

Our sanctions and export controls expertise

2023



Sanctions

Sanctions compliance can result in the imposition of onerous restrictions on businesses, and violations can lead to substantial risks, including criminal liability, fines, penalties, loss of business, reputational harm and a variety of associated costs which can be difficult to quantify. Our team assists clients in navigating the complex and sometimes competing requirements to which they, or their investors, lenders, advisors or partners, may be subject.

We have a thriving practice advising corporations, financial institutions and individuals on the sanctions and export controls regimes of the United Nations, European Union, United States, United Kingdom and many other jurisdictions. The core of the practice involves advising on economic and trade sanctions, arms embargoes and anti-terrorism laws administered by the EU and the governments of Member States, and U.S. programs administered by the U.S.

Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) and the U.S. Department of State, as well as divestment legislation in force in approximately 30 U.S. states.

There are some instances where a proposed business venture or activity is simply prohibited. In most cases, however, sanctions risks can be appropriately managed. In those rare instances where our clients face investigation or prosecution, we have experienced former government litigators in the EU, Asia, the Middle East and the U.S. who can defend them.

Our market leading sanctions team provides integrated cross-jurisdictional advice to our clients and is well versed in the most complex and sensitive transactions in the market.

Export controls

International trade is a complex area, and the movement of goods between jurisdictions is increasingly subject to financial and trade restrictions imposed by the United Nations, the European Union, or the United States.

We provide expert advice on matters relating to trade regulation and export controls, guiding clients through export control and dual-use laws. We have particular experience in conducting export controls due diligence reviews and investigations, product category assessments and licence requirements and applications.



Runner-up: Sanctions Law Firm of the Year – Europe

WorldECR Awards 2021



Tier 1 for Public International Law

Legal 500 UK 2022

“The Allen & Overy team provides strategic and legal advice to the highest of standards on extremely complex and cross-jurisdictional matters and always in a timely and practical manner.”

Chambers USA 2023

“Extremely generous with their time and support. Very knowledgeable about the latest trends and developments. Able to provide solid and commercial advice.”

Legal 500 2022

Our expertise

Highlights of our recent experience include advising:

Numerous corporates, banks and financial institutions

On the impact of sanctions brought against Russia, including risk management, operational restructuring and M&A.

Sage Group

On a variety of sanctions and trade related issues covering a number of sensitive jurisdictions such as Russian and Libya.

IMI

A major international manufacturer and supplier of valves and other specialist engineering technology, in relation to on-going sanctions and trade related advice. We have also advised IMI on sanctions issues in connection with the divestment of its Russian business to its local management team.

Puma Energy

In respect of both European and U.S. advice on Russian and Iranian sanctions as well as complex rules around co-blending of petroleum products and the treatment under sanctions rules of such products.

Stora Enso

On various sanctions and export control related matters including assessing the potential applicability of the EU's Dual Use Regulation to Stora Enso's product line and helping with the development of Stora Enso's sanctions and export control related compliance policies and procedures.

Mizuho

On sanctions related matters across a range of transactions in which Mizuho is providing finance.

National Australia Bank

On sanctions matters involving Russia, Iran and Sudan. Most recently we prepared a detailed international guide, covering in excess of thirty jurisdictions, analysing potential sanctions restrictions and how these may be relevant to NAB's business.

Colfax

On potential sanctions and export control issues associated with particular international dealings and the potential applicability of the EU's Dual Use Regulation to Colfax ESAB's product line.

DS Smith

A leading EU-based packaging company, on developing an internal sanctions guidance note on transactions concerning Russia, Ukraine, Crimea and Transnistria, together with an associated set of due diligence questions.

A global telecommunications services provider

On high-level corporate structure advice in respect of ABAC and sanctions risk.

Raiffeisen Bank International

On the applicability of the EU's Russian Sanctions regime to various proposed financings involving Russian oil and gas pipeline projects.

Assa Abloy

On the management of sanctions issues and risks in corporate acquisitions.

“Allen & Overy have a very good practice and deliver a great service.”

