

Bird & Bird & Airlines



Sharing your
passion & working
your way & in for the
long haul & across
the whole industry &
crossing the globe
& touching the
metal & helping
you to fly

Our mission is to combine our deep knowledge of the aviation sector and our legal expertise to develop commercial solutions that make long-term business sense.

Introduction

Bird & Bird is a global law firm. Altogether we have over 900 lawyers and legal practitioners working on our clients' issues and business goals worldwide. We select and develop our people to possess a rare and invaluable grasp of strategic commercial issues. By combining this talent with exceptional legal expertise and deep industry knowledge, our advice is always informed, up to date, focused and relevant. Our recommendations are practical, realistic and clear.

Bird & Bird & Aviation

Our Aviation team has hands-on experience working within aviation companies and our people are steeped in the way the industry works. We work for many airlines of all types and sizes in various countries across the world. We also work for aircraft manufacturers, lessors, financiers, groundhandlers, MROs and freight forwarders, insurers, airports, tour operators, industry associations and online booking providers. Our clients seek our advice because we know their business and we share a genuine passion and enthusiasm for the sector.

We relish using our aviation knowledge and experience to get to grips with business issues quickly. We provide timely, practical and commercially realistic advice and support in pursuit of sensible, workable solutions for transactions, ventures, and disputes. We like to be at the leading edge of business and legal developments and to be innovative for our clients' benefit.

Our people join forces to work on client matters across the world, meaning that all of our clients have access to the very best aviation legal expertise available from our firm.

Commentators say: "Simon Chamberlain's knowledge and reliability are great"

Chambers UK 2011

Robin Springthorpe is "unflappable and has great litigation instincts"

Chambers UK 2011

Paul Briggs is applauded for his "extremely proactive" approach to transactions.

Chambers UK 2011

Vonnick Le Guillou is "focused, resourceful and excellent when working in a team."

Chambers Europe 2010

Catherine Erkelens' clients say they instruct the Belgium practice 'because of her reputation'.

The European Legal 500

Airlines

We work with our airline clients to deal successfully with all aspects of airline business ownership, operations and management, including aircraft acquisition, financing, leasing and disposal, dispute resolution, regulatory and competition matters, commercial transactions and agreements and employment issues. Our recent transactions and activities include:

Aircraft Transactions

- Purchase of new aircraft from manufacturers
- Purchase of used aircraft
- Loan financing of new aircraft purchases
- Aircraft finance leases
- Aircraft operating leases
- Aircraft wet/ACMI leases
- Sale of used aircraft
- Creation and implementation of off-shore structures for the ownership and leasing of aircraft
- Aircraft sub-leasing
- Engine leasing (short and longer term)

Commercial

- Airline code-sharing and the agreements and arrangements for participation in global airline alliances
- Aircraft maintenance, overhaul, repair and spares support arrangements
- Aircraft and passenger handling, catering, fuel supply and all other ground handling arrangements
- Outsourcing of systems and services
- IT, communications and related technologies, including smart cards, electronic payment systems, inventory management systems and e-ticketing
- Sales and distribution agreements with travel agents, consolidators, global distribution systems and other sales channels
- Intellectual property rights, ranging from rights in the design of aircraft seats and aircraft cabin design to aircraft livery and IPR developed by third party service providers

- Warranty, support and service issues relating to the sale and operation of aircraft

“Some clients believe that the Bird & Bird team has ‘a more concise approach and working mentality than larger firms - it is business-based, dynamic and to the point’.”

Chambers 2010, Europe-wide Transportation: Aviation

Disputes

- Breaches of contracts, lease terms and conditions
- Disputes with aircraft financiers/managers
- Insurance coverage disputes
- Cross-border and multi-jurisdictional litigation and arbitration
- Equipment repossessions
- Maintenance and technical disputes
- Product liability claims
- Procurement and delay claims
- Warranty and other contractual claims
- Commercial disputes with suppliers
- Claims against airport operators regarding airport conditions and facilities
- Contentious regulatory matters
- Risk advisory

Regulatory and competition

- Establishing new airlines
- Building relationships with and liaising with applicable aviation and statutory authorities, including the European Aviation Safety Agency, UK Civil Aviation Authority, the UK Office of Fair Trading, the UK Competition Commission and the European Commission
- Airline licensing, ownership and control
- Traffic rights, slot swap arrangements and negotiation with airport slot co-ordinators
- Advertising standards
- Passenger rights
- Airport regulation, including airport charges, security and safety issues
- Computer reservations systems (CRS)
- Route licensing
- Bilateral air service agreements
- Environmental issues including noise emissions trading and the introduction of ETS
- Registration of aircraft
- Liberalisation of groundhandling services

Employment

- Boardroom-level appointments and dismissals
- Employee incentives, including share option plans and benefits packages
- Contractual issues - contracts of employment, restrictive covenants and confidentiality issues, handbooks
- Defending tribunal and court claims
- Advice on organisational restructuring
- Discrimination law
- Unions - recognition and industrial action
- TUPE - outsourcing and service provision changes
- Ex-patriate employee issues

Primary Contacts

Belgium

Catherine Erkelens

T: +32 (0)22 826 000
catherine.erkelens@twobirds.com

China

John Koh (Hong Kong)

T: +852 2248 6000
john.koh@twobirds.com

France

Vonnick Le Guillou

T: +33 (0)14 268 6000
vonnick.le.guillou@twobirds.com

Germany

Ulrich Goebel

T: +49 (0)89 3581 6000
ulrich.goebel@twobirds.com

Italy

Alberto Salvadè

T: +39 (0)23 035 6000
alberto.salvade@twobirds.com

Malaysia

Beng Chai Tay

T: +65 6428 9888
bengchai.tay@twobirds.com

The Netherlands

Pauline Vos

T: +31 (0)70 353 8800
pauline.vos@twobirds.com

Poland

Stanislaw Pelczar

T: +48 (0)22 537 4900
stanislaw.pelczar@twobirds.com

Singapore

Alban Kang

T: +65 6534 5266
alban.kang@twobirds.com

Spain

Javier Fernandez-Samaniego

T: +34 (0)91 790 6000
javier.fernandez.samaniego@twobirds.com

Sweden

Jörgen Ekström

T: +46 (0)85 063 2000
jorgen.ekstrom@twobirds.com

Anders Nilsson

T: +46 (0)85 063 2000
anders.nilsson@twobirds.com

UK

Simon Chamberlain

T: +44 (0)20 7415 6000
simon.chamberlain@twobirds.com

Robin Springthorpe

T: +44 (0)20 7415 6000
robin.springthorpe@twobirds.com

Paul Briggs

T: +44 (0)20 7415 6000
paul.briggs@twobirds.com

twobirds.com

Abu Dhabi & Beijing & Bratislava & Brussels & Budapest & Düsseldorf & Frankfurt & The Hague & Hamburg & Helsinki & Hong Kong & London & Lyon & Madrid & Milan & Munich & Paris & Prague & Rome & Shanghai & Singapore & Stockholm & Warsaw

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Bird & Bird is an international legal practice comprising Bird & Bird LLP and its affiliated and associated businesses and has offices in the locations listed on our web site: twobirds.com.

A list of members of Bird & Bird LLP, and of any non-members who are designated as partners and of their respective professional qualifications, is open to inspection at the above address.