Tax, Private Wealth & Trusts Practice

Rajah & Tann LLP boosts its Tax, Private Wealth & Trusts Practice. Mr Yeoh Lian Chuan and Ms Stacy Choong from Allen & Gledhill LLP and Drew & Napier LLC, respectively, have joined Rajah & Tann LLP as partners. Both are leading tax and private wealth practitioners, each with more than a dozen years’ specialist experience.

Associate Professor Stephen Phua, a leading tax academic from the National University of Singapore, has also joined the Firm as a tax consultant.

The three new specialists will join the Firm’s existing tax partners Soon Choo Hock and Christina Ng, and its trust practitioner Ronald Choo.

Standing (L-R): Stephen Phua, Soon Choo Hock, Ronald Choo, Yeoh Lian Chuan; Seated: Stacy Choong, Christina Ng
With the new additions, the Firm will boast one of the strongest tax practices in Singapore, with members having more than 80 years of combined tax experience. The Firm's tax practice is a full service practice covering all areas of taxation, but with particular focus on the following:

- planning and documentation of complex corporate transactions and structures;
- taxation matters involving the financial services, transport and infrastructure sectors;
- resolution of tax controversies; and
- goods and services tax.

Working closely with the Firm’s many specialists in other practice areas (including financial services regulation, banking, litigation and real estate), our Tax, Private Wealth and Trusts Practice advises high net worth individuals, as well as financial institutions and professional trustees on a full range of matters, including the following:

- integrated tax, trusts and estate wealth planning & structuring;
- drafting and administration of various types of trusts;
- establishment of structures for family governance and asset holding;
- wills & probate;
- preparation of documentation for private banks;
- advising on, structuring and documenting investments into various kinds of assets including structured products;
philanthropy and charitable giving;

immigration;

real estate; and

family law.

The credentials of our new Tax, Private Wealth & Trusts specialists are set out below.

Yeoh Lian Chuan

Lian Chuan graduated from King’s College, London in 1992, qualified as a Barrister-at-Law at Lincoln’s Inn in 1993 and was called to the Singapore Bar in 1994.

Lian Chuan has been a tax practitioner for more than 12 years and focuses primarily on tax structuring and planning advice, and indirect tax. He has particular expertise in the areas of corporate transactions and financial services, bringing to his work in tax law his extensive experience in corporate finance and commercial law gleaned from his time with leading local and international law firms.

In addition, from 1998 to 2001, Lian Chuan was a Deputy Director in the Financial Centre Development Department of the Monetary Authority of Singapore where he headed the Tax Unit. Lian Chuan has also worked extensively on a number of areas of financial sector policy including liberalisation, private banking and wealth management, employee savings and the trust industry.

Before joining Rajah & Tann LLP in June 2008, Lian Chuan was a partner in the Financial Services Department of Allen & Gledhill LLP for 6 ½ years.
Lian Chuan also advises a variety of clients on financial services regulatory matters. Lian Chuan is recommended by the following independent international journals:

- *Who’s Who Legal - Singapore 2008* for Corporate Tax Practice, described as being ‘as knowledgeable as you can get when it comes to Singapore taxation’;
- *The Practical Law Company’s Which Lawyer? Yearbook* (2008); and

Lian Chuan is a member of the International Tax Planning Association, the International Fiscal Association, the Society of Trust and Estate Practitioners (‘STEP’) and the Singapore Trustees Association.

**Stacy Choong**

Stacy commenced her tax and trust practice upon graduation from the National University of Singapore in 1994. She is admitted to the Singapore Bar (1995) and the New York Bar (2001) and has practiced in the United States.

Stacy advises on all aspects of tax laws and has substantial experience in providing tax planning and structuring advice in connection with a wide range of corporate transactions. She has also built an extensive tax dispute resolution practice including the obtaining of tax rulings, liaison and negotiations with tax authorities and the handling of tax litigation.
Stacy is also recognised for her private wealth and trust practice. She advises on trusts for both commercial and family/private purposes and also advises charities, non-profit organisations and foundations.

