Aviation

Airlines
“They’re head and shoulders above the competition.”

CHAMBERS GLOBAL, 2020
Introduction

We have acted for clients in the aviation sector for decades. It is currently facing unprecedented challenges, with disruption caused by the closure of borders and quarantine restrictions, and with potential repercussions affecting the industry for years to come.

We work with many of the world’s leading airlines and many of our client relationships are long-standing. Acting for national carriers, private airlines and regional operators, our team advises on corporate and commercial matters, resolving disputes, intellectual property matters, sponsorship agreements, employment and pensions law.

The breadth of our client base means we understand the different commercial pressures that airlines face and we tailor our advice and approach accordingly.

We work with airlines to resolve all types of disputes including contractual disputes relating to ground handling, aircraft purchase/refurbishment, engine leasing agreements and intellectual property. Where pre-court settlements of disputes may not be possible, we have significant experience of resolving such disputes through litigation, arbitration or mediation.

Commercial relationships with service providers, aircraft manufacturers and airports can be complex and subject to frequent renegotiation or disputes. We have significant experience drafting commercial contracts with third-party service providers such as engine and component manufacturers, as well as contracts concerning aircraft landing, freight and other charges related to the use of airport infrastructure.

Employment issues such as the end of government support schemes and the current vastly reduced numbers of passengers are a deep concern for the sector. We work closely with airlines and their suppliers to help them address a broad range of employment law and HR issues via a dedicated HR professionals team, from the inevitable restructurings and redundancies to the reward and retention of key staff, as well as all aspects of UK immigration and pensions law.

Just like other successful businesses, airlines are looking to make the most of their intellectual property assets including trade marks, copyright and designs, through their protection, enforcement and commercialisation. We are one of the few leading international law firms with the ability to provide a holistic approach, and a complete ‘one-stop-shop’, to meet your needs across the full range of intellectual property.

Sport sponsorships and other commercial partnerships are critical for the successful marketing of airlines. Our top ranked sports team has longstanding experience in advising on such arrangements and will always start by gaining an understanding of your specific priorities and concerns. Your in-house legal and commercial teams can be confident that our lawyers will work hand in glove with them to ensure the best possible outcome from these important agreements.
Our relevant experience

Acting for **Gulf Air**, the national airline of the Kingdom of Bahrain, 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 and in a dispute regarding the sale and purchase of 10 aircraft at a cost of approximately USD630 million.

Instructed by **Etihad Airways** on a variety of dispute resolution matters.

Selected to join its legal panel in July 2020, we advise **Qatar Airways** on a variety of contentious and non-contentious matters and projects.

Advising **EasyJet** 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.

Advising **Oman Air** on intellectual property issues and a whole range of dispute resolution matters as well as acting in a €6 million arbitration claim brought by a French company relating to claims of copyright infringement in relation to cabin crew uniforms.

Advising **Emirates** in relation to Intellectual Property matters.

Providing a **major Middle Eastern airline** with best practice advice on day to day employment issues in relation to its UK employees, including advice concerning sickness absence and grievances; reviewing and advising on employment contracts and policy documentation; and advising on outsourcing arrangements and agreements.

Advised **two flag carrier airlines** on their respective reward and key staff retention policies, training programmes and contentious whistleblower matters.

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

Acting on behalf of a **Caribbean airline** involved in a major aircraft engine-leasing dispute.
Acting for a **major French airline** in various commercial disputes against several providers of training, communication and advertising services.

Advising a **French regional airline** on pre-litigation negotiations with one of its directors in a dispute concerning the governance of the company and the renewal of the director’s mandate.

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

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

“They’re a fantastic team - very commercial, very clear in their advice and a pleasure to work with.”

CHAMBERS UK, 2020
“Nascent start-ups and intergalactic corporations alike love to have Charles Russell Speechlys as the guardian of their most important brands, due to its unwavering commitment to quality and its holistic and commercial approach.”

WORLD TRADEMARK REVIEW, 2019
Our team

Dispute Resolution

Patrick Gearon FCIArb
Partner
Patrick.Gearon@crsblaw.com
T: +973 17 133203

John Sykes
Partner
John.Sykes@crsblaw.com
T: +44 (0)20 7203 5131

Corporate

Paul Arathoon
Partner
Paul.Arathoon@crsblaw.com
T: +44 (0)20 7427 6515

Richard Norton
Partner
Richard.Norton@crsblaw.com
T: +44 (0)1242 246357

Commercial

Megan Paul
Partner
Megan.Paul@crsblaw.com
T: +44 (0) 20 7438 2235

Paul Stone
Partner
Paul.Stone@crsblaw.com
T: +44 (0)20 7203 5110

Real Estate & Construction

Paula Boast
Partner
Paula.Boast@crsblaw.com
T: +973 17 133212

David Savage
Partner
David.Savage@crsblaw.com
T: +44(0)1483 252614

Intellectual Property

Nick White
Partner
Nick.White@crsblaw.com
T: +44 (0)20 7438 2294

Mark Hill
Partner
Mark.Hill@crsblaw.com
T: +971 4 246 1921

Employment

Mike Powner
Partner
Mike.Powner@crsblaw.com
T: +44 (0)20 7203 5216
This information has been prepared by Charles Russell Speechlys LLP as a general guide only and does not constitute advice on any specific matter. We recommend that you seek professional advice before taking action. No liability can be accepted by us for any action taken or not taken as a result of this information. Charles Russell Speechlys LLP is a limited liability partnership registered in England and Wales, registered number OC311850, and is authorised and regulated by the Solicitors Regulation Authority. Charles Russell Speechlys LLP is also licensed by the Qatar Financial Centre Authority in respect of its branch office in Doha and registered in the Dubai International Financial Centre under number CL2511 and regulated by the Government of Dubai Legal Affairs Department in respect of its branch office in the DIFC. Charles Russell Speechlys LLP’s branch office in Hong Kong is registered as a foreign firm by The Law Society of Hong Kong. Any reference to a partner in relation to Charles Russell Speechlys LLP is to a member of Charles Russell Speechlys LLP or an employee with equivalent standing and qualifications. A list of members and of non-members who are described as partners, is available for inspection at the registered office, 5 Fleet Place, London, EC4M 7RD.