

AUSTRALIA JAPAN PRACTICE

AUSTRALIA

Senior Advisor



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Partners



Damien Roberts



Melissa Swain-Tonkin



Elizabeth Charlesworth



Graeme Gamble



Nicole Pedler



Timothy Stutt



Aaron White

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Kate Bower



Jennifer Wu



Saori Nakayama

Solicitors



Clarence Ma



Sakura Kajimura



Peter Keeves



Tatsuki Shiratsuchi



Edward Watson



Lauren Woo



Tatsuki Tomiyama

JAPAN

Partner



Andrew Blacoe

Senior Associate



Joel Rheuben

Associates



Ryu Long



Nina O'Keefe



Stephen McCann

 Indicates Japanese language proficiency

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OUR AUSTRALIA TEAM



Ian Williams Senior Adviser ☐
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Ian is a highly experienced M&A and joint venture specialist focusing on the mining, industrials and infrastructure sectors.

He is ranked in Chambers Global 2019 as a leading Corporate / M&A lawyer in Japan, as well as a leading Energy & Resources lawyer in Australia. Ian has been a Vice-President of the Australia Japan Business Co-operation Committee since August 2006, and was awarded the Foreign Minister's Commendation (外務大臣表彰) by the Japanese Foreign Ministry in 2016.

Ian worked at Kobe Steel for 5 years and played for the Kobe Steelers rugby team winning the Japan championship four times. He also represented the Australian Wallabies and Japan rugby teams. Ian holds 日本語能力試験二級 certification. Ian's full profile can be read [here](#).



Elizabeth Charlesworth Partner ☐
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Elizabeth specialises in advising on acquisitions and divestments as well as greenfield development of infrastructure and energy assets. She has acted for both financiers and sponsors on a range of transactions across the sector covering the UK, Europe, Africa and Australia.

Elizabeth's financing experience includes limited recourse project financing, acquisition financing, borrowing base lending as well as corporate financing.

Elizabeth attended Tenri University in Nara, studying a foreign language course, and represented the university in the Women's J-League for ice hockey. She was also a recipient of a Mitsui Educational Foundation scholarship in 2006.

Elizabeth's full profile can be read [here](#).



Damien Roberts Partner ☐
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Damien leads our Japanese client team. He is a corporate / M&A lawyer with particular expertise in infrastructure / logistics, energy and consumer, and whilst in Tokyo was ranked as a Japan-based expert for Australia Corporate / M&A by Chambers Global 2020.

He has extensive experience working in both Australia and Japan advising Japanese corporations, trading houses and public bodies on their outbound business acquisitions and international joint ventures.

Damien was based in Japan for 10 years until 2021. He is a qualified simultaneous interpreter and has held 日本語能力試験一級 certification since 1995.

Damien's full profile can be read [here](#).



Graeme Gamble Partner
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Graeme specialises in upstream mergers and acquisitions, and has a particular focus on the LNG sector. He is particularly well-versed in Australian and PNG oil and gas regulation, and has recently been involved in the Ichthys LNG Project. He has advised various Japanese trading houses and energy companies in the past.

Prior to joining Herbert Smith Freehills, Graeme was Senior Legal Counsel at Centrica Energy in the UK. He is a member of the Australian Mining and Petroleum Law Association and the Association of International Petroleum Negotiators.

Graeme's full profile can be read [here](#).



Melissa Swain-Tonkin Partner
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Melissa has extensive experience in public and private acquisitions and restructures and specialises in advising offshore financial investors on their Australian investments. Melissa has a particular focus on advising Japanese investors on farm-ins, joint ventures and other equity investments in the energy and resources and infrastructure sectors.

Melissa has worked with a number Japanese corporations during her career and she currently advises Japanese trading houses, power utilities and mining companies on their investments in Australia and associated off take arrangements.

Melissa previously held the role of General Counsel and Company Secretary of an ASX-listed coal mining company and so has a strong understanding of the Australian mining industry and the importance of delivering legal advice that has full regard to the commercial context.

Melissa's full profile can be read [here](#).



Nicole Pedler Partner ☐
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Nicole practises in the areas of companies and securities law. She has extensive experience in public and private acquisitions and disposals, restructures and equity capital raisings.