Stacy is listed in the following independent legal journals:

- *Best Lawyers 2008* in the specialties of Tax & Trust and Estates;
- *Who’s Who Legal – Singapore 2008* for Corporate Tax; and

**Stephen Phua**

Stephen has taught at university level in the area of tax law for over 18 years. In that time, Stephen has also been a tax consultant for and has undertaken numerous projects with government departments.

For 10 years from 1996, Stephen served on the Singapore Income Tax Board of Review. He remains a member of the GST Board of Review, the Valuation Review Board, and the Ministry of Finance’s Tax Advisory Group. He was Director for the Centre for Commercial Law Studies (‘CCLS’) from 2001 to 2005, and was recently appointed an examiner at The Chartered Institute of Taxation, London. He is a member of the Steering Group of the INTR, Centre for Tax Policy and Administration, OECD. Stephen has held visiting/teaching positions in universities such as Harvard University, New York University and University of British Columbia and was a programme advisor to the International Tax and Investment Centre in Washington (2007).
Besides numerous conference papers and articles in refereed journals, Stephen’s publications include being Editor of two books: ‘Recent Developments in Financial Regulation and Capital Markets’ (2003, LexisNexis Butterworths) and ‘Excise Taxation in Asia’ (2007, CCLS, Faculty of Law, NUS).

We also set out in the following paragraphs the credentials of our existing Tax, Private Wealth & Trust lawyers.

**Soon Choo Hock**

Choo Hock brings with him over two decades’ practice experience in banking, corporate and tax law in addition to seven years of lecturing on revenue law at the National University of Singapore. He is also a member of the Singapore Income Tax Board of Review.

In addition to his tax expertise, Choo Hock leads the Firm’s Corporate Banking team where he has handled a substantial number of deals involving loans and security documentation. In particular, he has been involved in negotiating and drafting structured finance documentation, syndicated loan documentation and restructuring transactions. He advises American, Japanese, European and Singapore banks and financial institutions on various aspects of banking and lending laws and compliance issues.

Choo Hock has also been cited in various legal journals as follows:


- *AsiaLaw Profiles* (2007), proclaimed as a recommended lawyer in the area of capital markets and corporate finance;
Christina Ng

Christina has more than 18 years of legal practice experience. She specialises in energy and infrastructure, and has been extensively involved with investments and mergers and acquisitions in the region. To each of her transactions, she brings her knowledge and experience in taxation which is particularly useful to clients in structuring cross-border transactions.

Christina also regularly advises clients on a diverse range of tax planning and structuring matters. Christina has been recommended by various independent legal journals as follows:

- **The Practical Law Company’s Which Lawyer? Yearbook** (2008) as a highly recommended tax practitioner;
- **International Tax Review 2004**;
- **Asia Pacific Legal 500 2006 / 2007** as a leading individual for Corporate / M&A;
- **Who’s Who Legal - Singapore 2007** for M&A;
- **Asia Pacific Legal 500 2003 / 2004** for M&A with a technology specialisation; and
- **Asia Pacific Legal 500 2004 / 2005** for advising the Bharti Changi Consortium on the modernisation and restructuring of the Mumbai and Delhi airport.
Christina is a member of the International Tax Planning Association, the International Fiscal Association, and the Society of Trust and Estate Practitioners (‘STEP’).

**Ronald Choo**

Ronald is an experienced litigator with more than 15 years of legal experience. He has argued significant cases at all levels, including the High Court and the Court of Appeal in the areas of banking, trusts and insolvency. Ronald was also formerly an Assistant Registrar of the Supreme Court.

In addition to his courtroom practice, one of Ronald’s specialisations is private trusts and estate planning. He regularly advises clients (both major international financial institutions and individuals) on the creation of settlements and trusts as well as the subsequent operation and administration of the trust structure, the obligations and duties of trustees, the rights of beneficiaries, changes of trustees, and the dissolution of trusts.

Ronald is a member of the Singapore Trustees Association.