Chambers UK 2023

Various lenders and borrowers

In drafting, negotiating and assessing U.S. and EU sanctions risks in numerous financings and re-financings, related issues covering a number of sensitive jurisdictions such as Russian and Libya.

A major bank

On the applicability of the EU's Russian Sanctions to various data transfer-related activities in the context of a proposed financing agreement.

A major European oil producer

On the potential acquisition of crude from Iran.

A U.S.-headquartered manufacturing company

On the sale of products into Iran by its EU subsidiaries including negotiating a distribution agreement with an Iranian counterparty and due diligence.

A multinational corporate

In connection with the purchase of a UK company that had previously been subject to investigation for the alleged export of goods to Iran without the requisite licenses from the UK Export Control Organisation (ECO).

A consortium of lenders

In relation to various potential breaches of the sanctions provisions within a financing agreement made in favour of a Russian company operating in Crimea.

Yamal LNG

On sanctions issues in the context of shipping matters and project financing arrangements.

A home and gardens consumer products company

On U.S. compliance (anti-corruption, sanctions) matters in connection with its purchase of a luxury brand.

Bencis Capital Partners B.V.

In relation to various sanctions issues associated within its acquisition of Welling Holding B.V. and, in particular, around the latter's historical and limited business activities in a number of sanctioned countries (including Russia, Iran, Lebanon, Venezuela, and Syria).

An Asian corporation

In respect of regulations for exports of laminated aluminium coils to Iran.

A Ukrainian headquartered steel company

On various EU Russian sanctions-related issues during on-going debt restructuring negotiations.

Numerous corporates and financial institutions

on the impact of sanctions brought against Russia, including risk management, operational restructuring and M&A.

“Consistently impressive in balancing leading edge legal advice with unswerving pragmatism”

Legal 500 2022

A consortium of lenders

On various sanctions risks, and contractual protections in relation to the same, in respect of a GBP3.29 billion financing made to STAR Rafineri A.Ş. owned by State Oil Company of Azerbaijan Republic (SOCAR) and the Ministry of Economic and Industry of Republic of Azerbaijan, for the ownership and operation of an oil refinery complex in Turkey.

A large FTSE 100 company

In the retail industry on all its sanctions matters, including liaising with the EU authorities on its behalf, advising on EU and UK legislation (and differing interpretations amongst Member States) relating to, amongst others, Iran, Syria and Libya, and putting in place process procedures to minimise the risk of breaches.

Several multinational clients

On import restrictions and approvals for the shipment of various commodities globally.

A major international supplier of physical security products

On export control and sanctions issues, including dual-use classifications, arising out of the sale of products to private entities in sanctioned countries including Iran, Sudan and Syria.

A global manufacturer

On sanctions compliance issues, including U.S. and EU sanctions with respect to Iran, Afghanistan, Libya, and Syria.

A major international healthcare business

On a range of sanctions and AML related matters concerning a proposed JV investment into a sanctions sensitive jurisdiction. This included extensive due diligence on the proposed JV partner.

A South-East Asian airline

On the impact of the EU and U.S. sanctions regimes to a potential distressed sale of a second hand civil aircraft to an Iranian counterparty.

A large multinational food corporation

In connection with OFAC sanctions and the exportation (direct and indirect) of food to Iran.

A state investment entity

As to the applicability of the EU and UK's Libyan sanctions regimes to various of its funds, as well as on various questions relating to sanctions licensing.

A European port operator

On compliance with U.S. and EU sanctions and export controls targeting Russia.

Multiple international banks

In connection with risks of U.S. sanctions for the IPO of Hong Kong-based telecommunications company with business in Libya and Syria.

An international tobacco company

On U.S. and EU sanctions issues relating to operations in Syria and on OFAC sanctions regarding Cuba.

Key contacts

UK & EMEA



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“One of the team’s greatest strengths is its impressive global practice and knowledge of laws in different regions, offering expert knowledge no matter which country you are doing business in.”

Chambers USA 2021

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Global presence

Allen & Overy is an international legal practice with approximately 5,800 people, including some 590 partners, working in more than 40 offices worldwide. A current list of Allen & Overy offices is available at www.allenoverly.com/global_coverage.

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