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IOSCO adds voice to calls for collateral transparency

The International Organization of Securities Commissions (IOSCO) has joined industry voices in calling for a more granular data collection for collateral transactions.

IOSCO claims that as new regulations drive a growing trend of collateralisation to mitigate certain risk types, a greater understanding of the collateral market landscape is needed.

The regulatory body also cited changes in market structure and the way market participants interact with each other as drivers behind the growth of collateralised transactions.

"Very little data exists on the demand for [collateral transformation] services," IOSCO stated in its Securities Markets Risk Outlook 2016 report.

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ISE sells to Nasdaq for $1.1 billion

Nasdaq has agreed to acquire the options exchange operator International Securities Exchange (ISE) from Deutsche Börse Group for $1.1 billion.

ISE operates three electronic options exchanges, the ISE, ISE Gemini and ISE Mercury, which collectively account for more than 15 percent of trading in US options.

The acquisition is intended to help Nasdaq improve efficiency and technology offerings for clients and to improve capability for innovation and experimentation in the equity options industry.

Nasdaq will combine ISE with its existing platforms and INET technology in a bid to improve its scope of services.

According to Deutsche Börse, the sale is part of organisational changes in relation to its growth strategy, as the organisation re-evaluates its competitive positioning, profitability and the strategic benefits of all its activities.

Bob Greifeld, CEO of Nasdaq, commented: "The equities options business has been core to our long-term strategy, and we believe an essential component to the strength of the Nasdaq franchise."

He added: "I believe this transaction advances our ambitions with all our stakeholders, including clients and shareholders."

Deutsche Börse CEO Carsten Kengeter said: "We are pursuing the goal to become the number one or two player in every business in which we operate. This goal requires an active management of our business portfolio. In areas where we are not able to meet this goal, we are evaluating other options."

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Target date set for US shift to T+2

The US T+2 Industry Steering Committee (ISC) has announced 5 September 2017 as the target date for the market to move from a T+3 to a T+2 settlement cycle.

The ISC, which is organised by the Depository Trust and Clearing Corporation and co-chaired by the Securities Industry and Financial Markets Association and the Investment Company Institute, made the recommendation following the publication of its Industry Playbook in December 2015.

In the playbook, the ISC detailed a timeline for implementation, including milestones and dependencies that participants should consider in order to successfully migrate to a shorter settlement cycle.

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ISE sells to Nasdaq for $1.1 billion

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Kengeter added: "ISE, purchased in 2007 before the financial crisis, is a highly attractive asset that has excellent prospects to develop under the ownership of a US exchange."

Bringing the businesses together is also intended to bring more competitive pricing to the industry.

Tom Wittman, executive vice president and global head of equities at Nasdaq, said: "The merger of Nasdaq and ISE's innovative options franchises will result in a combination of talent and technology from both organisations."

As part of the deal, Nasdaq will gain an additional 20 percent stake in the Options Clearing Corporation, bringing its total stake to 40 percent. It will also take over the Deutsche Börse ETF Ventures and Longitude products.

The deal excludes ownership interest in Bats Global Markets and Digital Asset Holdings, which will continue to be owned by Deutsche Börse.

Once the transaction is complete, Nasdaq will also take over operation of PrecISE, a front-end order and execution management system for trading options and stock-option combinations.

Wittman said: "PrecISE can be seamlessly installed on a desktop to connect traders to ISE options exchanges, and we will look closely at how it can be used across all our North American trading platforms."

He added: "The hallmark of Nasdaq's DNA is to provide innovative solutions to reduce inefficiency and improve the way market participants trade and interact. The ISE acquisition squarely fits within these objectives."

Nasdaq will fund the purchase with a combination of debt and cash, and the acquisition is not expected to have a material impact on Nasdaq's financial leverage or capital return strategy. The deal is subject to customary closing conditions and regulatory approval.

IOSCO calls for collateral transparency

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The report continued: "To achieve better monitoring and surveillance of such a market-wide activity, better quality and quantity of data are necessary. Currently, comprehensive, detailed data is not available. What does exist is piecemeal, covering specific segments of the industry."

The Committee on the Global Financial System, the Office of Financial Research and the US Federal Reserve have also highlighted the need for a more coherent overview of the potential risks that more collateral transactions might pose to global markets.

Additionally, the Investment Industry Regulatory Organization of Canada (IIROC), the self-regulatory organisation for investment dealers, has begun phasing in reporting for its members.

Under the changes, members will be required to report all fixed income transactions, including repo and reverse repo transactions, on a post-trade basis.

The IIROC intends to make an aggregate of statistics public, rather than the underlying transactions.

Target date set for US shift to T+2

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The suggested implementation date was chosen after consultation with industry participants and other global markets, taking in to account high-volume transaction days, large corporate action days and public holidays.

Shortening the settlement cycle for equities, corporate and municipal bonds, and unit investment trusts in the US is intended to reduce operational, systemic and counterparty risk, while also reducing liquidity needs. This should lead to improved market structure, and a safer and more efficient system for investors.

