

Former DOJ lawyers open new white-collar firm

Ron Knox

Tuesday, 6 November 2012

Two former prosecutors at the US Department of Justice's antitrust division have opened a "virtual" antitrust and white-collar law boutique focused on assisting individuals and companies embroiled in federal criminal investigations.

Former DOJ officials Hays Gorey and Bradford Geyer officially opened the doors to GeyerGorey LLP earlier this month after spending a combined 60 years as federal prosecutors in the DOJ's antitrust and criminal divisions.

The new firm aims to lean on its deep knowledge of antitrust, fraud and corruption law – as well as the agencies that prosecute such crimes – to win work through referrals from big antitrust law firms and word-of-mouth in the tight-knit antitrust community, Geyer says.

Along with the two named partners, the firm expects to announce the hiring of former antitrust division prosecutor and Verizon in-house competition counsel Robert Zastrow over the next week or so.

Zastrow, whose practice has focused primarily on civil antitrust law over his career, has litigated several major antitrust cases, including the Supreme Court *Trinko* and *Twombly* cases.

Geyer says partnership in the firm will be prerequisite on being a former federal prosecutor. While the firm is lean at the moment, Geyer says he is working to put in place a national network of former federal officials to assist clients wherever a problem might arise.

"We're not trying to disrupt the large law firm market; in fact, we're heavily reliant on referrals from them," Geyer says. "But at the same time, we think there's opportunity here."

Geyer resigned from the antitrust division on 1 October after spending 21 years as a division prosecutor. He spent the majority of his career as a trial attorney in the division's Philadelphia field office, which is closing as part of cost-cutting measures at the DOJ. The Cleveland, Dallas and Atlanta field offices are also closing.

Over the past several years, Geyer has also served as a special counsel to the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the National Procurement Fraud Task Force, during which he reported to the deputy assistant attorneys general for both the antitrust and criminal divisions at the DOJ.

Gorey recently retired from the National Criminal Enforcement Section of the antitrust division after spending 40 years as a prosecutor in both the antitrust and criminal divisions. He most recently was in charge of the antitrust division's investigation and prosecution of price fixing in the air freight forwarding market.

The new firm will have its head office in Washington, DC, but Geyer says that as a virtual firm it will rely heavily on video conferencing and other cloud-based document and communications services to coordinate responses for clients around the country. Geyer suggests that the reduced overhead costs will allow the firm to keep fees accessible for individuals who require counsel during an antitrust investigation.

Those types of cases – work for individuals who have been carved out of corporate plea agreements during antitrust investigations and other competition law referrals – are likely to account for as much as 75 per cent of the firm's workload, Geyer says.