

Crowell Adds Longtime DOJ Litigator To DC Antitrust Group

By Emily Sawicki

Law360 (December 10, 2024, 12:00 AM EST) -- Crowell & Moring LLP announced on Tuesday that it had added a former U.S. Department of Justice litigator with 33 years of government experience to its antitrust and competition, government contracts and litigation groups in its Washington office, furthering the firm's ongoing strategy to "double down" on its strongest practice areas, in the words of a top Crowell litigator.

Kenneth Dintzer made the move to private practice after spending all three decades of his career with the DOJ, serving under six presidential administrations. Most recently, Dintzer worked as deputy branch director of the Civil Division's National Courts Section within the Commercial Litigation Branch, a role he had held since January 2014.



Kenneth Dintzer

The addition of Dintzer is in line with Crowell's firm strategy of bulking up its top practice groups, antitrust and competition group co-chair Jason C. Murray told Law360 on Monday.

"I would say that this is definitely part of an articulated strategy that we are moving out on," Murray said. "We are trying to double down on the areas where we're strongest and best, and government contracts, antitrust and complex litigation really are at the forefront of that."

Murray said it was important that firm clients understood how committed Crowell was to bringing top talent to its key practice groups, and adding Dintzer aligns with that priority, particularly in a time of rapidly developing technology and a transitioning presidential administration.

"I can say — somewhat selfishly, but with real pride — that adding Ken's deep experience and first-chair trial experience, in particular, to our bench, to me, means that our clients are not going to be outlitigated in any of these coming matters, no matter how complicated, no matter how cutting edge," Murray said.

Dintzer's leap from the DOJ to Crowell drew praise from a number of firm leaders who provided statements in the firm's announcement of the move, including chair Philip T. Inglima, who described the attorney as "a preeminent trial lawyer," noting his depth of experience arguing cases on behalf of the federal government.

Over his career, Dintzer has tried more than 20 cases for the government, the firm said, including cases

before the U.S. Court of Federal Claims and the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit.

Notably, Dintzer successfully defended the government against a \$40 billion takings and exaction suit related to the government's bailout of AIG Insurance in the wake of the financial crisis in 2008 and 2009, with Dintzer leading a team of 16 government attorneys amid a 35-day trial, the firm said.

Dintzer earned a bachelor's degree from California Polytechnic State University in San Luis Obispo and his law degree from the University of Michigan Law School. He began his legal career as a clerk for the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit.

Dintzer first joined the DOJ in 1992, beginning his tenure there as a trial attorney within the department's Antitrust Division. He moved to the National Courts Section of the Civil Division in 1997, and rose to senior trial attorney in 2003, before being named assistant director in 2007. Beginning in 2014, Dintzer was named deputy branch director, a role he held until his departure at the end of November.

From July 2020 through May 2024, he was on detail to the DOJ's Antitrust Division, where he served as senior trial counsel for U.S. v. Google LLC, a case challenging search engine monopolization by the tech giant. In a landmark decision, the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia found that Google was maintaining an illegal monopoly.

It was as the trial wound down that Dintzer said he began considering a new chapter to his career, he told Law360, since it felt like a "natural break" after three decades of work for the DOJ. Though he was already very familiar with Crowell through years of interactions with the firm's lawyers, he said, it was an alignment in philosophy that finally drew him to the law firm.

"I've been practicing in D.C. for over 30 years, both on the government contract side and on the antitrust side, and I was looking for a firm that is world-class in both," Dintzer said. "I started talking with them, and I found that we think about cases and we think about litigation in the same way, and I respect their lawyers."

Having never before worked in private practice, Dintzer said he was looking forward to opportunities to help companies Crowell represents to develop litigation strategies, as well as experience a range of litigation beyond what government attorneys generally handle.

"The range of types of cases that might come up in private litigation are just broader than you can see in the government, simply because if two private parties are litigating against each other, then the United States usually isn't involved," Dintzer said. "And that would be another area where I would get a chance to help the clients deal with those challenges, and if necessary, present their side in court."

Dintzer's addition comes weeks after Crowell announced another key government hire, Erik Woodhouse, a senior State Department sanctions official, to the firm's D.C. office. Woodhouse was returning to Crowell, where he was counsel from 2017 to 2021.

Also in November, Crowell's top antitrust leader in New York, Olivier N. Antoine, departed the firm to join King & Spalding LLP.

The firm employs close to 600 attorneys in the United States as of the latest Law360 tally, including nearly 250 partners. In addition to its D.C. and New York locations, the firm maintains offices in Chicago;

Denver; Los Angeles; Orange County, California; San Francisco; and overseas in Brussels; Doha, Qatar; and Shanghai. There is also a London branch, Crowell & Moring U.K. LLP.

--Additional reporting by Matthew Perlman, Andrea Keckley and Christine DeRosa. Editing by Karin Roberts.

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