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CCP Insight

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Operational Risks

According to Linedata's Ciaran Whooley

Vistra launches a new Canada office

Vistra has expanded its services into the Canadian market with the opening of an office in Toronto. The opening of the office in Toronto represents a further extension of Vistra's footprint in North America.

The timing of the expansion coincides with Vistra's alternative investments division award fund, which came from a fund administration mandate from a private equity firm in Toronto.

Commenting on the opening of Vistra's Toronto office, Onno Bouwmeister, group managing director, alternative investments at Vistra, said: "This new office will complement our existing offices in North America and further strengthen the experience and expertise we can provide to our clients in this critical region."

"Initially our focus in Canada will be around our Alternative Investments business, however we plan to build upon our existing local relationships to expand our service capabilities to offer Vistra's full suite of services across all business lines."

Martin Crawford, CEO at Vistra, added: "Canada is home to some of the most sophisticated institutional investors, largest multinationals and innovative high growth companies, as well as being a target for inbound investment from across the globe and a market that has been on our radar for some time."

Crawford explained: "This new local presence will strengthen our ability to provide our high calibre expertise to these clients and better support global clients interested in Canada."

"I am excited to watch Vistra establish itself as a major presence in Canada."

Contents

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W: www.assetservicingtimes.com
T: @ASTimes_

Acting Editor: Becky Butcher
beckybutcher@blackknightmedialtd.com
+44 (0)203 750 6019

Junior Reporter: Jenna Lomax
jennalomax@blackknightmedialtd.com
+44 (0)203 750 6018

Junior Reporter: Maddie Saghir
maddiesaghir@blackknightmedialtd.com
+44 (0) 203 750 6019

Contributors: Barney Dixon and Ned Holmes

Designer: James Hickman
jameshickman@blackknightmedialtd.com
+44 (0)203 750 6021

Publisher: Justin Lawson
justinlawson@blackknightmedialtd.com
+44 (0)203 750 6028

Associate Publisher: Joe Farrell
joefarrell@assetservicingtimes.com
+44 (0)203 750 6024

Marketing and Sales Support: Paige Tapson
paigetapson@blackknightmedialtd.com
+44 (0)203 750 6020

Office Manager: Chelsea Bowles
accounts@blackknightmedialtd.com

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AIMA advises on UK Brexit deal

The UK should seek a deal with the EU that ensures UK firms' relationship with EU investors and clients can continue uninterrupted by virtue of "grandfathering positions", according to a position paper from the Alternative Investment Management Association (AIMA).

The 'Brexit and Alternative Asset Managers: Managing the Impact' paper, published on 9 April, offered a detailed assessment of what needs to be addressed during the transition period between the UK and the EU.

The paper based its analysis on the assumption that the UK will leave the EUs single market, and that many existing cross-border provisions in EU legislation will cease to apply for UK firms.

A series of technical points that need to be addressed during the transition period are outlined in the paper, with the aim of ensuring a smooth journey for firms as they revise their approach to reflect the UK's new 'third-country' status.

AIMA suggested that addressing these points will minimise disruption for UK fund managers and EU investors when the UK leaves the EU.

The paper also encouraged the UK to establish cooperation agreements with regulators across the EU. It recommended that the UK should seek a Brexit deal that incorporates an 'equivalence' determination in respect of UK rules by the European Commission.

This would enable UK firms, clearing, or trading infrastructure providers to continue to provide services to EU clients.

The new position paper is built upon a 2016 paper, 'Brexit and Beyond', which was produced by both the AIMA and the US-based Managed Funds Association.

'Brexit and Beyond' recommended that an overarching financial services agreement should be made between the UK and the EU based upon principles of equivalence, reciprocity, and non-discrimination.

Jack Inglis, CEO of AIMA, commented: "This is a time of uncertainty for the UK's alternative investment management industry, and our members continue to devise and implement a variety of contingency plans."

Inglis added: "With this paper, we hope to set out the clear steps that policymakers and regulators need to take to smooth the path to the new regime and prevent disruption to the UK industry and the clients and investors that it serves in the EU."

He said: "Our next piece of work in this area will be a similar paper considering these issues from the point of view of European policymakers and managers."

ACA to acquire Cordium

ACA Compliance Group (ACA) will acquire Cordium, a provider of governance, risk and compliance (GRC) services.

The transaction is expected to close this summer, subject to regulatory approvals. The financial terms of the transaction have not been disclosed.

