

HERBERT SMITH FREEHILLS LAUNCHES ALTERNATIVE LEGAL SERVICES OFFICE IN MELBOURNE

15 September 2016 | Melbourne
News

Leading global law firm Herbert Smith Freehills has announced the further expansion of its global Alternative Legal Services (ALT) business, with a new centre opening in Melbourne in November 2016. The new dedicated facility is the first of its kind to be opened and operated by a law firm in Australia.

Building upon the enormous success and growth of the firm's global ALT business, the new centre is located on St Kilda Road and will initially be staffed by around 65 employees, including up to 50 fee earners. It follows the recent opening of an ALT office in Shanghai, also the first offering of its kind in China, and the opening of an ALT 'pop-up' in Perth in October 2015.

In response to strong client demand and the outstanding success of the Perth pop-up, the firm has also made a decision to maintain a permanent ALT presence in Perth.

The firm's global ALT business combines legal expertise, process efficiency and client technology solutions to process high-volume or document-intensive work more efficiently and cost effectively for clients, complementing the high-end advice offered by the firm's lawyers from its existing Australian offices, and internationally.

The Australian ALT business will offer clients an innovative range of cost-effective services including 24 hour document review, claims assessment, due diligence, commercial contracts and legal analysis.

Libby Jackson, Herbert Smith Freehills' Global Head of Alternative Legal Services, said: "The challenges our clients are facing is creating a big increase in demand for ALT services. The high volume of data associated with significant matters continues to rise, and the sources of the data is shifting into less traditional spaces.

"By equipping these new teams in Melbourne and Shanghai with the technology and processes proven at our existing centres, we can offer clients a cost-effective way of tackling the labour-intensive elements of their projects, complementing the high-end advice offered by the firm's lawyers around the world."

Patrick St John, Managing Partner, Strategic Implementation, said the firm is changing the way work is delivered for clients, and that implementing innovative solutions efficiently and effectively will be the way for firms to differentiate themselves and to make themselves more invaluable to clients.

He went on to say: "Our clients are rapidly globalising, and the world is changing with rapid technological revolution. The challenges our clients are facing keep mutating. We are working proactively to help them adapt with new ways of doing business and finding greater efficiencies.

"Redesigning and improving the way we deliver our services to our clients is one of the key elements of our refreshed global strategy which was launched earlier this year. Lots of firms talk about this but we have invested significantly in this and are achieving exceptional results.

"Our alternative legal services offering has proven very popular with clients in Australia and around the world. We now have over 350 staff in seven strategic locations; we intend to keep investing in innovative solutions for our clients, including continuing to grow this exciting part of the business," Mr St. John concluded.

The recruitment drive for the Legal Analyst and Solicitor roles in the Melbourne ALT team has now commenced.

NOTES FOR EDITORS

Herbert Smith Freehills' Alternative Legal Services global team has some 350 lawyers, legal assistants and technologists, working from centres in Belfast, Brisbane, London, Melbourne, Perth, Sydney and Shanghai.

Its products and services include document review, transaction support including due diligence, claims assessment, commercial contracts, funds repapering/specialist work, client technology services (including advisory and document review software) and asset management for real estate clients.

Last year, the team processed 63 million documents, reviewed over 3 million documents and 5,000 property leases, and managed the administration of more than 500 funds.

ALTERNATIVE LEGAL SERVICES: TIMELINE

- April 2011 - Belfast office opens with 19 fee earners, focused on large scale document-

intensive aspects of litigation, arbitration and regulatory investigations. Herbert Smith Freehills was the first leading international law firm to establish a UK-based near-shore operation to conduct this type of work. Today, Belfast has over 240 staff.

- June 2015 - A new global alternative legal services business is launched, bringing together the firm's Belfast office with its Australian Information Logistics team and its London-based eDiscovery service to create a global team of over 350 lawyers, legal analysts and technologists - all dedicated to providing alternative legal services.
- October 2015 - Launches a 'pop up' office in Perth, Australia, set up with 30 staff in only eight weeks, giving clients access to a unique 24-hour document review service - one of a number of innovations that sets us apart from competitors.
- September 2016 - Launches in Shanghai with a 13-member team, bilingual in English and Mandarin, the first centre of its kind in China.
- November 2016 - Launches in Melbourne with 50+ strong team

MEDIA CONTACT

For further information on this news article, please contact:

**MADELEINE MOTION,
COMMUNICATIONS ADVISER**

SYDNEY

Tel: +61 2 9225 5065

Email: madeleine.motion@hsf.com