

PRESS CUTTING

Solicitr.com
11 February 2009

Redundancy Watch: DLA and McDermott. White & Case opt for Salary Freeze. But Bonuses for Bankers?

More redundancies hit the legal sector this week...

DLA Piper has started its second redundancy consultation in just three months. There will be 30 lawyers and 110 support staff in the line up. The firm carried out a consultation in December last year, in which 15 fee earners and 16 support staff were axed. All eight of the firm's UK offices will be vulnerable but partners and trainees will not be included. However, it is understood that, the firm is inviting a number of those trainees due to start in 2009 to defer their start dates until 2010.

Following an announcement last week McDermott Will & Emery was set to lay off 60 lawyers and 89 business support staff across its US offices; the US firm's City arm has now launched a formal redundancy consultation with nine jobs to be culled. Three fee earners and six support staff face the chop. The practice areas to be affected are as yet unconfirmed.

Meanwhile another US firm, White & Case, has now implemented a hiring and salary freeze in its London office with a view to cutting costs. The news follows a drop of 4.8% in the firm's global profit PEP figure in 2008. The pay freeze will affect all London-based associates, counsel, trainees and professional support lawyers, although support staff salaries will be reviewed as normal on 1 May, 2009.

Freshfields' decision to break with assistant lockstep by freezing pay may just have started a new trend in the UK. However, if you are twiddling your thumbs and are looking to pick up a bit of litigious work, perhaps you should think beyond the bad news and seek out those opportunities. Feeling inspired - you might not do yourself any harm by finding yourself some bonus seeking bankers...

According to **The Times** : "Ronnie Fox is representing clients at three different banks who maintain they are entitled to payouts despite the recent conditions. The specialist in employment law said a large number of bankers could take action if the Government imposes a blanket ban on bonuses. Mr Fox is currently representing "a small number" of clients but said this could expand if the Government clamps down on pay outs." No doubt...