

**Executive Risk. Reward. Reputation:
The 7th Annual IFSEA International Conference**

One-Day Conference: Tuesday, 16 June 2026, 8.00 am - 6.00 pm
(followed by closing drinks and conference dinner, 7.00 pm - 9.30 pm)
(with Welcome Evening Drinks Reception: Monday, 15 June 2026, 6.00 pm - 8.30 pm)
Venue: Saddlers' Hall, 40 Gutter Lane, London EC2V 6BR

CONFIRMED TOPICS

1. Memory, Perception and the Search for Truth in Executive Investigations

Human memory is not a recording device - it is a story continually rewritten by bias, context and emotion. This panel will examine how advisers can navigate the psychological realities that shape witness accounts in executive-level investigations and disputes. We will explore how memory actually works (and fails), how confirmation bias creeps into interviews and decision-making, and what to do when alcohol, stress or time distort accounts. The session will explore practical interviewing methods, credibility cues, and safeguards that make findings defensible in high-stakes executive cases.

2. Across the Lines: Navigating Privilege, Protocol and Culture in Cross-Border Investigations

Cross-border investigations are rarely straightforward. Privilege shifts from one jurisdiction to the next, interview expectations differ, and cultural or regulatory nuances can complicate even the simplest lines of enquiry. This session addresses the practical challenges advisers face when coordinating fact-finding across borders, including in offshore centres where subtle distinctions carry real weight. Panellists will share clear, pragmatic ways to align process, protect privilege, manage reputational and regulatory exposure, and deliver a single, robust outcome that stands up in multiple legal systems.

3. Exits in the Spotlight: Navigating Good Leavers, Equity Interests and New Employment Laws Protecting Executives on Exit

Senior executive exits can be fraught, fast-moving and highly visible. This panel looks at how to handle sensitive transitions with discretion and discipline, from retention risks and separation negotiations to disputes over “good leaver” and “good reason” provisions. We will consider the legal and tactical impact of recent UK and international legal developments and share strategic approaches to reaching outcomes that aim to protect the business, the executive and the wider leadership narrative.

4. Protecting the Business: Restrictive Covenants, NDAs and the Art of Commercial Resolution

Restrictive covenant and confidentiality disputes rarely reach a courtroom. Most are settled in meeting rooms, not before a judge. This session explores how advisers can protect business interests in an era of threatened non-compete bans, heightened scrutiny of NDAs and increasingly cross-border enforcement challenges. The panel will focus on practical, commercial approaches to resolving even contentious exit-related disputes-balancing legal leverage, reputational risk, and the need for swift, workable outcomes.

5. Remote Work: the real impact of ignoring compliance for Distributed Executive Teams

Remote and hybrid models have outpaced many employers' compliance frameworks. This session highlights the complexity of managing globally-scattered executives and teams: tax exposure across borders, compliance gaps when work happens "anywhere", and the often-overlooked broader financial and HR issues that apply even in a spare bedroom. We'll outline the practical issues that HR teams and advisers must take to stay compliant, control cost, and avoid unnecessary exposure or regulatory breaches-while still supporting the flexibility senior talent now expects.

6. Different Minds, Better Decisions - Neurodiversity in the Boardroom

Board-level decisions improve when leaders stay honest with themselves and inclusive of others. This discussion will offer tools to maintain self-awareness under pressure and to support neurodivergent executives-covering communication, role clarity and adjustments-so the top team makes faster, fairer, more defensible calls. The panel will explore neurodiversity in the C-suite-how to recognise strengths, set people up to succeed and run meetings that bring out everyone's best thinking.

7. IFSEA Keynote: Common Ground at Work: Winning Hearts and Minds for Lasting Change

How can you persuade - not polarise? A discussion with leading human rights campaigner [Tiernan Brady](#), who led the successful equal marriage referendum campaigns in Ireland and Australia and served as Global Director of Diversity & Inclusion at Clifford Chance. Drawing on real activist campaign lessons, this discussion will explore how to turn values into everyday behaviours and how leaders can build positive social cohesion and positive change across generations in an increasingly polarised and turbulent world - and carry it beyond the workplace into wider society.

