

HERBERT SMITH FREEHILLS SUCCESSFULLY ACTS FOR SONEPAR IN FRANCE'S FIRST AFA HEARING

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Deals and cases

Herbert Smith Freehills has successfully advised distribution giant Sonepar, after the French Anti-Corruption Agency (AFA) found the company to be "*fully compliant with the requirements*" of the new Sapin II Law.

The decision, which was handed down on 4 July 2019 in the first case ever heard by the AFA's Enforcement Committee (*Commission des sanctions*), marks the first time a French company has had its compliance programme approved by the French Authorities.

The AFA is in charge of ensuring that companies comply with the anticorruption compliance obligations provided by law, by advising them and checking their compliance programmes.

Following a request from the AFA that Sonepar present its anticorruption compliance programme, the company opted for a public hearing in the interest of transparency.

The AFA finally confirmed that it was fully compliant with the new Sapin II Law.

Paris Partner Jonathan Mattout and of Counsel Raphaël Coeurquetin advised Sonepar, an independent family-owned group with global market leadership in the B-2-B distribution of electrical products, solutions and related services.

Commenting on the case, Jonathan said:

"We are delighted by the decision. It was very challenging and rewarding for us to be involved in this first hearing of the AFA. We are thrilled with the decision, which confirms that Sonepar's policies and procedures are exemplary."

