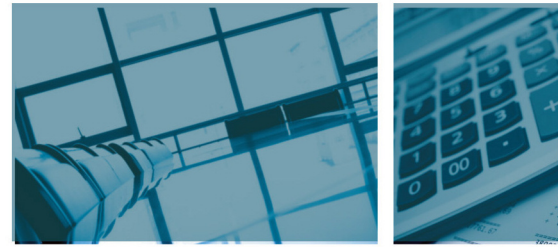


In Association With... Alliott Group



Continuing with Lawyer Monthly's focus on legal associations and networks across the world, here we carry on with our focus on the Alliott Group, and speak to Caroline Berube, managing partner of HJM Asia Law & Co. LLC.

Please introduce yourself, your role and your firm.

HJM Asia Law & Co. LLC is a boutique foreign law firm with offices in China and Singapore, specialized in advising foreign investors doing business in Asia. I am a New York and Singapore qualified attorney with fifteen years of legal experience in Asia. Most of our lawyers are fluent in foreign languages and are able to provide legal services in English, French, Chinese and Malay to a variety of small and medium-sized foreign family companies, including Fortune 500 companies.

What are the main types of cases you deal with?

HJM Asia Law regularly advises and acts as designated external counsel for multinational corporations and foreign small and medium closely-held enterprises. We provide services primarily in commercial and corporate law, mergers and acquisitions and intellectual property. We also advise on cross-border transactions, HR and compliance matters. Our main objective is to anticipate our clients' challenges and to protect their interests.

What common challenges do you face within your work and how do you navigate them?

As we are involved in multiple industries and regions across Asia, we believe a common challenge is adapting to our clients' needs in order to remain competitive in this dynamic region. As businesses and their owners' operations become increasingly complex, we have been able to navigate this ongoing challenge by connecting with other international professionals, sharing information and working knowledge to enhance and deliver legal services with quality that is usually expected of a larger firm.

What are the advantages, in your opinion, of an alliance such as the Alliott Group?

Becoming a part of Alliott Group has allowed us to meet our clients' growing business needs in

an increasingly interconnected world. We have been able to expand our presence beyond Asian jurisdictions to develop new business opportunities and, meanwhile, cooperate with other members who have projects in Asia. Membership has also given us tools to build on our technical and practical skills through regular worldwide and regional conferences and training programs.

The Alliott Group strives to promote 'work without boundaries'; how does the alliance help your firm to do this?

The alliance helps our firm 'work without boundaries' by being able to connect with other members to access local resources and knowledge. Alliott Group membership enhances our value proposition to clients by having partners around the world who have an understanding of local economic and cultural conditions and can assist with making critical and timely business decisions in respective markets. We have expanded our international presence and have also been able to retain and develop new business opportunities.

What recent legislative changes have affected your practice?

With regard to China, probably the most widely relevant has been the change to the Catalogue on Foreign Investments (2012) (the "Catalogue"), which determines the industries in which foreign investment is permitted and any restrictions that may exist. China's tax system has also undergone considerable changes recently which are relevant for foreign companies and individuals alike.

Singapore has not experienced as many significant amendments to its legislation. However, government has implemented a number of changes aimed to increase foreign investment, including offering substantial tax incentives to new companies to set up in Singapore. Both Singapore and China have developed Data

Protection Law which brings interesting perspective for business people and practitioners.

Do you see the need for any legislative changes? If so, what changes would you like?

Although the Catalogue set forth the general direction for new foreign investment policies, the specific rules and regulations regarding foreign investment are still being determined and/or clarified. Further details regarding these changes, including details regarding how these will be implemented, will be helpful for foreign companies and advisors alike.

Is there anything else you would like to add?

The Alliott Group alliance has been an invaluable part of our growth as a firm as we have worked on several conference sessions for events in both Asia and Europe and created mutual referral opportunities that were only possible because of professional and personal relationships we have developed with members worldwide. **LM**

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