

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS

### Performance Disclosure

(Apr 05)



As part of an ongoing campaign to provide readers with law firm performance information it is intended to publish data that has entered the public domain or has been acquired without any breach of confidentiality. Two datasets became available in the week ending 22 April concerning the specific performance of some Australian firms, one with branches here in New Zealand.

The first concerns Project Finance deals handled during 2004 and includes information gleaned from all major international project finance transactions taking place between 1<sup>st</sup> January 2004 and 31<sup>st</sup> December 2004.

Name of Firm	World ranking based on number of deals.	Number of financings	Total value of 'deals' (US\$)
Allens Arthur Robinson	6	27	5.71 Billion
Freehills	9	20	2.79 Billion
Mallesons	9	20	3.84 Billion

The second dataset contains information on the gross fee income generated in 2004 and includes international rankings.

Firm name	World-wide ranking	Fee income (US\$)	Revenue per lawyer (US\$)
Mallesons Stephens Jaques	82	\$280.5 M	\$304,000
Minter Ellison	85	\$277 M	\$251,000
Freehills	90	\$269 M	\$269,000

**NB. Top ranked practice for revenue per lawyer, US firm Wachtell Lipton achieved over US\$1.1M per lawyer. Top ranked (49<sup>th</sup>) UK firm, Slaughter & May, achieved US\$433K.**

The publication of law firm performance data in Australasia is unusual and discouraged. The reasons suggested for failure/unwillingness to disclose information capable of assisting clients in selecting a particular practice is usually based on the notion of 'privacy'. An odd response given the increased transparency of performance provided/demanded by other sectors of the economy. Another reason may be the inter-firm comparisons carried out by third parties for fees. Once Anglo American disclosure becomes the norm in these parts the 'value' of inter-firm data will plummet from tens of \$000s to virtually nil. In the interim the continuing globalisation of legal services will ensure a growing stream of useful performance data enters the public domain.