Nicole has worked with Japanese trading houses and corporations throughout her career and currently advises a number of Japanese clients on their investments in Australia.

Nicole studied Japanese at university, undertaking a student exchange at a university in Tokyo and has basic written and spoken Japanese skills.

Nicole's full profile can be read [here](#).

OUR AUSTRALIA TEAM



Timothy Stutt Partner
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Timothy practises corporations law and specialises in corporate governance. He has extensive experience advising large companies in relation to environmental, social and governance (ESG) matters, particularly with respect to disclosure and risk management, and has co-authored several publications in relation to shareholder rights and activism (including in Chambers and The Law Reviews).

Timothy also has previous experience in the financial industry, having worked as an analyst for a Japan-focused investment manager based in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Timothy was one of two Australians to receive a Young Leaders' Program scholarship from the Japanese Ministry of Education to study for his Masters of Business Administration (MBA) at Hitotsubashi University in Tokyo. He also holds Bachelor of Laws (Honours) and Bachelor of Commerce degrees from Monash University, Melbourne. Timothy's full profile can read [here](#).



Jennifer Wu Senior Associate
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Jennifer is a senior associate predominantly focussed on the energy, resources and infrastructure sectors. Jennifer has also spent time in the Tokyo office from 2019, returning to the Sydney office in 2021.

Jennifer has advised several Japanese trading houses and major companies on overseas energy joint ventures and infrastructure investments. Her experience also includes advising on M&A transactions, project development, and operational and regulatory matters.

Jennifer's full profile can be read [here](#).



Aaron White Partner
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Aaron is a transactional lawyer who has more than 17 years' experience advising in the international technology and telecommunications industries.

He has extensive experience advising Japanese corporations and trading houses on their trading and investment activities across a wide range of industries, in particular helping them to partner with, invest in, and acquire the most innovative companies in technology, mobility, clean energy and climate.

Aaron recently relocated from our London office to Australia and is qualified in the United Kingdom and Australia. He is a ranked lawyer in Chambers 2022 for Telecommunications: UK, as a Next Generation Partner in Legal 500 2022 for Telecommunications: UK.

Aaron has studied and lived in Japan.

Aaron's full profile can be read [here](#).



Saori Nakayama Senior Associate 
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Saori is a senior associate in the Real Estate group based in Brisbane.

Saori has advised major development companies, real estate and superannuation funds, publicly listed corporations, private clients, government corporations and local governments in relation to all aspects of real estate transactions.

Saori's experience includes acting on the development, acquisitions, disposals and leases of industrial properties, shopping centres and office buildings and on other redevelopment projects.

Saori is bilingual.

Saori's full profile can be read [here](#).



Kate Bower Senior Associate 
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Kate specialises in construction disputes and has over 10 years' experience working on construction related matters in the LNG, mining, oil, energy and resources sectors.

Kate has undertaken secondments with international mining and major oil and gas companies. She has acted for Japanese contractors on mining projects and conducted negotiations for Japanese trading houses on resources projects.

Kate holds 日本語能力試験一級 certification.

Kate's full profile can be read [here](#).



Sakura Kajimura Solicitor 
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Sakura is a solicitor in our Perth office and has experience in the corporate, dispute resolution and finance practice areas. She has assisted both domestic and international clients on private acquisitions and disposals, equity capital raisings, and restructuring and insolvency. Sakura also has experience assisting Japanese trading houses on transactions in the oil and gas sector.

Sakura is a native English and Japanese speaker.

OUR AUSTRALIA TEAM



Peter Keeves Solicitor
Dispute Resolution, Perth
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Peter is a solicitor in our Perth dispute resolution team. He has previously worked for 6 months in our Tokyo Dispute Resolution and Corporate Crime and Investigation team, and continues to work with our Tokyo, Hong Kong and Indonesian offices on corporate crime and investigation matters.

Peter has experience in international arbitrations and cross border disputes, as well as disputes in a range of Australian courts, in respect of commercial disputes and insolvency matters.



Tatsuki Shiratsuchi Solicitor 
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Tatsuki is a solicitor in the Corporate M&A team in Sydney. He has experience working on cross-border transactions and mergers and acquisitions both for private and public companies. Tatsuki has a particular focus on Japanese investment into Australia across a variety of sectors. He has experience assisting Japanese trading houses, TSE/TYO-listed public companies and has advised companies negotiating with Japanese counterparties.

