

LATINLAWYER 250

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law firms



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haynesboone

Setting precedent.

With more than 500 attorneys and 10 offices worldwide, Haynes and Boone is a leading Texas-based 'AmLaw 100' law firm with one of the largest Latin America practices in the country, led by Larry Pascal. The Mexico City office of the firm was formed in 1994, consists of over 20 Mexican attorneys and law clerks, and is an essential part of the firm's Americas practice group. The firm has permanently based partner or counsel level Mexican attorneys in its Dallas and Houston offices, providing its clients immediate access to Mexican legal advice from its two principal Texas offices. Overall, the Americas practice group is comprised of over 50 attorneys working in Dallas, Houston, New York, Mexico City and Washington, DC.

In addition to its strong Mexican practice, the firm distinguishes itself with an important presence in Central America, South America and the Caribbean, having worked in over 30 jurisdictions in the region. To meet the broad regional needs of its clients, it has on staff lawyers from Argentina, Mexico, Brazil and Peru, and operates a foreign associate programme for its Mexico City associates and attorneys from other parts of the region, frequently in conjunction with its local correspondent firms. Haynes and Boone is frequently called upon to advise in multi-jurisdictional matters throughout the region.

H&B is a member of two international networks – World Services Group, a multidisciplinary organisation with members in over 100 countries, and TechLaw, an intellectual property focused organisation.

The firm has a diversified client base, representing clients in a variety of economic sectors. Reflecting its Texas roots, Haynes and Boone has been very active in the region in the energy sector, having recently advised Mirant, Chevron Texaco, Ecopetrol, and the Kelcy Warren Group, among others, in Latin American energy transactions. The firm also advised the Mexican government on the politically sensitive downstream privatisation of the natural gas sectors in the 1990s. It also has extensive experience with national oil companies in the region, including but not limited to, Pemex, Petrobras, Ecopetrol, PDVSA and Petroecuador.

In addition, Haynes and Boone has also been very active in the aviation sector in the region (particularly in the mergers and acquisitions and bankruptcy areas) on behalf of clients such as American Airlines, International Air Transport (IATA), Aviall, Grupo Taca, Sabre, and other participants in the aviation and computer reservations market.

Other economic sectors where the firm's Americas practice group attorneys have been visible include financial services (securities, lending and bank regulatory work), real estate development, mining and infrastructure. The firm is one of the few offering both US and Mexico litigation and international arbitration resources.

Other practice areas where the firm is involved in the region include bankruptcy (where it was counsel to Grupo Mexico in the Asarco case in South Texas), franchising and international trade and compliance issues.

Members of the Americas practice group have also been active in Bar associations. Two partners of the Americas practice group were former chairs of the international law section of the American Bar Association, and one currently serves as chair of the real estate law section of the International Bar Association. In addition, five partners have served as chairs of the international law section of the State Bar of Texas. Several partners have also taught courses on international law at US law schools. It also publishes the annual update on South American energy in the *Matthew Bender Energy Law and Transaction* treatise.

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INTERNATIONAL

HAYNES & BOONE LLP

A major effort in Latin America from this Texas firm, with a significant presence in Mexico City and substantial work in the energy sector in particular.

PRACTICE: Mexico has been the key geographic focus, while energy and natural resources has become an increasingly significant industry focus, alongside aviation, with the firm representing some key clients in this sector. Securities, finance and M&A practices are strong. Haynes & Boone has also done extensive work in Central America, notably in El Salvador, Costa Rica and Honduras, as well as in South America, particularly in Argentina, Brazil, Colombia and Peru. The firm has a solid contingent of Latin American-licensed lawyers from across the region on board in its offices in Houston and Dallas – quite apart from the Mexico City office.

PEOPLE: Haynes & Boone has the best part of 50 lawyers focused at least in part on Latin America. Practice head Larry Pascal in Dallas is the key name, praised by one client for his “ability to organise and conclude complex, large multi-jurisdictional transactions and drive them to conclusion under time pressure”. Hunt Buckley, Texas-qualified and based in Mexico City, is another key name, with solid experience in the energy sector throughout Latin America. Brad Richards in Houston and Gil Porter in New York also have a strong focus on Latin America, while Antonio Franck in the firm’s Mexico City office is very highly regarded in that market for corporate and financial matters.

OFFICES: The practice is spread across offices in Houston, Dallas, Austin, New York, Mexico City and Washington, DC where the firm opened an office practising both US and local law as far back as 1994.

CLIENTS: Recently active clients notably include Ecopetrol, Commercial Metals Company, GMAC, Hillwood, Mirant Corporation, OHL and MMX, as well as IATA and American Airlines, which the firm represents throughout Latin America and the Caribbean. Mexico’s Saba Group has also been a notably active client for that office.

2008 DEVELOPMENTS: Marcelo Paramo and Agustin Portal left the partnership early in 2008, although Portal remains of counsel in the Mexico City office. Dual-licensed attorney Alberto de la Peña was promoted to the partnership in Dallas, while senior attorney Gabriela Salazar moved across from von Wobeser & Sierra in Mexico City.

The firm has been active in pro bono, both in the US and in its Mexican office, and in 2008 received an award from the Texan State Bar for pro bono work on behalf of two Mexican nationals wrongly convicted and sentenced to life in prison in the United States for the 1996 murder of a convenience store clerk.

On the deal front, Darrel Rice, Larry Pascal and Hunt Buckley advised Peruvian consortium Irradia in a US\$82 million credit agreement with German

banks WestLB and Deutsche Bank to build a liquefied natural gas plant near Lima; Pascal and Buckley again teamed up, alongside Alberto de la Peña, in advising US investor Kelcy Warren in his acquisition of a controlling stake in Honduran Roatan Electric Company (RECO), while Brian Antweil and Charles Beckham successfully defended Grupo México in a Texas court against fraud allegations brought by its US subsidiary Asarco.