

HERBERT SMITH FREEHILLS TOPS AUSTRALIAN M&A LEAGUE TABLES FOR 2020

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Firm news

Herbert Smith Freehills has secured its position as the leading legal adviser in Australian mergers and acquisitions, topping three different M&A leagues tables by both deal volume and total deal value for the 2020 calendar year.

The firm ranked:

- 1st by value and 1st by deal count in announced AU/NZ deals (Bloomberg);
- 1st by value and 1st by deal count in announced Australasian deals (Mergermarket);
- 1st by value and 1st by deal count in announced AU/NZ deals (Refinitiv); and
- 1st by deal count in AU/NZ announced mid-market deals (Refinitiv).

Commenting on the firm's performance, Herbert Smith Freehills corporate M&A partner [Paul Branston](#), said, "2020 saw many sectors facing challenging market conditions, and we're grateful to all of our clients for continuing to give us the opportunity to work alongside them on their milestone transactions throughout the year.

"While M&A in 2020 initially had a slow start and then experienced a significant decline as the COVID-19 global pandemic hit in February and March, activity levels returned in the second half of the year with a mix of both public and private deals being announced in that period, including the vast majority of the year's largest deals.

“Looking forward, we are expecting M&A activity to be high in 2021. The Australian economy has fared well relative to many other countries during the pandemic and there is a strong pipeline of deals, showing companies have adapted and are now focused on pursuing their growth strategies. Private equity will continue to feature, and interest from overseas should increase as the global situation improves.”

Herbert Smith Freehills acted on many of Australia’s largest and most complex M&A deals in 2020, including advising:

- Coca-Cola Amatil on the proposed A\$10.9b acquisition by Coca-Cola European Partners
- IGO Limited on its A\$1.95 billion acquisition of 49% of Tianqi Lithium Energy Australia
- Iluka Resources Limited on the demerger of its royalties business, Deterra Royalties Limited
- CBA on the A\$3.3b sale of Colonial First State

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