8. Leading on the Tightrope: The Realities of PE-Backed Leadership

From board dynamics to cash discipline to talent risk: a candid discussion of what distinguishes effective portfolio executives and PE-backed professional services leaders. What capabilities matter most when running a PE-backed business - balancing value creation with culture, clarity with speed, and investor demands with long-term credibility.

9. Preventing Sexual Harassment: Law, Leadership and the New Standards of Accountability

With regulators and legislators intensifying scrutiny of workplace conduct, organisations must demonstrate stronger prevention and response to sexual harassment. The FCA's expanded approach to non-financial misconduct - including behaviour outside work - heightens the risks for regulated individuals, while ERA 2025 introduces further duties and potential consequences but also increases potential rights and remedies for affected executives. This session will explore how employers, executives and their advisers should respond to these new legal and regulatory requirements and the impact they will have in practice.

10. Tainted by Association: When Proximity or Passivity Become Reputational Risk

Executives can find their reputations damaged not because of what they did, but because of what they failed to spot or stop. This panel examines how being “around” problematic behaviour-weak culture, poor leadership, or unchecked bad actors-can be enough to trigger scrutiny from boards, regulators and the market. We'll explore the impact of active leadership that shapes culture for the better, and the dangers of passive leadership that overlooks warning signs and inadvertently signals tolerance. The panellists will offer practical guidance on accountability, early intervention, documentation, and protecting both personal and organisational credibility.

11. Cross-border Deals - Key Employment and Regulatory Due Diligence Issues

A practical look at employment, executive compensation incentive and regulatory traps in cross-border M&A transactions-and how to approach due diligence on data security, GDPR and AI risks in transactions without slowing the deal.

12. As We Move Forward: The Headaches Heading for Practitioners

The next two years promise no shortage of challenges for in-house teams and private practitioners alike. This fast-paced session highlights the issues most likely to cause sleepless nights: shifting regulatory expectations, cross-border employment and data obligations, disputes super-charged by AI, and increasingly complex governance demands from boards and investors. We will cut through the noise to identify the trends that matter, the traps to avoid, and the practical steps practitioners can take now to stay ahead-rather than firefight later.

13. Reputation in the Age of Misinformation

In an era of deepfakes, outrage cycles and political polarisation, reputational risk can escalate before the facts are known. Business leaders are consequently becoming more withdrawn in their interactions with colleagues, less visible on social media, and more conservative in their decision making in order to prioritise self-preservation. This session explores how misinformation spreads, how allegations can be weaponised, how quickly private incidents (including “off-duty” personal issues including divorce and family and neighbour disputes) can become public crises, and what leaders can do to protect their organisations and themselves. A practical discussion on foresight, containment and limiting collateral damage.

14. Sanctions, Tariffs and Directors’ Liability: What Every Board Must Know

Sanctions and trade measures now carry real personal risk for directors (and LLP members), yet the UK and international guidance is often sparse. This session lifts the lid on the practical exposures: how sanctions and tariff rules interact with executive, director and LLP member duties; what “reasonable care” looks like in supply-chain and market-entry decisions; and how boards can evidence their thinking to withstand regulatory, investor or parliamentary scrutiny. With anonymised case examples highlighting where well-run companies still trip Up, attendees will leave with a clear set of governance steps to strengthen oversight and reduce personal liability.

15. *Whose Voice Is It Anyway? The Unintended Consequences of AI-Written Employee Complaints, Client Enquiries and Executive Messaging and how should advisers respond? (Samoan Circle Debate)*

As AI-generated grievances, executive statements and client enquiries become routine, advisers are increasingly confronted with high-stakes communications that don’t sound anything like the person behind them. Over-polished, over-confident or simply inaccurate language can distort the issues, inflate expectations and derail judgement before any real conversation begins. This Samoan Circle debate asks how advisers should respond when the “first draft” is machine-made - and what authenticity, credibility and trust look like when AI is shaping the opening move.