



24.05.2013

King & Wood Mallesons appoints first female Managing Partner Australia

The Australian Chairman of King & Wood Mallesons, Stephen Minns, today announced the appointment of Sue Kench as the firm's new Managing Partner Australia.

Sue has been at the firm for 20 years and has a deep understanding of the business through a number of senior roles held within the Australian practice. Most recently, Sue has been Managing Partner of the firm's Real Estate, Construction, Environment and Infrastructure sector, engineering the firm's delivery of capability and market leading expertise to clients in this market.

Sue has also been a Sector Leader, steered the firm's Admissions Committee for many years and was a member of the board from 2010 to 2012, overseeing significant strategic decisions including the firm's ground breaking combination with China's leading law firm King & Wood. These roles have given her exposure to a broad range of partners and the firm's business, practices and governance.

Commenting on behalf of the board, Minns, said: "We are thrilled to confirm Sue's appointment. Sue has a firm grasp of the key challenges and opportunities facing our clients and the right combination of expertise, experience and energy to lead the business in what is an increasingly dynamic market."

Global Managing Partner Stuart Fuller said: "I am delighted with the Board's decision. Sue possesses the stewardship and energetic drive for excellence that is critical to executing the firm's domestic strategy and broader integration into the region and internationally."

"I am deeply honoured by the opportunity to lead KWM's Australian practice," said Kench. "Competition for clients and deals in the Australian market remains fierce and, if anything, has intensified this year, as commercial activity and confidence in the broader economy remains challenged. Our historic combination with King & Wood last year has given the firm a unique point of difference in the market and I look forward to working with the Board, all the partners throughout the KWM network and the rest of the leadership team to continue our bold strategy to become the leading global law firm based in Asia."

Sue is widely regarded as one the best lawyers not only in Australia, but across Asia and is renowned for going above and beyond for her clients.

"Sue will bring a strong client focus to the Managing Partner Australia position and a clear action plan to ensure the client remains front and centre of everything we do," said Fuller.

"My immediate priority will be to reach out to the firm's major clients and to our people to listen to them and better understand how we can enrich the client experience moving forward. I will then focus on driving the implementation of the firm's client promise with speed and intensity to deliver great value," said Kench.

Sue assumes the Managing Partner Australia role with immediate effect, replacing Tony O'Malley who stepped down from the role last week.

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