

HERBERT SMITH FREEHILLS WINS FINANCIAL TIMES TOP ASIA PACIFIC INNOVATION AWARD

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News

The firm has been named Most Innovative International Law Firm at the *FT Asia-Pacific Innovative Lawyers Awards 2016*.

The firm topped the overall Asia Pacific rankings, scoring highly across Asia and Australia for innovation in business of law, corporate and commercial, and finance.

"This is a great result for all our people, especially as we were recognised across all areas of our business – for innovation in service delivery for clients, on the ingenuity of legal deals, and for our firm commitment to diversity and inclusion," said Sue Gilchrist, joint Regional Managing Partner for Asia & Australia.

Equally pleasing was a win for strategic client Telstra, named most innovative in-house legal team. This award relates to the collaboration project that the firm has undertaken with Telstra over the last 12 months to better manage matters and workflows and to drive new and innovative ways of working.

In addition, Justin D'Agostino, Global Head of Disputes and the firm's joint Regional Managing Partner for Asia & Australia was named one of the top ten most innovative lawyers in the region.

"This year, Herbert Smith Freehills occupies the top slot, a jump from 17th last year. Neither the UK's Herbert Smith nor Australia's Freehills, which merged in 2012, was then known for innovation. But four years on, the merged firm's performance in this report shows it has grown its Asia-Pacific presence. Its work includes BHP Billiton's demerger from South32, the largest in Australian corporate history, and CGN's purchase of Edra Global Energy Berhad for \$2.3 billion last year, the largest M&A deal in Malaysia.

More revealing is a recent announcement on strategy. Cultivating innovation is listed as one of the five ways in which it wants to become a new type of law firm for 2020."

From *FT Asia-Pacific Innovative Lawyers 2016*, 3 June 2016

The full report is available [here](#).

In addition to the Most Innovative International Law Firm and the nomination for Most Innovative Lawyer, the following projects were ranked by the judges:

INNOVATION IN BUSINESS OF LAW

- **Standout:** An expanded global legal project management team includes process improvement and data analytics expertise. Professional project managers now frequently work alongside lawyers providing advice to clients.
- **Highly commended:** Through a series of roundtable seminars, the firm is connecting infrastructure companies with new projects and the firm's experts in countries along the new Silk Road.
- **Commended:** Diversity and inclusion initiatives are helping to engage women and LGBT lawyers and staff while developing the next generation of Asia-born talent to build a more multicultural firm.

INNOVATION IN FINANCE

- **Highly commended:** Advised National Australia Bank on its first Australian Islamic financing product using the sharia principle of wakala (**Commended:** Fergus Smith)
- **Commended:** Advised on a unique covenant-lite package for the largest renminbi-denominated unrated bond issued by an Indian corporate.

INNOVATION IN CORPORATE & COMMERCIAL

- **Commended:** Advised BHP Billiton on the demerger of South32, the largest in Australian corporate history, managing shareholder rights and disaggregating operations in five different countries.

- **Commended:** Helped to craft the deal structure and overcome foreign ownership restrictions for China General Nuclear Power Corporation's acquisition of Edra's energy assets in Malaysia's largest M&A transaction of 2015.

Full Asia-Pacific rankings are available [here](#).

About Herbert Smith Freehills

Operating from over 26 offices across Asia Pacific, EMEA and North America, Herbert Smith Freehills is at the heart of the new global business landscape providing premium quality, full-service legal advice. We provide many of the world's most important organisations with access to market-leading dispute resolution, projects and transactional legal advice, combined with expertise in a number of global industry sectors, including energy, natural resources, infrastructure, technology and financial services.

KEY CONTACTS

If you have any questions, or would like to know how this might affect your business, phone, or email these key contacts.



**JUSTIN
D'AGOSTINO, MH**

CHIEF EXECUTIVE
OFFICER AND
PARTNER, HONG
KONG

+852 21014010
Justin.DAgostino@hsf.com

MEDIA CONTACT

For further information on this news article, please contact:

**SALLY GREIG, HEAD OF
COMMUNICATIONS, ASIA**

HONG KONG

Tel: +852 21014624

Email: sally.greig@hsf.com