international organisations. Juris Doctor, Osgoode Hall Law School (Canada), junior editor for the Osgoode Hall Law Journal. M.Phil., Columbia University (New York). M.A.; Hons. B.A., University of Toronto.

MEYER HANIF, Haris

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Featured in Restructuring/Insolvency (United Arab Emirates), Banking & Finance (United Arab Emirates)

Practice Areas: Haris is the head of finance for our Global Transactions team in MENA. He advises on a wide spectrum of transactions with a focus on restructuring and insolvency matters, event-driven financings and direct lending transactions across the Middle East and Africa. Haris has acted on some of the most innovative restructurings and financings in the region and is known for taking a commercial approach to executing transactions.

MILLER RANKIN, Erin

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Featured in Dispute Resolution (Middle East-wide), Dispute Resolution (South Korea), Construction (United Arab Emirates)

See under Dispute Resolution for profile.

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Featured in Islamic Finance (Middle East-wide), Capital Markets (Middle East-wide), Banking & Finance (United Arab Emirates), Capital Markets (United Arab Emirates)

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NEIGHBOUR, Thomas

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Featured in Insurance (United Arab Emirates)

Practice Areas: Thomas is a Senior Associate in the Dubai insurance and reinsurance team, having trained as a solicitor in London before joining HFW in Dubai in 2014. Thomas is a qualified lawyer in England and Wales. Thomas acts for clients in claims and defence work before the DIFC and ADGM Courts, in international/local arbitration and before the English High Court, as well as managing local court litigation, in relation to a variety of construction, property, energy, marine and liability claims, along with reinsurance disputes. Thomas also advises on coverage issues.

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Featured in Regulatory & Public Affairs (United Arab Emirates)

Practice Areas: Jodi Norman heads Allen & Overy's Middle East Financial Regulatory team and has unrivalled knowledge across the full suite of regulations applicable in the UAE: UAE Central Bank law and regulation, UAE SCA law and regulation, ADGM law and regulation and DIFC law and regulation. This regional knowledge is supported by strong working knowledge and experience in UK/EU financial services law and regulation. Jodi advises many of the world's leading financial institutions and we have invested in building a team with international support that can provide financial services regulatory advice to clients across all segments of the financial services industry, including: commercial banks, investment banks and broker-dealers (the sell side); asset managers, investment consultants, pension funds and other institutional investors (the buy side), exchanges, multilateral trading facilities and clearing houses (infrastructure providers), as well as regulators and governments on their regulatory frameworks. Increasingly, the clients that she advises includes a broad range of non-traditional financial services providers, such as payment services and cryptoasset providers and fintech start-ups. Jodi is the Regional DE&I Partner for the Middle East, Africa and Turkey (META). In this role Jodi sponsors the META DE&I Working Group and is integral to delivering a work program that focuses on enhancing gender diversity and cultural diversity and supporting A&O's working parents. Jodi holds a CISI Level 6 Diploma in Investment Compliance, a qualification developed specifically for compliance professionals.

O'CONNELL, Kirsten

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Featured in Dispute Resolution (United Arab Emirates)

Practice Areas: Kirsten is a partner in the International Arbitration Group. She has over 20 years' experience in international arbitration and has been based in the Middle East for 12 years. Kirsten specialises in disputes arising out of major construction and infrastructure projects across a wide-range of sectors, including oil and gas, renewables, natural resources, defence and technology sectors. Kirsten is also experienced in investor-state disputes, having defended host States against claims arising out of complex construc-

tion projects, and having advised both States and investors in connection with potential claims and defences. She regularly appears as an advocate before international tribunals arguing complex cases with large sums and stake. Kirsten has successfully represented clients in international arbitration proceedings under a variety of institutional and ad hoc rules, including those of the ICC, LCIA, HKIAC, DIAC, UNCITRAL, ICSID and ADCCAC (soon to be arbitrateAD). Kirsten also sits as an arbitrator.

O'SULLIVAN, Macky

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Featured in Venture Capital (United Arab Emirates)

Practice Areas: Macky O'Sullivan is a partner in the Private Funds and Capital Markets practices. Macky has represented and advised clients on a broad range of investment funds and venture capital matters, including capital raising transactions, seed rounds and corporate venture financings, as well as the formation of and investment in conventional and Shari'ah-compliant investment funds. He also regularly advises clients on the establishment of asset management and advisory businesses, as well as the formation of carried interest plans and management arrangements among fund principals. Mr. O'Sullivan worked in the corporate department of a magic circle law firm and has spent a period on secondment with London Stock Exchange listed hedge fund Man Group plc advising on corporate and investment fund matters. Macky also worked in the UK House of Lords for Rt. Hon Baroness Scotland of Asthal QC (Commonwealth Secretary-General and former UK Attorney General) where he gained experience advising on UK-Africa trade relations and foreign direct investment issues.

