

## Crowell & Moring Hires Ex-Reed Smith Global Deals Pro

By Taylor Arluck

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The former leader of Reed Smith LLP's corporate and securities group in Washington, D.C. — who was lead counsel for packaging company Sonoco's \$383 million acquisition of a German competitor — has joined Crowell & Moring LLP.

Claud v.S. "Lex" Eley joined Crowell & Moring's Washington, D.C., office as a partner on Monday after spending more than five years at Reed Smith, where he assisted clients, particularly in the packaging industry, with mergers and acquisitions. He also counseled emerging growth companies in the D.C. area.

"What I bring to the table for Crowell & Moring is building up the firm's international practice, with an interest in also expanding the regional corporate practice," Eley told Law360 on Thursday.

Eley's practice will continue to focus on international transactions in the European market, where he has had leadership experience. While a partner at Hogan & Hartson LLP, which became Hogan Lovells LLP in 2010, he was managing partner of its Brussels office from 1994 to 2000.

Eley's decades of experience with trans-Atlantic deal making led him to maintain a 20-year relationship with Sonoco Products Co. In October 2014, Sonoco reached a \$383 million deal to acquire Germany's family-owned Weidenhammer Packaging Group GmbH.

In January 2015, the U.K.'s Competition and Markets Authority flagged the packaging companies' deal for further scrutiny over competition concerns, but ultimately cleared it in July 2015.

"Had we not been successful in getting U.K. clearance, Sonoco would have had to divest some of its operations in the country," Eley said.

Eley's move comes on the heels of Crowell & Moring's announcement earlier this month that it had hired two other partners, Simon Evers and David McFarlane.

Evers left Davis Polk & Wardwell LLP to join Crowell & Moring's London office, where he is a member of the firm's corporate group. McFarlane joined Crowell & Moring's Los Angeles office, where he is head of the firm's ERISA practice.



Lex Eley

Before joining Crowell & Moring, Eley was a partner at Reed Smith from 2011 to 2016 and before that served as a partner at Morgan Lewis & Bockius LLP from 2008 to 2011.

Eley received his law degree in 1982 from Emory University and his bachelor's degree from the College of William and Mary in 1979.

--Editing by Bruce Goldman.

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