



Blake Dawson

## Press Release

26 September 2011

### **Ashurst and Blake Dawson announce Asia business combination and future merger plans**

Ashurst and Blake Dawson have announced plans to combine their businesses in Asia and merge their operations globally, creating a new and powerful legal presence in the international market under the Ashurst name.

Under the arrangements, Ashurst and Blake Dawson have agreed:

- To combine their businesses in Asia under the Ashurst brand;
- That Blake Dawson will rebrand as Ashurst in Australia; and
- To merge by 2014.

This follows a positive vote of both partnerships, which took place on 23 September 2011.

Ashurst and Blake Dawson have a shared vision to build a premier global law firm. At the outset, the firms will combine their practices in Asia to offer scale, depth and reach in the fastest growing region of the world. The combination will provide significant opportunities and competitive advantages, building on the firms' established stronghold in the energy & resources, infrastructure and financial services sectors.

The Asia combination and rebranding of Blake Dawson is planned to take effect by March 2012. The full merger is conditional on a further vote of the partnerships. It is expected that the merger will be considered in early 2014.

Charlie Geffen, senior partner of Ashurst, commented:

"There is a great deal of synergy between Ashurst and Blake Dawson in terms of practice area expertise and growth strategy. This is an exciting opportunity for two firms who share an ambition to develop their business both in Asia and internationally. We are confident that the initial combination will materially strengthen our businesses in the Asia Pacific region and also allow us to create significant momentum in achieving our goal of being among a small group of premier global firms."

Blake Dawson's chairman Mary Padbury said:

"Ashurst and Blake Dawson see this as a significant opportunity to take a bold step towards becoming one of the premier global law firms which will lead the legal market in coming years.

This is also a first for an Australian top tier firm. Combining our operations with a leading international firm will deliver significant competitive opportunities for both businesses, a greatly expanded international capability for our clients and exciting career prospects for our people."

Geoffrey Green, who the firms have appointed to chair the combined Asian business, said:

"Our firms have worked together successfully in Asia for nearly 10 years. This combination is a natural development of our relationship, giving Ashurst scale and depth of resource in Asia and providing our Blake Dawson colleagues with greater international reach for their important client base. We both look forward to full integration."

#### **Ashurst – key facts**

- Number of partners: 229
- Total number of lawyers: 915
- Office locations: Abu Dhabi, Brussels, Dubai, Frankfurt, Hong Kong, London, Madrid, Milan, Munich, New York, Paris, Rome, Singapore, Stockholm, Tokyo, Washington DC.
- Revenue 2011: £303 million / AUS\$462 million

#### **Blake Dawson – key facts**

- Number of partners: 190
- Total number of lawyers: 828
- Office locations: Adelaide, Brisbane, Canberra, Melbourne, Perth, Sydney, Shanghai, Singapore, Port Moresby, Tokyo and an associated office in Jakarta
- Revenue 2011: AUS\$380 million / £250 million

...ENDS...

#### **For further information, please contact:**

Ashurst: Jo Shepherd, head of communications, +44 (0)20 7859 2760 / +44 (0)7771 896 290  
Alan Hanson, PR advisor, Asia, +852 2846 8969 / +852 6077 0400

Blake Dawson: Lisa Macnamara, national media manager, +612 9258 6915/+61 427 268 221

#### **Notes to editors:**

##### **Ashurst**

Ashurst LLP and its affiliated undertakings trade under the name Ashurst. Ashurst LLP is a limited liability partnership registered in England and Wales under number OC330252. The term 'partner' is used to refer to a member of Ashurst LLP or to an employee or consultant with equivalent standing and qualifications or to an individual with equivalent status in one of Ashurst LLP's affiliated undertakings. Further information about Ashurst LLP and its affiliated undertakings can be found at [www.ashurst.com](http://www.ashurst.com).

**Blake Dawson**

Blake Dawson and its affiliated entities trade under the name Blake Dawson. Blake Dawson is a partnership registered in Australia (ABN 75 304 286 095). The term 'partner' is used to refer to a member of Blake Dawson or to an employee or consultant with equivalent standing and qualifications or to an individual with equivalent status in one of Blake Dawson's affiliated entities. Further information about Blake Dawson can be found at [www.blakedawson.com](http://www.blakedawson.com).