Following the closing, Cordium's compliance, cybersecurity, software, regulatory hosting, tax and regulatory reporting offerings will be integrated into ACA's operations.

According to ACA, the acquisition will also expand ACA's services in Europe to include Cordium's regulatory hosting platform, Mirabella, and a post-Brexit EU office.

Robert Stype, CEO of ACA, said: "Cordium's expertise, technology strengths and shared culture will greatly expand how we service and deliver our solutions to clients."

He added: "By blending the delivery of innovative technology, depth of knowledge, and exceptional client service, we can help our clients further enhance their approach to GRC. As two leaders in the space, working as one will allow us to innovate faster and deliver more value to clients."

Doug Morgan, group CEO of Cordium, commented: "With the existing strengths and capabilities of Cordium and ACA, the market can expect an unprecedented level of GRC support, built by integrating the resources, expertise and technology of both companies."

He added: "GRC has never been higher on the agenda of the financial services industry, especially given the current pace of technology innovation. Through this partnership, we will be able to provide guidance and efficiencies to firms of all profiles and strategies."

Baymarkets separates its business

Baymarkets Technology (Baymarkets) has separated into two independent companies, Reg&Tech Solutions (Reg&Tech) and Baymarkets.

Reg&Tech is a new company created by three of the previous founders of Baymarkets and Reg&Tech's CEO, Per Andersson.

Reg&Tech addresses the regulatory challenges facing financial institutions around the globe.

Baymarkets will continue to provide financial technology solutions to marketplaces and clearing houses, based on the Clara clearing platform. It will be led by Tore Klevenberg as CEO and Peter Fredriksson as chairman.

Andersson, said: "The financial markets are rapidly becoming fully electronic, driven by regulations and new enabling technologies."

He added: "There is a strong demand for solutions and platforms that automate and streamline the business processes to comply with these new regulations as well as to increase operational efficiency."

Klevenberg commented: "I'm looking forward to this new phase in the development of Baymarkets' clearing and marketplace offering.

The Clara platform has proven to be very efficient at addressing all the demands of a modern clearing solution."

WSO2 creates new toolkits and programmes for GDPR preparation

WSO2 has released several technology developments designed to help the financial industry meet the regulatory requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), which will be implemented on 25 May.

According to WSO2, the developments will also enhance its long-term growth potential through new services and greater efficiency.

The programmes and toolkits, announced in WSO2's Spring 2018 Release, include new features and updates across all products, solutions, and services.

Among these are additions to WSO2's identity access management (IAM), application programming interface (API) management, enterprise integration and analytics offerings.

The consent management and privacy toolkit in WSO2 Identity Server has been designed to enable data controllers to accelerate their organisation's GDPR compliance.

While WSO2 Enterprise Integrator enables connections and data transformations across legacy systems, solutions as a service applications, services, and APIs.

The WSO2 Stream Processor, formerly named WSO2 Data Analytics Server, allows organisations to derive insights with available data.

WSO2 stated that its open banking for financial firms, which launched in August 2017, will also assist firms compliance with both GDPR and the European Union's second Payment Services Directive.

WSO2 said: "The programmes are designed to ensure the security and privacy of personal data throughout the processes of collection, processing, storage, and destruction, in line with GDPR requirements."

Swisscanto selects SGSS for fund services

Swisscanto Asset Management International has selected Société Générale Securities Services (SGSS) for cross-border fund distribution.

Swisscanto will benefit from the support of SGSS's distribution network of local representative agents, and its central services hub in Luxembourg to distribute its funds in France, Italy, Spain, the Netherlands, and the UK.

SGSS will help enable the client to manage the administrative and legal process for registering funds in each country, where it will be distributed and provide investor inquiry monitoring and local market intelligence.

In addition, SGSS will coordinate various local representative agents and provide a consolidated overview of fund activity. This will facilitate distribution of Swisscanto's four funds and 26 sub-funds in five European countries.

The firm is also currently considering further expansion into Austria, Monaco, and Singapore.

Régis Veillet, head of business solutions, cross-border fund solution at SGSS in Luxembourg, said: "Swisscanto's decision shows the commitment of our teams in Luxembourg to provide the best service to asset managers and how SGSS leverages on one of the wider networks to allow fund distribution all over Europe and beyond."

Nomura Asset Management partners with 8 Securities

Nomura Asset Management (NAM), a subsidiary of Nomura Holdings, has entered into an agreement with 8 Securities and its Hong Kong-headquartered parent company 8 Limited to acquire shares through a third-party allotment.