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Featured in Capital Markets (United Arab Emirates), Corporate/M&A (United Arab Emirates)

Practice Areas: Capital Markets: Equity (United Arab Emirates), Corporate/M&A: Abu Dhabi-based (United Arab Emirates) Commercial Contracts

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Featured in Construction (United Arab Emirates)

Practice Areas: Amr Omran is a Senior Associate in our Dispute Resolution team in Dubai. He advises clients in construction, commercial and investor-state arbitrations involving contracts governed by major systems of law across a range of economic sectors. He has represented clients in major disputes under the ICC, DIAC, ICSID and UNCITRAL Rules. As a fluent Arabic speaker, he also regularly advises on procedural and substantive issues un-

der the laws of various Middle Eastern countries.

Career: Amr has worked for Freshfields since 2014, initially as a stagiaire in the Paris office, and now placed in Dubai. Previously, Amr served as a public prosecutor in Cairo and a consultant at The World Bank in Washington, DC. He is admitted to practise in Egypt and New York, and is registered as a Legal Consultant with the Dubai Legal Affairs Department. He also sits regularly as arbitrator and is a judge on the Appeals Panel of the International Basketball Federation.

Publications: The Appearance of Foreign Counsel in International Arbitration: The Case of Egypt, 34:5 J. INT'L ARB. 901-920 (2017); Co-author of the IBA Arbitration Guide for the United Arab Emirates.

Personal: He is a Member of the ICC Commission on Arbitration and ADR and an ICC YAAF Representative for the MENA Chapter. In 2020, Amr was recognised as one of Africa's 50 Most Promising Young Arbitration Practitioners. In 2022, Amr was ranked as an "Associate to Watch" in Chambers Global 2022 and as one of the Future Leaders in Arbitration by Who's Who Legal. Amr holds a Licence en droit from Cairo University. He also holds an LLM from McGill University, an LLM from The American University in Cairo, and an LLM from Harvard Law School. Before arriving at Freshfields, he worked at the Financial Market Integrity unit of the World Bank Group in Washington, DC and at the Public Prosecution Office in Cairo.

PICKERING, Duncan

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Featured in Real Estate (United Arab Emirates)

Career: Please see <https://www.dlapiper.com/en-hk/people/p/pickering-duncan> for further information.

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Featured in Dispute Resolution (Middle East-wide), Dispute Resolution (United Arab Emirates)

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Featured in Banking & Finance (United Arab Emirates)

Practice Areas: Banking, Project Finance

Personal: Prior to working in the Middle East, Alan worked at Linklaters in London undertaking major institutional commercial property development and funding work. Alan has spoken at INSOL and at the IBA Conferences. Alan is admitted as a Solicitor of the Senior Courts of England and Wales.

ROSENBERG, Kim

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Featured in Construction (United Arab Emirates), Corporate Compliance & Investigations (United Arab Emirates)

Practice Areas: Kim focuses on two strategic risk areas for clients: disputes involving major design / construction projects and corporate investigations relating to economic crime. On the former, Kim regularly achieves success for clients as counsel in construction arbitration, she often sits as an arbitrator in construction disputes. On the latter, Kim is Head of our Corporate Investigations practice in MENA and frequently advises clients on the full ambit of economic crime risk management issues, including effective compliance frameworks.

Professional Memberships: Chair of the committee that drafted the 2nd edition of the Society of Construction Law's Delay and Disruption Protocol. Board member of the International Construction Law Association. Fellow of the Project Management College of Scheduling. Member of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (MCIArb). Committee member of the Society of Construction Law - Gulf.

Publications: She is co-editor of the pre-eminent text *Dealing with Delay and Disruption on Construction Projects*.

SAYED, Ashraf

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Featured in Real Estate (United Arab Emirates)

Practice Areas: Real Estate

Personal: Prior to joining Hadeef & Partners, Ashraf worked for a leading international law firm in London. He completed his LLB at Brunel University and the Legal Practice Course at the College of Law, in the UK, before qualifying as an English Solicitor. He is fluent in English, Hindi and Urdu.

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Featured in Corporate/M&A (United Arab Emirates)

Career: Please see <https://www.dlapiper.com/en-gb/people/s/seivewright-will> for further information.

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Featured in Corporate/M&A (Middle East-wide), Capital Markets (Middle East-wide), Capital Markets (United Arab Emirates), Corporate/M&A (United Arab Emirates)

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Featured in Corporate Compliance & Investigations (United Arab Emirates)

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Featured in Employment (United Arab Emirates)

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Featured in Restructuring/Insolvency (United Arab Emirates)

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Featured in Capital Markets (United Arab Emirates)

Practice Areas: Ibrahim's capital markets experience includes advising public and private issuers and investment banks on a broad range of capital markets transactions including equity offerings (IPOs and secondary offerings) and debt offerings (conventional and Islamic). Ibrahim has extensive experience advising on transactions across a number of jurisdictions in the Middle East, the US and Europe. Ibrahim also regularly advises on public M&As as well as companies and their boards on listing requirements, securities and corporate governance matters and reporting obligations.

Professional Memberships: Lebanon - Beirut Bar New York State Bar
Personal: Georgetown University - 2011 Master of Laws (LL.M.) Saint Joseph University - Beirut - 2006 Master en Droit Saint Joseph University - Beirut - 2004 Bachelor of Laws (LL.B.)

