



CRS

CharlesRussell
Speechlys

—
Aviation Practice
Middle East

A large commercial airplane is shown from a low-angle, bottom-up perspective, flying over a sunset sky. The aircraft's fuselage, wings, and engines are clearly visible against the bright orange and yellow light of the setting sun. The sky is filled with soft, glowing clouds.

"Clients say: 'I genuinely can't think of anything to improve. If I contact them on anything they are very quick to respond'."

Chambers Global, 2018



Introduction

Charles Russell Speechlys LLP (“CRS”) is one of the oldest and most respected law firms in the UK with over 170 partners and over 500 lawyers operating from our offices in 11 international business centres around the world. We are one of the leading international law firms in the Middle East. With English and Arabic speaking lawyers, we service a broad range of clients including governments, sovereign wealth funds, corporates, major investors, as well as high-profile families and individuals across the Middle East.

Our Partners in the Middle East are all ranked in independent directories such as Chambers Global and Legal 500 as leading lawyers in their respective fields.

Our Services

We provide a range of legal services to the aviation and associated industries, including:

- Airlines
- Aircraft manufacturers
- Airports and ground handlers
- Aerospace & defence companies
- Airport contractors and facility management

Our main areas of work involve:

- Dispute Resolution
- Mergers & Acquisitions
- Aircraft leasing
- Commercial contracts
- Intellectual Property
- Employment



Patrick Gearon FClarb
Partner

T: +973 17 133203
Patrick.gearon@crsblaw.com



"Sources say Patrick Gearon is "highly skilled in his field," and an "excellent leader." His vast expertise encompasses all aspects of dispute resolution, with recent notable clients in the banking and aviation sectors."

Chambers Global, 2019

Selected Experience

Dispute Resolution:

[Etihad Aviation Group](#)

Advising Etihad in relation to dispute resolution and litigation matters in the Middle East.

[Gulf Air](#)

Advising Gulf Air in relation to a dispute under English law regarding the sale and purchase of 10 aircraft at a cost of approximately USD 630 million.

[Gulf Air – Worldwide freezing order](#)

Acting for Gulf Air in the English High Court in respect of a complex multi-million dollar breach of contract case involving seven separate respondents relating to In-flight entertainment contracts. Freezing orders were obtained and judgment obtained against the respondents for 9.1 \$ million.

[Gulf Air – Pakistan Litigation](#)

Acting for Gulf Air in relation to numerous disputes raised in Pakistan, including a claim of USD 4,769,400 for breach of contract.

[Oman Air](#)

Advising Oman Air, the national carrier for the Sultanate of Oman on, intellectual property issues and a whole range of dispute resolution matters and acting in a Euros 6 million arbitration claim brought by a French company relating to claims of copyright infringement in relation to cabin crew uniforms.

[Gulf Technics](#)

Advising Gulf Technics in relation to a multi-million dollar dispute with one of its suppliers.



Patrick Gearon was recently selected by his peers for inclusion in the Sixth Edition of The Best Lawyers™ 2018 in the practice area of Litigation.

The Best Lawyers™ 2018

EasyJet

Advising on a range of legal matters, including disputes relating to ground handling agreements, IT agreements and licences, research project arrangements, engine maintenance and regulatory matters.

Bahrain Airport Company

Acting as the lead legal advisor on the redevelopment of Bahrain International Airport advising upon all the contracts from Main Contractor to all sub contracts in relation to this high profile and transformational project.

British Airways

Advising British Airways on its flotation and on the sale of Bond helicopters to Babcock.

Executive Jet Charter limited

Advising Executive Jet Charter Limited in connection with numerous disputes relating to commercial agreements.

Enigma Information Retrieval Systems Inc

Representing Enigma Information Retrieval Systems Inc against a major defence manufacturer in a matter involving use of software applications for the maintenance of aircraft.

FlyBMI

Advising the shareholders and lenders in and to FlyBMI in respect of their administration. Amongst the very many complex issues associated with an airline administration, this also involved the transfer out and disposal of all the aircraft in the FlyBMI fleet shortly before the administrator was appointed.

Aircraft leasing dispute

Acting on behalf of a leading aircraft leasing company in relation to defaults by one of its lessees and in UAE proceedings to retrieve aircrafts. We successfully negotiated with various UAE airport authorities on the retrieval of aircrafts and secured a favourable settlement in relation to the defaults by the lessee.



“Charles Russell Speechlys LLP is instructed by government bodies and industry regulators, sovereign wealth funds and high-net-worth families, and corporate clients in the aviation, hi-tech and construction and engineering sectors, among others.”

Legal 500 EMEA, 2019

[Jet Engine Leasing Agreements Disputes](#)

Advising a regional airline in connection with various disputes arising in relation to jet engine leasing agreements. This involved various arbitration proceedings and assisting to negotiate a commercial settlement.

[Termination of a UAE Agency Agreement](#)

Advising a South East Asian national airline in regards to terminating a UAE law general sales agency agreement.

[Private Jets](#)

Representing an executive private airline regarding an aircraft refurbishment dispute and associated contractual variations.

Representing private jet owner in dry charter dispute also involving a significant white collar crime element.

[Caribbean Airline Company](#)

Acting on behalf of a Caribbean airline involved in a major aircraft engine leasing dispute.

Mergers & Acquisitions:

[Bond Helicopters](#)

Advising the Bond family (Bond Helicopters, a major North Sea helicopter operator) on the sale of their shareholdings in the Avincis Group (holding company for Bond Helicopters and other helicopter companies) on the sale of Avincis for in excess of US\$2 billion.