NAM will acquire ordinary shares issued by 8 Securities and 8 Limited.

NAM plans to invest in 8 Securities and will hold a majority of the outstanding shares. NAM will become a minority shareholder.

Based in Japan, 8 Securities provides advisory services through iOS and Android mobile apps using exchange-traded funds.

8 Limited provides mobile app robo-advisory and online brokerage services in Hong Kong, through local affiliate financial technology firm, 8 Securities. By collaborating with the 8 Group, NAM aims to leverage the functions of the 8 Securities platform to deliver high value-added services to its clients.

NAM and 8 Securities will work together to develop the necessary app with the aim of launching the product from this Autumn.

NAM will also pursue strategic collaboration with the 8 Group in financial technology areas in Asia and aims to contribute to

ongoing efforts in Japan to encourage a shift from savings to asset building.

African Development Bank agrees risk participation deal with Commerzbank

The African Development Bank's board of directors approved $50 million unfunded risk participation agreement with Commerzbank.

The new deal will leverage Commerzbank support to African issuing banks looking to expand their trade finance options.

It will also help address trade finance market demand in key economic sectors, such as agriculture and manufacturing.

According to the African Development Bank, the facility will foster financial sector development, regional integration, and boost government revenue generation.

This will be the African Development Bank's second risk participation agreement with Commerzbank. The new deal will run for three years as a 50/50 risk-sharing agreement.

It is expected that the facility will support approximately $700 million (counting rollovers) of trade in Africa over the period.

Stefan Nalletamby, the African Development Bank financial sector development director, said: "Commerzbank is a strategic partner for implementing the Bank's development mandate. This intervention will improve market access by African issuing banks, corporates and small to medium enterprises."

FCA asset management study is a 'positive step'

The Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) Asset Management Market Study Final Report brings "greater clarity and priority to the The Packaged Retail and Insurance-based Investment Products (PRIIPs) and the second Markets in Financial Instruments Directive (MiFID II) implementation work carried out by asset managers", according to Alexander Dorfmann, director of product management on the financial data side of SIX.

Dorfmann suggested that the publishing of firm policy direction is "a positive step".

Dorfman added that the study reinforced "the importance of adopting flexible compliance systems that can be adjusted in response to any recommended changes and clarifications".

The FCA launched its market study into asset management in November 2015.

It explained: "We looked at the asset management sector because we want to ensure that the market works well and the investment products consumers use offer value for money.

"Improvements in value for money could have a significant impact on pension and saving pots. We find weak price competition in a number of areas of the asset management industry."

It found that performance wise, there was no clear relationship between charges and the gross performance of retail active funds in the UK, in particular.

It also stated: "We found some evidence of persistent poor performance of funds. However, we also noted that worse performing funds were more likely to be closed or merged into better performing funds."

The authority explained that it had "concerns about how asset managers communicate their objectives and investors" awareness and focus on charges, which it said was "mixed and often poor".

The report also found that pension trustees find it difficult to scrutinise the performance of their fiduciary manager because there is very little public reporting and scrutiny of fiduciary management fees and performance, making it difficult for investors to assess the performance of fiduciary managers and compare them, both at the point of sale and on an ongoing basis.

The FCA reported that, alongside the release of the asset management report had released another interim report to make a market investigation reference to the Capital Market Authority in relation to the provision of investment consultancy services.

Dorfman said that this awareness from the FCA could only help the industry especially in terms of regulation.

He concluded: "Asset managers that embrace a more strategic approach to investor protection and align their compliance efforts will be best placed to react not only to the FCA's suggestions, but to any future recommendations made from other local regulators across Europe."

ADX initiates liquidity provision services

The Abu Dhabi Securities Exchange (ADX), has added liquidity provision services for Bank of Sharjah shares on its exchange by SHUAA Capital International Limited (SHUAA). This is the second liquidity provision agreement hosted by ADX since last year.

As an authorised liquidity provider by the ADX, SHUAA will work towards enhancing liquidity levels of the traded stock.

SHUAA currently has the highest liquidity provision levels in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) both by volumes and by a number of signed-up listed firms, along with carrying out the service against cash equities and futures on multiple exchanges.

Rashed Al Blooshi, chief executive of ADX, said: "We are witnessing growing interest in the depth of products and services which we have introduced, including liquidity provision mandates. We take this opportunity to welcome Bank of Sharjah's timely decision for appointing one of the lead experts in this highly specialised field, SHUAA."

