

Rob Dalling and Lucy Blake analyse new SFO Director's Speech in *Commercial Dispute Resolution (CDR)* and *Global Investigations Review (GIR)*

News

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London Investigations, Compliance, and Defense Partners Rob Dalling and Lucy Blake offered insights on Nick Ephgrave's speech as Director of the Serious Fraud Office (SFO), marking his first address since taking office in September 2023.

Rob shared his perspective with CDR, highlighting the longstanding challenge of disclosure within the SFO. He discussed the significance of recent reforms stemming from the Altman Review and emphasised the need for increased resources to drive meaningful change. Rob shared his support for Nick Ephgrave's first address, stating, "The tone of Nick Ephgrave's speech, with the emphasis on the swift resolution of cases and taking a pragmatic approach, is to be welcomed. It will take time for any new enforcement action strategy to take root. But the circumstances are favourable. In particular, recent reforms to the corporate criminal liability regime, introduced by the Economic Crime and Corporate Transparency Act 2023, should support the new director's strategy."

Meanwhile, Lucy conveyed her thoughts to GIR, echoing appreciation for the speech's positive tone and its emphasis on quick case resolutions and pragmatic approaches. She said, "The tone of his speech was positive; the emphasis on the swift resolution of cases and being pragmatic is really welcome."

After more than a decade as a trial lawyer, prosecuting and defending in serious criminal cases, Rob now serves international companies in sectors including energy, extractive, financial services, medical, hospitality, and real estate across the United Kingdom, the European Union, the United States and beyond. He advises companies on financial crime policies and procedures in areas including financial sanctions, anti-money laundering, and anti-bribery and corruption.

With her strategic judgment and ability to uncover the facts fast, Lucy helps clients investigate, respond to, recover from, and prevent all manner of wrongdoing. Corporate crises tend to be multi-faceted, and clients value Lucy's ability to propose a cohesive strategy in "quarterbacking" simultaneous cross-border proceedings, such as internal and external investigations by a variety of

prosecutors and regulators (including the SFO, FCA, and US DOJ) as well as litigation, parliamentary proceedings, and public inquiries.

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