[BMI Regional Airways](#)

Advising the purchasers of BMI Regional from British Airways, this involved the separation of all the BMI assets, including the computer systems, from the rest of the BA group and detailed negotiations with the CAA on bonding and similar arrangements. The purchasers and their funders also took security over the BMI aircraft fleet.



“Charles Russell Speechlys LLP is noted for its ‘excellent responsiveness, commercial nous and value’.”

Legal 500 EMEA, 2017

Loganair

Advising the purchasers of Loganair, the major airline in Scotland. This acquisition included putting in detailed management incentive schemes to cover the post purchase era.

QualitAir

Advising QualitAir on a business purchase from Airline Maintenance Resources Limited.

UFC Aerospace

Advising UFC Aerospace on its acquisition of BAS Aerospace.

Offset programmes

Advising a leading offset broker on its arranging and participation in a multi-party offset programme for the acquisition of a portfolio of US900\$m aircraft manufacturer loans for the acquisition of 25 aircrafts provided to several international airlines. The acquisition was financed by way of a series of structured loans.

Aircraft Purchase and leaseback

Advising a major investment bank in relation to its proposed equity investment into a 'purchase and lease back transaction' of an Airbus A300-330. We were asked to provide a detailed due diligence report in relation to the proposed equity investment and the structure of the transaction comprising several documents – Engine Warranty Assignments, Leases and the Equity Subscription documentation.

Leasing

Advising the arranger and participating investor on the acquisition of a combined portfolio of US500\$m aircraft manufacturer loans and leased aircraft, financed through a series of structured loans.



"Clients point to the professional approach and say the lawyers 'are very flexible and give us a multitude of options'."

Chambers Global, 2017

Commercial Contracts

Bahrain Airport Company

Acting as the lead legal advisors on the redevelopment of Bahrain International Airport advising upon all the contracts from Main Contractor to all sub contracts in relation to this high profile and transformational project.

Cavotec Middle East FZE

Providing commercial advice for this global engineering group including advice on the contract to provide ground support systems for the expansion of Bahrain International Airport.

Hochtief Facility Management Group

Advising Hochtief Facility Management Group on a wide range of commercial matters including advice on the facilities management contract for Bahrain International Airport.

Executive Jet Charter Limited

Advising Executive Jet Charter Limited in connection with numerous commercial agreements.

Intellectual Property

Gulf Air

Advising Gulf Air, the award winning national carrier for the Kingdom of Bahrain, for nearly ten years on the full spectrum of intellectual property protection and the whole range of IP dispute resolution.

Yeoman Light Aircraft Company Limited

Advising Yeoman Light Aircraft Company Limited on a broad range of legal issues including intellectual property and corporate / commercial matters.



“One client said: “A strength of Patrick's is definitely timely responses and basically getting the job done.”

Chambers Global, 2019

Aircraft Leasing

Confidential Client

Advising a significant Middle Eastern private group on the Shari'ah compliant financing of a private aircraft portfolio.

Confidential Client

Advising a significant Ukrainian group on the financing of a private aircraft portfolio.

Employment

CAFCO (Coventry) Limited

Advising CAFCO (Coventry) Limited, a consortium company, on the acquisition of Coventry Airport in the UK and related airport procurement & supply agreements, employment, regulatory, litigation and planning issues.

Other Experience

Gulf Aviation Academy

Advising Gulf Aviation Academy in relation to the preparation of a number of standard form commercial agreements relating to the provision of training services to customers and clients.

Monaco Telecom International

Advising Monaco Telecom International in relation to a master services agreement with OnAir Switzerland SARL (the 50 / 50 joint venture between Airbus and SITA) to provide the ground infrastructure for its GSM and GPRS mobile services, allowing air passengers to use their mobile telephones in flight.

Enigma Information Retrieval Systems Inc

Advising Enigma Information Retrieval Systems Inc against a major defence manufacturer in a matter involving use of software applications for the maintenance of aircraft.

Contact

If you are interested in more information on our Aviation expertise, please speak to your usual contact or alternatively:

Patrick Gearon

Partner

Litigation & Dispute Resolution

T: +973 17133203

patrick.gearon@crsblaw.com

Our offices

London
5 Fleet Place
London
EC4M 7RD UK
T: +44 (0)20 7203 5000

Cheltenham
Compass House
Lypiatt Road
Cheltenham
Gloucestershire
GL2 5QJ UK
T: +44 (0)1242 221122

Guildford
One London Square
Cross Lanes
Guildford
Surrey
GU1 1UN UK
T: +44 (0)1483 252525

Doha
Palm Tower
Floor 15
West Bay
PO Box 26600 Doha
Qatar
T: +974 40342036

Dubai
Index Tower, West Tower
11th Floor, Unit 1108
P.O. Box 507226
DIFC, Dubai, UAE
T: +971 4 246 1900

Geneva
9- 11 rue du Prince
1204 Geneva
Switzerland
T: +41 (0)22 591 18 88

Hong Kong
Unit 1002, L10,
1 Duddell Street,
Central, Hong Kong
T: +852 6596 7517

Luxembourg
2 rue Jean Monnet
L-2180 Luxembourg
T: +352 26 48 68 00

Manama
Bahrain World Trade Center
Floor 24 East Tower
PO Box 31249 Manama
Kingdom of Bahrain
T: +973 17 133200

Paris
41 Avenue de Friedland
75008 Paris
France
T: +33 (0) 1 70 99 09 00

Zurich
Basteiplatz 7
8001 Zurich
Switzerland
T: +41 (0)43 430 0200

charlesrussellspeechlys.com

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