Varouj Nerguizian, general manager of Bank of Sharjah, commented: "We at Bank of Sharjah are pleased to announce this new liquidity provisioning exercise, meant to further boost our shares' liquidity levels. We are confident our liquidity provisioning is in good hands."

Innovation and fintech create cyber problems, says DTCC survey

More than 80 percent of participants at a recent DTCC Financial Technology Symposium thought innovation and financial technology have made cyber defence and cyber resilience more difficult.

DTCC, which released the results of the audience poll on 2 April, posed questions during the event to solicit feedback on key issues around fintech.

The firm found that only 17 percent of the audience, thought innovation and fintech would make the challenge easier, while a further 1 percent predicted it would have no impact.

DTCC also asked audience members what aspects of implementing blockchain technology would, in their opinion, pose the greatest challenges. Some 35 percent said that unknown costs would present the greatest challenge, followed by 17 percent who thought interoperability and legal and regulatory frameworks would be the biggest concern.

Another poll asked what the biggest challenges in scaling the impact from artificial intelligence (AI) could be. Some 38 percent of the audience said the quality of data was the biggest challenge, while 27 percent said coordinating different siloes would be a challenge.

The audience were also asked what part of the trade lifecycle would see the greatest opportunities from AI.

Risk and finance was seen as the greatest area of opportunity, receiving 35 percent of the vote, while post trade and custody was voted in second place of the poll, with 23 percent of the vote.

Fawad Tariq-Khan, chief executive of SHUAA Capital, said: “Our established experience in liquidity provisioning and market making in UAE markets allow us to prudently provide these firms the scenarios needed to build healthy liquidity levels, and offer better pricing blended with unique market insights.” He added: “We’d like to thank both the Abu Dhabi Securities Exchange and Bank of Sharjah for their vote of confidence.”

deVere CEO: Cryptocurrency investor mindset is shifting

There is a “seismic shift” taking place in the cryptocurrency sector, according to Nigel Green deVere Group’s founder and chief executive.

The observation from Green, follows the cryptocurrency market recording a daily gain of $10 billion on 3 April, with bitcoin surging 6 percent on the same day.

Green, who launched deVere Crypto, an exchange app, earlier this year, stated: “There is a seismic shift taking place with cryptocurrency investments.”

He added: “Investor sentiment appears to have considerably changed in the first quarter of 2018. Towards the end of last year, crypto values went too high, too fast—and, of course, it was unsustainable.”

“At the time I urged caution, saying an asset that goes almost vertically up should typically raise alarm bells for investors.”

“Arguably, even before the frenzied peak in December, when the price of one bitcoin reached an all-time high of more than $19,000, the market was beginning to become frothy and overheated. But since then, in this first quarter, there’s been a serious price correction of most major cryptocurrencies.”

Green stated that this has been caused due to an “evolution in investor attitude”.

Green said that now, the “overwhelming majority of investors do not view cryptocurrencies as a way to make a fast buck, as perhaps previously many more might have done.”

Clearing the hurdles:

The paradox for CCPs

Amidst a changing political and regulatory landscape shaping the future of Europe's financial market infrastructure, Mark John of BNY Mellon's Pershing Limited discusses the paradoxical challenges facing European CCPs

The growth of central counterparties (CCPs) as a fundamental cog in the wheel of Europe's financial markets has been driven by a regulatory regime that has consistently called for more on-venue transactions to be centrally cleared. As more and more instruments are added to the long list of those requiring central clearing, the number of CCPs has grown in tandem.

It is widely recognised that the regulatory changes have increased the overall costs of a transaction eroding the thin profit margins on trades. The post-trade costs are only adding to the costs of venues memberships and smart order routing required to achieve best execution. This could encourage market participants to do the exact thing that a regulatory shift sought to discourage. It leaves banks and tier one brokers searching for workarounds to central clearing.

Compounding this paradox and as the EU28 soon becomes EU27, this is not the only hurdle CCPs have to clear themselves.

The future role and location of UK CCPs in Europe, as we know them, remains a huge uncertainty. Whilst the risks of a 'cliff edge' for market infrastructure providers in the event of a hard Brexit – that is, negotiations that do not achieve a satisfactory level of legislative and regulatory equivalence—have been well-documented, the impact of this political scenario on the investor is less clear.

