

Covington Snaps Up Project Finance Veteran In London

By Alex Davis

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Covington & Burling LLP announced on Monday that it has hired a project finance heavyweight lawyer in London to supervise an expansion of the firm's capabilities in the sector.

Graham Vinter joins as senior of counsel and will chair the firm's project finance practice, Covington said in a statement. He was most recently general counsel at U.K. gas multinational BG Group from 2007 to 2015, where he was a member of the company's group executive committee, before stepping down after the firm was bought by Royal Dutch Shell PLC.



Graham Vinter

While at BG Group, Vinter was responsible for the company's legal affairs and headed a legal department of more than 80 lawyers worldwide, Covington said.

Prior to his move to BG Group, Vinter spent almost 20 years as a partner at Magic Circle law firm Allen & Overy LLP. He was global head of Allen & Overy's projects practice from 1996 to 2007.

"Graham is a veteran of the project finance industry and is highly respected worldwide for his unparalleled knowledge of the sector," said Timothy Hester, Covington's chairman. "We see an opportunity at Covington to build a leading projects practice that also provides synergies with other parts of the firm — in particular, arbitration, government affairs, tax, corporate, IP and energy regulation."

While at BG Group, Vinter was involved in a number of projects, including the company's largest — a liquified natural gas liquefaction plant and linked infrastructure in eastern Australia with a combined capital cost of more than \$20 billion, according to Covington's website.

At Allen & Overy, he was involved in numerous infrastructure and energy projects around the globe, including road and rail transportation projects in Europe, power projects in Europe and Asia and LNG liquefaction projects in the Middle East, Covington said.

"Project finance is all about navigating complex projects involving multiple sets of interests from around the world, and Covington's strength in policy-facing matters and diplomacy is a huge asset in this context," said Vinter. "It is a great platform on which to build a leading project finance practice, and I look forward to the challenge."

At Covington, Vinter is joining a nearly 100-year-old firm with more than 800 lawyers in offices in Beijing, Brussels, London, Los Angeles, New York, San Francisco, Seoul, Shanghai, Silicon Valley and Washington, D.C., that focuses on providing corporate, litigation and regulatory counsel to businesses.

--Editing by Stephen Berg.

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