

# Corporate Registers Forum MEMBERS NEWSLETTER

May 2017

## Welcome from the President

I am honoured to have been appointed as the CRF president for the next 12 months. I look forward to us continuing to grow and develop CRF as a forum to review the latest developments in corporate business registers internationally, and exchange experiences and information on our operations.

Thank you to Tim Moss from the UK Companies House for the important role he has played in CRF over the past five years, both as an Executive Committee member since 2012 and our inaugural president over the last four years.



Under Tim's leadership our membership has grown and we have strengthened our connections with our partners and other international registry forums. Tim - you will be missed and we wish you all the best in your new role.

In March we held our 13th Annual conference in Hong Kong. Thank you to Ada Chung and her team for hosting such a wonderful conference - it was exemplary in every way. You can read more about the conference below.



Last, a reminder that this newsletter aims to keep you informed and touch on issues that are of interest to you. If you have ideas about content or wish to contribute articles please let me or any Executive Committee member know, as the success of CRF depends on you, our members.



## Hot Topics

### Cyber Security

*The need for a registry early warning network in the regulatory world.*

“Getting to the ‘whys’ and ‘hows’ of cyber threats is the very basis upon which cyber-security is built.” Says cyber-security expert Eugene Kaspersky. The Russian CEO of Kaspersky Lab addressed more than 150 leaders of local Industry at a conference organised by the Jersey Financial Services Commission (JFSC), warning about the threat internet criminals pose and urging firms to step-up their cyber-security defences.

Over the last year, the JFSC has been highlighting that cyber-security is a core business issue. The regulator has issued specific guidance for local companies,



given numerous presentations to Industry and met with individual firms to discuss their respective approaches.

The JFSC has already seen a threefold increase in companies voluntarily reporting cyber breaches; a positive statistic rather than a negative as far as the regulator is concerned as it shows businesses are willingly engaging and recognising their obligations. The onus, currently, remains very much on individuals and organisations to take responsibility for understanding their own ‘whys’ and ‘hows’ and to make sure they have appropriate security measures in place.

“We’re urging businesses and registries to make sure they focus their efforts on human factors” said Denis Philippe,

Head of ICT at the JFSC. “This is no longer just about technology and it’s certainly not an exercise solely for a company’s IT department. Organisations need to be aware that the people they employ, whether their own staff, contractors or suppliers, can pose a real threat... So firms need to make sure that their security suppliers are appropriately qualified, competent and most importantly vetted”

Through regular awareness raising, the JFSC is optimistic that these sorts of risks and gaps in security can be addressed and seems confident that the message is getting out there to local businesses.

If there is one thing you can’t be with cyber, the regulator says, it’s complacent.

For the full article, please visit the CRF website at [www.corporateregistersforum.org](http://www.corporateregistersforum.org).

## Beneficial Ownership

Companies play an essential role in the global economy. They are a vehicle to facilitate private sector investment and growth.

At times these vehicles can be used to disguise the identity of those involved in illicit activities, including tax evasion, money laundering, bribery, corruption and terrorism financing. This is achieved for example through mechanisms such as the use of shell companies and complex ownership and control structures. The exploitation of these vehicles results in gains for criminals and financial losses to the global economy.

To ensure compliance with the relevant laws against such illicit activities, relevant authorities (including law enforcement and prosecutorial authorities, supervisory authorities, tax authorities and financial intelligence unit) need to be able to identify the entities and individuals that can control and benefit from the financial activities of a company and how those individuals and entities are connected to each other. This objective is inhibited by deficient information collected on the beneficial ownership of companies, and as a result the individuals involved in such illicit activities are able to disguise the true source or use of funds or property behind company structures.

Improving the collection and utilisation of beneficial ownership information can significantly contribute to authorities’ efforts to combat and prevent these activities. This, in turn, can promote greater integrity and

transparency within the domestic and global financial system, as highlighted in a recent [Australian Federal Government Consultation Paper](#) specifically aimed at addressing beneficial ownership.