If a hard Brexit comes to pass within the current regulatory framework, CCPs will be required to have a base in London as well as a base somewhere in the EU 27

With UK CCPs managing over a quarter of global clearing activity, CCPs—and by default banks and brokers themselves—will soon find themselves non-compliant if transactions are not cleared and reported via an EU27 CCP.

If a hard Brexit comes to pass within the current regulatory framework, CCPs will be required to have a base in London as well as a base somewhere in the EU 27. This will require separate legal entities, which will need to be independently capitalised within each respective location.

Market participants would pay two bills if CCPs are both UK-domiciled and EU-domiciled, by virtue of having a second relationship with a CCP complaint with the European Markets Infrastructure Regulation and the Markets in Financial Instruments Directive. On top of basic operating costs, add in initial variation margins, insurance costs, split volumes, and costs per item, then the trading and settlement bill will all go up because the CCP will now rank lower in the volume-tiering system as the transactions cleared by each unit are halved.

In terms of the bottom line, CCPs may not have a choice of two worlds, but be forced to live with both. This will mean burgeoning layers of cost and, even under the simplest model, users would be faced with a two-fold increase.

As a result, the profile of CCPs could change dramatically. To satisfy regulatory demands, CCPs will either increase fees as it becomes more difficult for clearing houses to squeeze margins from each transaction, or absorb these costs themselves.

Banks and tier one brokers could opt to simply move clearing activity toward EU CCPs, targeting them with a higher volume of trades. But given 76 percent of companies that use a MiFID passport are based in the UK, this presents itself as a fundamental business challenge for banks, brokers and the market as a whole. It is not simply a workout for regulatory compliance teams, but a total shift in the wholesale market's way of doing business.

In addition, if EU member states saw more reliance by clients on their services, their costs might increase significantly with the flow of demand, possibly creating a drag on liquidity. The volume of activity would have huge implications on the risk environment and could cause margin requirements to swell, causing technology and reporting costs to balloon.

If the trading infrastructure is ill-equipped to deal with the volume and market participants are forced to seek alternatives, there could be a period of over-the-counter (OTC) trading in which the market could carry more risk. In an environment like this, the part of the OTC transactions that previously cushioned a lot of the market disruption could instead force a financial impact on the market structure itself.

Faced with no other choice, as cost constraints are driven by the further transparency of MiFID II and without changes to the regulatory framework to accommodate CCPs, costs are likely to be passed on to the banks and brokers who rely on CCPs and, in turn, to investors.

Only a certain number can bear these costs, however. And these are most likely to be the larger CCPs who can navigate such a complex operating environment. In doing so, this risks reducing the number of cogs that keep the wheels turning.

Too complex to fail?

As CCPs find themselves under pressure to reduce costs and become more affordable, some will be unable to do so profitably and might simply shutter their clearing businesses entirely. A central risk entity cannot run at a loss and such activity would have to be taken over by a competent legislative authority or a regulator.

To prevent this outcome, regulators would either need to revisit the existing framework or given that the systemic nature of CCPs is only set to increase, they would have to be bailed out by a lender as a last resort. A crude reality that ranks worst case scenario for all European supervisory institutions. The mantra of 'too big to fail' has become an established part of global financial acumen. A paradox of regulation and costs is driving CCPs to change and adapt, adding layers of operational, financial and geographical complexity to already complex business models. This fundamental shift may concentrate the market in the hands of the few as they overcome these hurdles, and these few may soon become just too complex to fail. AST

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Risky business

Ciaran Whooley of Linedata discusses his top five operational risks in fund administration for the year ahead

Top five operational risks in fund administration in 2018

Basel II defines operational risk as "the risk of loss resulting from inadequate or failed internal processes, people and systems, or external events". This is a pretty wide ranging description, although the convention does set out seven categories to help group the various risk types:

- Internal fraud
- External fraud
- Employment practices
- Clients, products and business practices
- Damage to physical assets
- Business disruption and system failure
- Execution, delivery and process management

The collapse of Barings in 1995 was a real watershed moment—a perfect example of the failings of process, people, systems and external events, in the form of a large earthquake in Japan and adverse movements in the Nikkei index. The subsequent introduction of the ironclad three lines of defence (operations, risk function and internal audit) did not prevent, however, 13 years later, Société Générale's Jerome Kerviel from being allowed to gamble and lose €5 billion.

