

Former Swissmedic Head of Legal Affairs to Join Sidley in Switzerland

Andreas Balsiger Betts, the former Head of Legal Affairs at Swissmedic, will join Sidley Austin LLP as a senior advisor in Switzerland. The firm also announced that Olivier Goarnisson, the former Director of Medical Affairs Operations Europe and a lawyer at a global pharmaceutical company, has joined the life sciences practice in Switzerland as counsel.

In a release, the firm said Andreas Balsiger Betts previously served as the head of Legal Affairs and member of the Management Board of Swissmedic, the Swiss Agency for Therapeutic Products. In this capacity, he had a role in drafting the complete revision of the Swiss Federal Act on Therapeutic Products and its ordinances, which will come into force in 2019. He represented Swissmedic in all the Swiss parliamentary committee meetings in this context as well as in all meetings with EU member state agency counterparts. At Sidley, he will advise on regulatory matters in the life sciences industry.

The firm said Olivier Goarnisson possesses dual qualification as a lawyer and medical doctor, and will focus his practice on matters related to clinical trials, non-interventional studies, pharmacovigilance, marketing authorizations, market access, data protection, and compliance and enforcement.

“Andreas’s arrival initiates our effort to provide the first comprehensive global life sciences legal practice in Switzerland, offering a deep, three-continent perspective to established global companies, to the emerging biotechnology sector, and to the many global life sciences companies that call Switzerland home,” said Scott Bass, leader of Sidley’s

global Life Sciences practice. "Andreas is highly recognized in the Swiss life sciences industry for his in-depth knowledge of the regulatory environment. His insights into Swiss institutions will significantly bolster our ability to offer global solutions to local challenges for clients in the life sciences sector. We are very happy that Olivier also joins our firm, bringing his experience in a wide range of matters related to life sciences regulatory law, specifically in the pharmaceutical industry."

In his role as head of Legal Affairs and Member of the Management Board of Swissmedic, Andreas Balsiger Betts was in charge of establishing and maintaining legal guidance for Swissmedic's policies, procedures and practice, both on the strategic and the day-to-day level. With his division of specialized prosecutors, he also was responsible for law enforcement initiatives within the remit of Swissmedic. Under his guidance, his team represented Swissmedic in all court cases regarding administrative and penal decisions taken by the agency, against claims of liability and in freedom of information inquiries.

Olivier Goarnisson oversaw his company's execution of post-authorization studies and related interactions with regulatory authorities. He also oversaw programs through which the company provided support for academic research in Europe. In this role, he ensured compliance of the company's academic support programs with anti-corruption and pharmacovigilance requirements. He also helped the company manage intellectual property and product liability risks that may arise from involvement in academic research. Before moving in-house, he worked for six years as a lawyer in Sidley's Brussels office, where he worked on regulatory law, clinical trials, pharmacovigilance and data protection issues affecting clients in the life sciences industry.

