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Digital Copyright Law in HK
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Anton Piller orders: Legal WMDs?
Sukuk al-ijarah explained

for the ACCC to seek a jail term for Mr Pratt should they be successful in convicting him in respect of the alleged offences because: the maximum financial penalties under the section are relatively small; in the case of a wealthy businessman such as Mr Pratt, such penalties may not be regarded by the ACCC as having sufficient deterrent effect; and while cartel conduct itself is not yet a criminal offence in Australia, and although these allegations against Mr Pratt do not directly relate to the cartel offence itself, we would expect the ACCC to seek to use these proceedings to reinforce its position that cartel participants should be subject to the full weight of the criminal law.

Conclusion

It is early days yet in respect of the proceedings commenced by the ACCC and it is important to bear in mind that these serious allegations will need to be proven. However, the commencement of the proceedings themselves sends a very clear message about the ACCC's determination to seek appropriate punishment for those it alleges breach the TPA, particularly where it involves cartels.

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Troutman Sanders to merge with Ross, Dixon & Bell

The law firms of Troutman Sanders LLP and Ross, Dixon & Bell have announced their intention to merge, creating a 750-attorney international firm. The merger will combine the traditional multi-faceted corporate, finance, litigation, real estate and public policy practices of Troutman Sanders with Ross Dixon & Bell's insurance, professional liability and commercial

litigation practices. When complete, the merger will provide Troutman Sanders with access to West Coast and Chicago offices, while Ross, Dixon & Bell will gain access to the London and Asian markets where Troutman's presence has been long established. The merger takes effect as of January 1, 2009, and will be named Troutman Sanders LLP.

Sri Lanka angles for piece of outsourcing action

With practitioners increasingly turning to outsourcing as a reality rather than a novelty, Sri Lanka is set to challenge India for a piece of the action. The effects of the global credit crunch aside, it is cost that is the main force behind the marketing of services of Indian lawyers to US and European counterparts. Legal process vendors tend to target the more mundane, time-intensive tasks, such as those related to discovery, areas where hourly charges can add up. And with LPO salaries for Indian lawyers generally below US\$10,000 a year compared to the US\$160,000 earned in associate base salaries at major firms in New York, the math has been made easy for many companies.

Eager to attract some of the millions of dollars of legal work estimated to flow out of Western economies in the years to come, Sri Lankan attorneys Ali Tyebkhan and Sudath Perera launched *LegalBase* in January of this year. The venture was established in response to increasing demands for quality offshoring opportunities to manage corporate and firm costs.

But the Sri Lankan venture sees their role as having the potential to expand on its current role, and broaden the current standards of acceptable use of offshoring. "Most legal outsourcing focuses on process, for example e-discovery rather than 'real' legal work," Says Tyebkhan. "However, a real opportunity exists in providing higher value legal work to law firms and corporations. In order to do this it is necessary to match work produced by in house teams and law firms. If you are going to focus on process you run the risk of losing out to a cheaper provider...It is more about being an offshore law firm rather than an outsourcing factory."

Current market predictions indicate that the industry is set to expand to the tune of US\$4.5 billion being injected into offshore providers. In Tyebkhan's view, "As long as quality and confidentiality can be assured, it should make little practical difference to a client whether legal work is done in Hong Kong, Singapore or Colombo, Sri Lanka."