So here are my top five operational risks:

People - the weakest link

Despite recent technological advancements, the world of fund administration is essentially still a people industry. Some examples of poor management still exist, particularly around operational risk and controls. Staff who lack the right qualifications and training increase the probability of errors, and administrators can be demotivated by monotonous and tedious workflows. Too many admins are still laden down with spreadsheets. An unhealthy corporate culture often results in high staff turnover rates and key person dependencies. The over-dependence on key employees, errors and performance failures can

Older technology legacy platforms further increase operational risk levels, and there have been high profile occurrences of failed upgrades combined with inadequate disaster recovery and business continuity procedures

be significantly reduced by a continual drive to maximise automation, providing transparent business process management and strong oversight controls. The motivation, empowerment and education of employees, with related accountability, provides the strongest first line of defence against operational risks. The best-run fund administrators are those that consistently invest in their people as well as their technology.

Cyber risk and data security

The EU Commission has estimated the cost of cyber-crime globally will rise to €1.89 trillion by 2019, but only around ten percent of this is being spent on prevention. Robert Mueller, former director of the FBI even stated: “There are only two types of companies; those that have been hacked, and those that will be. Even that is merging into one category: those that have been hacked and will be again.” Ginni Rometty, IBM’s chairman has also stated that cyber-crime may be the greatest threat to every company in the world.

High profile incidents such as the theft of $65 million from the Bank of Bangladesh through SWIFT vulnerabilities have impacted fund admin operations. Cyber criminals are becoming increasingly sophisticated, yet the majority of the funds industry is lagging far behind. Older technology legacy platforms further increase operational risk levels, and there have been high profile occurrences of failed upgrades combined with inadequate disaster recovery and business continuity procedures. This is an area firmly in the spotlight of regulators globally.

Compliance failures

Unsurprisingly, regulation remains a significant challenge given the thousands of new and amended pieces of legislation impacting the asset management sector each year. Costs associated with this growing regulatory burden have been largely subsumed by fund admin departments, while the risk of compliance failure including regulatory fines appears to have exponentially increased.

Regulators globally are looking closely at procedures to counteract terrorist financing and money laundering and the EU’s forthcoming General Data Protection Regulation, coming into force in May 2018, has far reaching consequences for fund administrators and their clients, including mandatory breach notifications and the potential financial and reputational damage associated with failure to comply.

Outsourcing and offshoring

Outsourcing and offshoring is arguably the single biggest trend in fund administration in the past ten years. The obvious upside for successful offshoring includes operational cost savings, fully utilising global time zones and alleviating concentration exposure. Possible downsides include inadequate operational oversight, a lack of understanding of cultural and regulatory differences, geopolitical impacts as well as unforeseen communication, system and IT issues. Back in March 2017, The Central Bank of Ireland published a CEO letter to all Irish based fund administrators stating that it felt the current level of outsourcing was “at or close to the outer limit of what is appropriate for this industry”. The letter went on to set out expectations for the sector, including a dedicated outsourcing manager/team.

Geopolitical and economic triggers

A significant headwind in the past 12 to 18 months, geopolitical and economic triggers are essentially external events and mostly out of the control of administrators. They can however be planned for, or at least the impacts partially mitigated. Obvious examples include Brexit, Trump’s tax plans and foreign policy, regional conflicts and political instability in various offshore locations. There is also the possibility of market downturns and skilled labour shortages.

In a highly competitive and increasingly regulated environment, it is essential for fund administrators to minimise losses resulting from operational risk events by carrying out effective top-down and bottom-up risk identification and assessment across business lines and functions. Each process should be mapped, inherent risks identified and related controls assessed for effectiveness.

Risk assessments should also include all related third-party service providers, including market data vendors and technology providers in order to ensure the highest standards of secure, transparent and robust service delivery. AST

