



Jirsch Sutherland adds to specialist capabilities with two new appointments

Jirsch Sutherland has expanded its team of experienced specialists with the appointment of Registered Liquidator Melissa Lau as Partner and Philip Ascher CPA as Business Director for its Brisbane office.

Lau will significantly broaden the firm's forensic capabilities with her resume of fraud and forensic investigation work, particularly in asset tracing and recovery for leading firms within Australia and Asia.

Her 19 years in insolvency and corporate banking at leading firms nurtured an interest, and sought-after expertise, in these areas. "I really enjoy wearing a hat as a 'financial detective', investigating fraud and misappropriation of funds by 'following the money,'" Lau says.

She adds, "Because of my background, one of the areas I will be focusing on is the Asian market. I want to help people in difficult situations – whether business owners or individuals – who are under financial stress, to achieve a far better outcome than could have been the case."

Meanwhile, Ascher will be helping clients manage and mitigate their exposure to business risk in the post COVID-19 world. "We all regularly face a multitude of risks that can impact our success and it is how we confront and deal with them that ultimately determines how we're affected," says Ascher who has extensive experience across a wide range of sectors.

His proactive and pragmatic outlook on risk management will be complemented by his ability to quickly grasp a client's situation and navigate them through the complex legislations that form part of the recovery and insolvency process. "I believe there's a fundamental lack of understanding about the function and benefits of insolvency practitioners. I'm keen to provide more information about the benefits of the insolvency regimes," Ascher says.

"Philip's experience across a wide range of sectors and his expertise in risk management are a welcome addition to our team," says Brisbane Partner Chris Baskerville.

While Lau will also be based in the Brisbane office, she will work with the firm's teams around the country. "Melissa will be a tremendous asset to our firm at a national level and will enhance our forensic and asset recovery capabilities, particularly in the Asian markets," says Baskerville.

Jirsch Sutherland National Managing Partner Brad Morelli says he's delighted with the new appointments and has previously worked with Lau. "I'm a huge fan of Melissa," he says. "She is highly competent, intelligent, loyal and hard-working and will be a great addition to the team, as will Philip. We welcome them both as excellent additions to our existing team of outstanding specialists."