

## State Department names chief of investment arbitration

**Tom Jones • Wednesday, 9 September 2015**

The US State Department has named **Patrick Pearsall** as its new chief of investment arbitration, as his predecessor **Jeremy Sharpe** moves to Shearman & Sterling.

Pearsall, 35, has worked in the State Department's Office of the Legal Adviser for six years. In his new role, he will lead a team of lawyers that represents the United States in investor-state and state-to-state arbitrations arising under investment treaties and free trade agreements.

He takes over at the end of September from Sharpe, who has held the position for four years. As already [announced](#) in July, Sharpe is joining the partnership at Shearman to develop its investment treaty and public international law practices in London.

Speaking to *GAR* about his successor, Sharpe says "Patrick is a brilliant choice for the position. He has significant experience in international investment arbitration and an excellent reputation for coordinating high-stakes issues for the US government. I'm confident he'll be tremendously successful in his new position."

Among other cases, Pearsall successfully defended the US in a NAFTA chapter 11 claim brought by Canadian pharmaceutical company Apotex, which was dismissed in 2012; and a state-to-state case brought by Ecuador under the US-Ecuador BIT that ended in 2012. He has also advised on the negotiation of several major trade and investment agreements on behalf of the US.

He has served as the principal lawyer overseeing the environmental review of the Keystone XL, the proposed extension to an oil pipeline between Canada and the US; as well as the lead negotiator of several multilateral treaties concerning international oceans issues.

Before joining the State Department, he practised at *GAR* 30 firm Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton in New York for over three years, and served as a clerk at the ICC International Court of Arbitration in Paris.

**Claudia Annacker**, partner in Cleary's Paris office, praises Pearsall's "extensive knowledge of the complex issues that arise in investment treaty arbitrations." She says he is already a "leading member of the investment treaty bar" and that the firm is "pleased and proud to include Patrick as one of our alumni."

A 2005 graduate of Columbia Law School, Pearsall has lectured there as well as at George Washington School of Law and Georgetown University, where he is an adjunct professor.

Pearsall was a speaker at *GAR* Live BITs in Washington, DC, in April this year, and at [GAR Live Frankfurt](#) in 2014, where he argued that the changes in US government attitudes to investment protection in the past 30 years should be viewed as "a calibration rather than a clawback" of investor rights.