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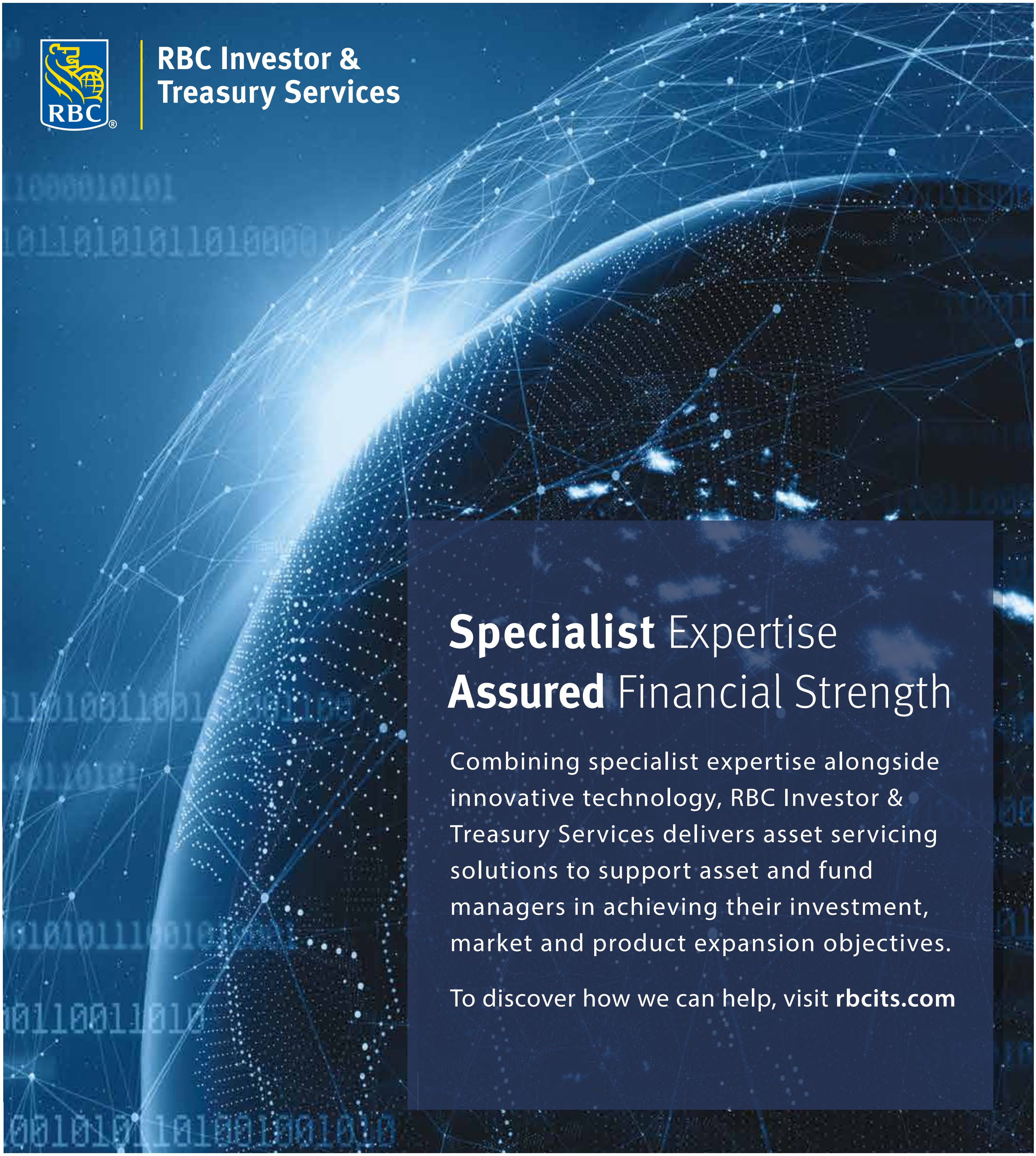
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Industry appointments at Deutsche Bank, Carey Olsen Bermuda and more

The supervisory board of Deutsche Bank has named Christian Sewing as CEO, and management board members Garth Ritchie and Karl von Rohr as new presidents.

Sewing has been appointed with immediate effect, succeeding John Cryan who will leave the bank at the end of this month.

Most recently, Sewing was responsible for Deutsche Bank's private and commercial bank (including Postbank) with Frank Straß.

Sewing has been a member of the management board since January 2015, and was appointed as president in March last year.

Before Easter, Marcus Schneck informed the supervisory board that he intends to leave the bank after this year's annual general meeting, and so he is unavailable for a position in the new management team.

Paul Achleitner, chairman of the supervisory board at Deutsche Bank, said: "In his more than 25 years at Deutsche Bank, Christian Sewing has proven himself a strong and disciplined leader. The supervisory board is convinced that he and his team will be able to successfully lead Deutsche Bank into a new era. We trust in the great ability of this bank and its many talents."

Achleitner thanked the departing CEO, stating: "Despite his relatively short tenure as CEO, Cryan has played a critical role in the almost 150-year history of Deutsche Bank—and laid the groundwork for a successful future of the bank."

Achleitner added: "The supervisory board in general and I personally are grateful for this. However, following a comprehensive analysis, we came to the conclusion that we need a new execution dynamic in the leadership of our bank."