Tatsuki is fluent in Japanese.



Edward Watson Solicitor 
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Edward is a solicitor in the employment, industrial relations and safety team. He has worked closely with the Australia-Japan Practice since 2016, initially as a paralegal, assisting the Corporate team in Brisbane on various Japanese client matters and also working briefly in the firm's Tokyo office. He has previously rotated in the Environment, Planning and Communities team in Brisbane.

Edward speaks fluent Japanese and holds 日本語能力試験一級 certification.



Lauren Woo Solicitor 
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Lauren is a solicitor in our Brisbane corporate / M&A team. She has previously worked for 6 months in the Tokyo corporate team. Lauren's experience includes advising on public and private M&A transactions, project development (including tender contracts and procurement contracts), real estate related FIRB applications and the sale and purchase of commercial properties.

Lauren works closely with Japanese companies on their investments into Australia, Asia and Europe. She has basic Japanese language skills and has previously obtained 日本語能力試験三級 certification.



Clarence Ma Solicitor 
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Clarence is a graduate in the Sydney office.

Clarence holds a Bachelor of Laws and a Bachelor of International Studies (International Relations) from the University of New South Wales, Australia. In university, Clarence undertook a student exchange at the University of Tokyo, supported by the Australian Government's New Colombo Plan Scholarship.

Clarence holds 日本語能力試験一級 certification.



Tatsuaki Tomiyama Solicitor 
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Tatsuaki is a graduate in the Sydney office. He has previously worked in the firm's disputes team, where he worked on a major lawsuit against a multinational Japanese corporation.

Prior to joining Herbert Smith Freehills, Tatsuaki worked internationally in the U.S., Japan, and Africa for several years, including at a United Nations agency working with donor countries to improve governance and security in conflict areas.

Tatsuaki is a native Japanese speaker, and speaks fluent English and basic Spanish.

OUR JAPAN TEAM



Andrew Blacoe Partner
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Andrew has extensive experience and expertise advising clients on complex international and cross-border transactions in the metals and minerals, power and petroleum sectors.

He has lived in both Tokyo and Sydney for over 10 years and has specific expertise advising Japanese corporations on their M&A, project development and finance transactions in the energy and resources sector.

Andrew was seconded to a major Japanese trading house in Tokyo for 2 years.

Andrew's full profile can be read [here](#).



Nina O'Keefe Associate 
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Nina is an associate in the dispute resolution team in our Tokyo office. Nina has experience in advising clients in compliance, regulatory and investigatory matters, and focuses on commercial litigation, corporate crime investigations and modern slavery advisory.

Nina is admitted to practise as a solicitor in New South Wales. She is a native English speaker and speaks Japanese fluently.

Nina's full profile can be read [here](#).



Joel Rheuben Senior Associate 
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Joel is a senior associate in the competition, regulatory and trade practice in Tokyo, having previously worked in Brussels and London. Joel has represented a number of global and Japanese clients in relation to the merger control aspects of their transactions, as well as antitrust investigations by the European Commission and other regulators

Joel is admitted to practice in New South Wales, Australia and as a solicitor in England and Wales and Ireland. He is a fluent Japanese speaker, having held 日本語能力試験一級 certification for more than 15 years, and is a graduate of the University of Tokyo.

Joel's full profile can be read [here](#).



Stephen McCann Associate
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Stephen is an associate in our corporate team in Tokyo. Stephen's practice focuses on cross-border M&A, joint ventures, and other transactional matters for Japanese clients in the energy, oil & gas (including LNG), and resources sectors.

Prior to joining Herbert Smith Freehills, Stephen worked in another international law firm in Tokyo. Stephen also worked on secondment for three years at a Japanese electric utility as well as spending time on secondment at a Japanese trading company.

Stephen's full profile can be read [here](#).



Ryu Long Associate 
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Ryu is an associate in the corporate / M&A team in our Tokyo office. Ryu has experience in advising Japanese and international clients, including Japanese trading houses, on a broad range of corporate and commercial matters.

Ryu is dual-qualified to practice in the Supreme Court of New South Wales, Australia and as a solicitor in England and Wales. He is a native English speaker and speaks Japanese fluently.

Ryu's full profile can be read [here](#).