

Modern Slavery - Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement

Slaughter and May is a leading international law firm, providing a full and extensive range of legal services to a diverse range of clients.

We seek excellence in every aspect of our business and are committed to the highest standards of professionalism, ethics and integrity. We are committed to conducting our business in a lawful manner and this includes engaging with our suppliers to ensure that they share our high standards.

As required by the Modern Slavery Act 2015 (the “Act”), this statement describes the steps which Slaughter and May has taken during the financial year ended 30 April 2018 to ensure that slavery and human trafficking is not taking place in any of our supply chains, or in any part of our own business. Slaughter and May Services Company, the in-house company that we use to engage our staff, has a separate [statement](#).

Business model

In London we practise through a general partnership which also has offices in Brussels and Beijing. In Hong Kong we practise through a separate partnership. For further information about our business model, including how we are regulated, see the [Legal and Regulatory Information](#) on our website.

Supply chain relationships

Our key suppliers are the businesses which help us to run our premises, such as our catering, cleaning and security providers, or who supply us with the technology we need to deliver our legal services to our clients. We tend to foster long-term relationships with these first-tier suppliers and we avoid making demands of our suppliers that might lead to them violating human rights. For example, we require our catering, cleaning and security suppliers to pay their personnel, who work at our premises, a salary which is equivalent (at least) to the London Living Wage.

Policies

Our commitment to fair employment practices in relation to our own employees is embodied in our [Code of Business Conduct](#). This provides information about how we approach our day-to-day activities and the principles in it are covered in inductions for new staff and reinforced through training. The standards in the Code are reflected in our policies and procedures and we endeavour to embed them in everything we do.

We expect our suppliers to have fair employment practices too, as articulated in our [Supplier Code of Business Conduct](#). This encourages our suppliers to conduct their businesses ethically and we ask key suppliers to sign it to make their commitment to fair employment practices clear. A supplier’s compliance with our Supplier Code of Business Conduct is an important factor in us deciding whether to form, continue or re-new a relationship with them. Any breach of our Code by a supplier may result in us terminating our arrangements with the supplier.

As well as our own offices, we have close working relationships with other leading law firms across the world. However, we have no exclusive alliance with other law firms and are therefore independent and able to work alongside the lawyers selected by our clients in any jurisdiction. Ordinarily our clients engage their lawyers direct but, occasionally, we may do so on their behalf. If this is done on a sub-contracted basis, we generally rely on our knowledge of the other law firm and their business and the fact that they are regulated and/or committed to high ethical standards and would not usually send them a copy of our Supplier Code of Business Conduct.

Training

We have a face-to-face training programme for our senior management team as well as those of our employees who have responsibilities in relation to engaging the firm's suppliers. This covers not only the offences in the Act, but how to go about evaluating suppliers and mitigating risks within supply chains. Our aim is to raise awareness of the issues and increase informed scrutiny.

In March 2017 we held a "Supplier Symposium" at our offices, with a programme which included training for our key suppliers on the requirements of the Act as well as our own ethical expectations in this area. Following the success of this event a further symposium was held in February 2018. This was similarly well-received by our suppliers.

Risks

We try to identify risks to workers in our supply chain, by regularly refreshing the due diligence we carry out on our key suppliers before we engage them and through the ongoing supplier management processes we have in place.

When selecting our suppliers, price is not our only driver. We are committed to buying quality products and services from ethical suppliers and part of measuring this involves assessing the approach a potential supplier takes to its people and the workers in its own supply chain. At the start of the year we published an internal "Supplier Relationship Management Guide", which stresses this point.

Performance indicators

We meet formally with each of our key suppliers at least annually and, among other things, address their approach to slavery and human trafficking at those review meetings. In 2016 we invested in contract management software. This online system has enabled us to interrogate our contractual terms (including those dealing with the Act) with suppliers more easily.

In addition, managers responsible for the firm's relationship with key suppliers visit them at their own premises from time to time. This gives us an opportunity to observe first hand their working conditions and to talk to a sample of their workers direct. In many cases, we have a contractual right to audit the performance and working practices of our suppliers.

Paul Stacey, Executive Partner