

# Private equity team of the year

## WINNER

# Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer

**David Higgins; Simon Weller**

*Acting on the multi-billion pound take-private of Tomkins*

In a year that saw private equity return to some semblance of normality, Freshfields was never far from the leading deals. It picked up major mandates for the likes of Warburg Pincus, CVC Capital Partners and Cinven. However it was the eye-catching £2.9bn take-private of Tomkins, the UK-listed global engineering group, by Canadian private equity firm Onex, alongside the Canada Pension Plan Investment Board (CPPIB), that stood out.

Canadian investors were particularly active in Europe throughout 2010 and this deal marked the first UK investment for Onex, as well as being the largest take-private of the year. It also signalled a change of direction for CPPIB as it moved to being a principal investor in deals. It's telling that, when it looked to change tack, it turned to Freshfields for deal advice.

## HIGHLY COMMENDED

### ASHURST

**Simon Beddow; David Carter**

Ashurst's long-held relationship with Candover paid dividends this year when it advised the buyout house, as the major shareholder, on the sale of its stake in Ontex. The firm co-ordinated all the shareholders, lender groups and their respective law firms in the deal, which ran as a dual-track process.

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### CLIFFORD CHANCE

**Kem Ihenacho**

An impressive year for the buyout experts at Clifford Chance was capped off when it represented Bridgepoint on its £414m take-private of Care UK. The deal was one of the first private equity deals in the current cycle to take advantage of high-yield debt financing.

### LINKLATERS

**Ian Bagshaw**

The Magic Circle firm's private equity team continues to go from strength to strength and 2010 was no exception. Bagshaw led a team which advised Triton on its acquisition, alongside KKR, of Ambea, the Nordic provider of care services for €850m. Linklaters



(L-R) Freshfields' Simon Weller and David Higgins with Naveen Tuli of Laurence Simons

handled the acquisition, the financing and the consortium equity arrangements.

### SJ BERWIN

**Steven Davis**

SJ Berwin's private equity pedigree remains one of its shining lights. The team worked on some of the most significant transactions of the year, including advising Apax Partners on the sale of a stake in its business to China Investment Corporation and acting for Lion Capital on its £1.2bn buyout of Picard Surgelés.

### TRAVERS SMITH

**Phil Sanderson**

In an outstanding year for Travers' private equity team, the firm advised Intermediate Capital Group and George Topco on their £400m investment in CPA Global, using one of the first schemes of arrangement to be completed in Jersey. As well as the CPA deal, the firm acted on an impressive deal sheet, which included advising Bridgepoint on both its £955m sale of Pets at Home to KKR and the acquisition of Hobbycraft.

### WEIL, GOTSHAL & MANGES

**Marco Compagnoni**

The only US firm to make the shortlist, Weil had a role on a number of the leading buyout deals of 2010. In a clear highlight for the practice, the firm acted for Advent International and Bain Capital on the £2.025bn buyout of RBS's Global Merchant Services business. Compagnoni's team came into the process at an early stage allowing them to get involved at every level of the deal with a team of 30 lawyers in London and Boston.

# Congratulations Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer

Congratulations to Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer on winning the Private Equity Team of the Year award.

It is indeed a fantastic achievement and at Laurence Simons, we'd like to think we have had similar successes.

In everything we do we take a tailored and targeted approach, moulding our services accordingly. We are not afraid to go against the grain if it means that we find the right role for our candidates and provide a bespoke service to our clients.

We take pride in our fresh approach and it seems to work. So much so that almost all of our work is based upon previous success and personal recommendations.

And this approach is not confined to the UK. With our ever growing global network of offices spanning eleven countries and fielding expertise in many more, we are in a unique position to advise on international legal markets. In 2010 we opened offices in Singapore, Rio de Janeiro and New York and with plans for further expansion in 2011 there is nobody better placed to deliver your legal recruitment requirements.

So if, like us, you feel that you deserve a team of professionals who go the extra mile to offer a personalised service, wherever you are in the world, please do get in touch.

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