Internationally, there is a focus on increasing transparency of beneficial ownership information within the global financial system. International bodies such as the G20 view transparency as playing a key role in combating illegal activities such as money laundering, bribery and corruption, insider dealings, tax fraud and terrorism financing.

This international focus was highlighted at the CRF Conference in Hong Kong in March where members from Singapore, United Kingdom, Hong Kong and Jersey, presented overviews of changes to jurisdictional laws, the progress of change in the marketplace and how registries are helping companies comply. Presentations are available from the CRF website at [www.corporateregistersforum.org](http://www.corporateregistersforum.org).

## Summary of CRF 2017

The 13th annual conference of the Corporate Registers Forum 2017, organised by the Hong Kong Companies Registry, was held from 6 to 10 March in Hong Kong.

The conference brought together around 190 participants representing corporate registrars from 59 jurisdictions. It offered an opportunity to share ideas and best practice, as well as to discuss emerging issues.

Participants also included CRF partners such as the World Bank, USA and European registrars. 14 vendors from information businesses to technology providers also were in attendance.

The theme for 2017 was ‘Corporate Registries - Challenges and Opportunities, today and tomorrow’.

Topics discussed included:

- Disclosure of beneficial ownership, with updates from Jersey, UK, Singapore and Europe
- Registry updates from China, Qatar, Russia
- Regional break out sessions
- IT case studies from Abu Dhabi, Ireland and Poland
- Site tour of the Hong Kong Companies Registry and the Hong Kong Stock Exchange



- Transparency versus privacy from UK and Abu Dhabi
- Collaboration in IT – reports from NZ and the Global Legal Entity Identifier Foundation
- Regulation of company service providers from Hong Kong, Singapore and Malaysia
- Update from the World Bank Investment Climate Team, ECRF (Europe), IACA (USA) and ASORLAC
- Opportunities for tomorrow
- And much more.

The next conference is planned for May 2018 in Botswana.



## Interested in hosting the CRF Conference 2019?

The CRF welcomes applications from member jurisdictions interested in hosting the 15th annual conference. All members jurisdictions are eligible to apply.

As a host nation, you will have the opportunity to put together an exciting, interesting and engaging programme while raising the profile of your registry.

Interested member jurisdictions should complete the application available from the CRF website [www.corporateregistersforum.org/?page\\_id=956](http://www.corporateregistersforum.org/?page_id=956).

## Membership Fees reminder

Being a CRF member has many benefits, we offer a network through which registry professionals can share ideas, benchmark performance and practices along with gaining access to specialist experience.

At the time of writing, out of the 62 CRF members, 9 have not paid their membership fees. First, second and final reminders were issued on 8 March, 13 April and 4 May 2017 respectively to members with outstanding balances.

Those members who have not paid their membership fees or any outstanding balances thereof are required to settle their payments by 14 June 2017.

Membership ceases where there is failure by the member to pay the membership fee within three months of the due date, namely, by end of June 2017 (per paragraph 4.9.2 of the CRF Constitution).

## Upcoming Corporate Register Events

### CRF technical workshops

Our technical workshops complement the CRF conferences and are aimed at facilitating in-depth technical discussions. There are no registration fees for members.

- **Qatar - November 2017**

More information to come on our website, [www.corporateregistersforum.org](http://www.corporateregistersforum.org).

- **Pretoria, South Africa - August 2017**

The Companies and Intellectual Property Commission (CIPC) of South Africa, with the support of the CRF and the World Bank (WB) are honoured to host a Technical Workshop.

The theme for the Technical Workshop will revolve around: “Efficiencies and learnings of a modernized registry, from a registration office to being a regulator.”

All information relating on registration and other logistics will be posted on the CIPC Website, [www.cipc.co.za](http://www.cipc.co.za).

### 14th Annual CRF Conference - May 2018, Botswana

More information to come.

## Want to contribute to our next newsletter?

If you have any feedback, ideas or suggestions for next quarter’s newsletter please contact us at [corporateregistersforum@gmail.com](mailto:corporateregistersforum@gmail.com).

Otherwise, please contact CRF Secretariat Michael Brosnahan via the following address.

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