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Featured in Investment Funds (Middle East-wide), Venture Capital (United Arab Emirates), Corporate/Commercial (Saudi Arabia)

See under Investment Funds for profile.

SWARBRICK, Tom

Bracewell LLP, Dubai

Featured in Construction (United Arab Emirates)

Career: Tom Swarbrick is a construction lawyer based in Dubai. He advises in relation to the construction and development of assets in the power, oil and gas and infrastructure sectors across the Middle East, Africa and Europe.

Personal: LPC, Nottingham Law School, 2005; GDL, Nottingham Law School, 2004; BA, The University of Manchester, 2002

SZAJA, Pawel J

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Featured in Capital Markets (United Arab Emirates)

Practice Areas: Pawel Szaja is a partner in the Capital Markets practice. He is based in the London and Dubai offices and advises corporates, underwriters and private equity funds in EMEA on complex cross-border SEC-registered and Rule 144A / Regulation S equity and debt capital markets, M&A / private equity and SPAC/de-SPAC transactions as well as corporate governance, regulatory and ongoing reporting matters. Pawel is a member of the Fintech Foundry program at Shearman & Sterling. He has completed secondments to the execution group at a major investment bank in London and the legal department at ADNOC in Abu Dhabi, UAE.

Career: Education Columbia University School of Law LL.M Gothe-University of Frankfurt/Main LL.M(Finance) Warsaw University J.D. Admissions New York England and Wales Ireland - On the Roll Languages Polish German English

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Featured in Shipping (United Arab Emirates)

Practice Areas: Tien is a finance lawyer specialising in structured trade, commodity finance and ship finance and has been based in the UAE for over 15 years. Tien has been involved in a number of domestic and cross border financings such as the award winning Port Khalifa financing (2020). Tien's current matters also include representing the Swiss headquarters of a global bank in the restructuring of a UAE-based large oil trader (ongoing 2024). Tien also specialises in asset and international finance including acting for financial institutions (including commercial and development banks), international corporations and shipping companies in relation to the financing, chartering, newbuilding and sale and purchase of ships and yachts including Islamic finance techniques. Tien was previously seconded to the in-house legal team of a major banking client in the Dubai International Financial Centre.

THRAYA, Tom

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Featured in Commercial Contracts (United Arab Emirates)

Practice Areas: Tom Thraya advises both private and public clients in the areas of cross-border and domestic mergers, acquisitions, divestitures, international and domestic joint ventures, private equity and global corporate re-organizations. He also advises clients on international and domestic commercial agreements, foreign direct investment, regulatory and governmental matters, employment, including immigration matters, and compliance-related advice and investigations, litigation/arbitration support and general corporate and commercial counseling. Tom offers

clients over a decade of experience and an international geographic focus on the Middle East (with particular emphasis on the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Iraq). Tom is a fluent Arabic speaker and reader. Clients served by Tom include Lockheed Martin, Boeing, Danaher, Benteler, Accenture, ADNOC, Fendi, General Motors, Cruise Automation, HSBC, Publicis and Underwriters Laboratories.

TRABOULSI, Anthony

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Featured in Banking & Finance (United Arab Emirates)

Practice Areas: Anthony is the head of the civil law team and a partner in the Banking department in Dubai, covering the Middle East region. He qualified as an attorney at law in Lebanon in 2003. He obtained an LLM in Corporate Finance Law from the University of Westminster in 2004. He is fluent in Arabic, English and French. He has extensive experience in advising major international and regional financial institutions and family businesses on real estate finance, corporate lending, structured finance and debt restructuring transactions.

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Featured in Tax (United Arab Emirates)

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Featured in Corporate Compliance & Investigations (United Arab Emirates)

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Featured in Insurance (United Arab Emirates)

Practice Areas: Justin is a Partner in HFW's leading insurance practice in the Middle East. His practice area covers general commercial disputes, with specialism in insurance and reinsurance claims and policy coverage advices. He has advised a number of Middle Eastern and global insurers and facultative and treaty reinsurers, and acted for a wide range of international companies and policyholders from a variety of industries. He also leads our Middle East cyber and data privacy team across our offices in Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Kuwait and Riyadh. He is well versed in commercial and (re)insurance litigation in the Courts of the Middle East and in England & Wales. Justin is also a CEDR accredited Mediator and has conducted numerous mediations and other forms of Alternative Dispute Resolution.

WILLIAMS, Christopher

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Featured in Commercial Contracts (United Arab Emirates)

Practice Areas: Has particular experience in advising on mergers and acquisitions, joint ventures, complex commercial contracts and corporate advisory work, as well as experience advising on labour and employment matters (contentious and non-contentious), and managing litigation disputes in the UAE. Resident of the UAE since 2008, is able to use his keen understanding of the region to guide the leadership of Bracewell's Dubai office, as well as his own active corporate practice.

Professional Memberships: Law Society of England and Wales; Solicitor, Senior Courts of England and Wales, 2003

Personal: LPC, The College of Law, Chester, 2001; LLB, The University of Liverpool, 2000

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Featured in Commercial Contracts (United Arab Emirates), TMT (United Arab Emirates)

Practice Areas: Commercial, Data Protection, TMT

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