Commenting on Schneck's departure, Achleitner said: "We very much regret Schenck's decision and thank him for his contribution in a crucial period for our bank. We wish him continued success for the future."

Offshore law firm Carey Olsen Bermuda has named Mary Ward as a partner in its corporate practice.

Ward will join the firm in June, after fulfilling her contractual obligations at Conyers Dill and Pearman, where she has worked for 15 years.

Ward has also worked for international law firms Linklaters in New York and Slaughter and May in London. She advises on all aspects of commercial and corporate law.

Carey Olsen is an offshore law firm advising financial institutions, corporations, and private clients on the laws of Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Guernsey and Jersey from a network of nine international offices.

Michael Hanson, managing partner of Carey Olsen Bermuda, said: "We are delighted to have Mary Ward join us. From the outset, our aim has been to build a market leading full-service offering and Ward will play a key role in that strategy."

Hanson added: "She brings with her a tremendous reputation and is considered one of Bermuda's most technically accomplished corporate lawyers."

Christian Somers has retired from Candriam Investors Group.

Somers was responsible for contributing to transformation initiatives and improvements in order management, program trading, electronic execution and transaction cost analysis for equities.

Frédéric Heirebaudt will replace Somers. Heirebaudt, who has been with Candriam for almost 14 years, is currently responsible for portfolio management for private mandates.

Commenting on Somers's departure, Fabien Oreve, global head of trading at Candriam, said: "While it's important we stay on top of new technologies, it's also important we ensure the transfer of knowledge from one generation of traders to the next in a sustainable way to further develop our multi-asset trading desk."

Volante Technologies has appointed David Mark as senior partner and managing director at The Boston Consulting Group (BCG) to its board of directors.

Mark joins Volante's board with experience in helping clients with product, strategy and innovation.

Prior to joining BCG, Mark was chief strategy officer for Flex, a technology firm. He has also served as a senior partner at McKinsey & Co.

Harpreet Grewal, a member of the firm's board of directors, has taken on an additional role as executive in residence after working at Volante for five years.

Grewal also currently serves on the board of a number of firms, including Penumbra. Grewal was previously general manager and CFO at Constant Contact and has also served as CFO at Cimpress and in various strategy roles at Pepsi Co.

According to Volante, the two appointments will help drive Volante's continued innovation and growth in global payments.

Commenting on his appointment, Mark said: "Volante has established itself as a leader in true payments innovation. Volante's products accelerate business agility exponentially."

He added: "I look forward to helping Vijay Oddiraju and the team with their strategic objectives to achieve the growth of the company."

Grewal commented: "I have known Volante and its leadership team for many years. They are one of the leaders in disrupting the global payment and financial messaging space for some of the largest financial institutions around the world."

He added: "I am excited to have the opportunity to take on a more expansive operational role to help the team accelerate Volante's momentum in the payments space."

Commenting on the appointments, Oddiraju, CEO of Volante Technologies, said: "As we expand to provide greater payments innovation, we will lean on David Mark's insights as a trusted advisor to the largest technology firms and on Grewal's experience managing high growth companies to guide our focused growth." He added: "Together, the two leaders provide a unique blend of strategic and operational experience that will contribute to Volante Technologies's sustained position as a payments innovation partner."

BNY Mellon has appointed Elizabeth Grier as director and sales executive of hedge fund, exchange-traded funds (ETFs) and structured products.

Based in London, she will be reporting to Scott Coey, managing director and head of business development of hedge funds, ETFs and structured products.

Grier joins BNY Mellon from J.P. Morgan where she was executive director of client service alternatives for more than four years.

Commenting on Grier's appointment, Coey said: "Elizabeth Grier has a wealth of knowledge in the alternatives sector, gained through working directly for and with a variety of private equity and hedge fund focused banks and alternative investment firms."

He added: "Grier's appointment underlines our strategic priority of continuing the development of our strong market position in alternative investment services."

Link Fund Solutions Ireland has made two senior appointments in order to expand its position in the Irish market.

Keith Parker has been named head of business development and will join Brian Farrell as senior manager.

Parker, who joins from Koger, will be responsible for managing the growth of management company and administration offerings out of Ireland.

Farrell will support client servicing, as well as the growth of Link Fund Solutions's third party management proposition. Prior to this, Farrell was chief financial officer and company secretary of investment manager, Londinium DAC.

Link Fund Solutions, part of Link Asset Services, offers services to traditional and alternative funds in the UK, Ireland, and Jersey. AST