The target implementation date of 5 September is subject to support from regulators and also relies on the successful completion of industry-wide testing in Q2 and Q3 2017.

ICE weighs in on LSEG merger

Intercontinental Exchange (ICE) has announced it is considering making an offer for an acquisition or merger deal with the London Stock Exchange Group (LSEG), potentially derailing a prospective merger of LSEG and Deutsche Börse.

The US-based ICE has not made an official decision to go ahead with an offer, and has not yet approached the board of LSEG. It said in a statement: "There can be no certainty that any offer will be made, nor as to the terms on which any offer will be made."

ICE will, however, confirm whether or not it intends to make an offer by 5pm on 29 March, in accordance with rules set out in the City Code on Takeovers and Mergers.

This announcement comes after LSEG and Deutsche Börse confirmed they were in talks over a potential merger on 23 February, however, talks have been marred by the suggestion from Deutsche Börse that the deal would be threatened if the UK votes to leave

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the EU, although it is unclear how a 'Brexit' would affect deals with either party.

LSEG declined to comment on the announcement from ICE, but Xavier Rolet, CEO of LSEG, has called the potential merger with Deutsche Börse a "compelling opportunity", suggesting that this deal would strengthen both companies.

Rolet made no mention of the possibility of an offer from ICE.

In its 2015 results statement, LSEG suggested that combining the complementary growth strategies, products and services of Deutsche Börse and LSEG would be beneficial both to shareholders and customers.

According to the report, benefits could include cross-margining between listed and over-the-counter derivatives clearing, subject to regulatory approvals.

Rolet said: "This represents a compelling opportunity to strengthen each other in an industry-defining combination, by creating a global market infrastructure group with significant benefits for our customers and shareholders."

Clearstream records flat figures for Feb

Clearstream has seen lacklustre results for February 2016, with assets under custody remaining on par with last year, overall.

For February 2016, Clearstream recorded an overall value of assets under custody of €12.9 trillion, marking a 2 percent dip compared to February 2015, which registered €13.2 trillion.

Securities held under custody in the international central securities depository (ICSD) saw a 3 percent increase, registering a total of €7.1 trillion, compared to €6.9 trillion in February last year.

However, securities held in the domestic German central securities depository (CSD) decreased by 7 percent from €6.2 trillion in February 2015 to €5.8 trillion in February 2016.

Year-to-date 2016, the combined value of assets under custody in the CSD and ICSD businesses has seen no significant change compared to the same period in 2015, remaining at around €13 trillion.

For February 2016, Clearstream processed 3.7 million ICSD settlement transactions, 6 percent less than in February last year, which saw 3.9 million transactions processed.

The majority of the transactions, 84 percent, were over-the-counter (OTC), while 16 percent were registered as stock exchange transactions. The domestic CSD processed 7.9 million transactions, marking a 2 percent increase on February 2015's total of 7.8 million. Of these, 35 percent were OTC transactions and 65 percent were registered on the stock exchange.

For 2016 year-to-date, the number of settlement transactions, combining the domestic and international CSDs and including both OTC and stock exchange transactions, reached 22.2 million. This represents a 6 percent dip compared to the same period in 2015, when 23.5 million transactions were processed.

The investment fund services (IFS) business also saw an 11 percent dip in the numbers of transactions processed in February. It saw 750,000 transactions last month, compared to 850,000 in February 2015.

Year-to-date 2016, IFS transactions totalled 1.5 million transactions, marking a 12 percent dip on the same period in 2015, which registered 1.7 million transactions.

Collaborative blockchain trial a success

R3 has completed trials of five new cloud-based blockchain technologies, with 40 financial institutions taking part.

Tests involved trading fixed-income assets between participants using blockchain technology. Run in parallel, the five trials used smart contracts based on identical business logic to allow for accurate comparison.

Trials used various different cloud technology providers and were conducted within R3's Global Collaborative Lab.

Banks connected to private distributed ledger technology and evaluated the strengths and weaknesses of each. They would run smart contracts to facilitate issuance, secondary trading and redemptions, testing commercial papers—short-term fixed-income securities usually issued by corporations for fund raising.

The R3 lab specialises in testing collaborative blockchain developments to explore the ways in which distributed ledger technology can be used in global financial markets.

David Rutter, CEO of R3, said: "This development further supports R3's belief that close collaboration among global financial institutions and technology providers will create significant momentum behind the adoption of distributed ledger solutions across the industry."

"These technologies represent a new frontier of innovation and will dramatically improve the way the financial services industry operates, in much the same way as the advent of electronic trading decades ago delivered huge advancements in efficiency, transparency, scalability and security."

Tim Grant, managing director and global head of the R3 Collaborative Lab, added: "With the completion of this trial we have raised the bar significantly with the sheer number of global financial institutions, distributed ledger technologies and cloud providers working together in parallel to demonstrate how this nascent technology can be applied to real-world financial markets processes, by deploying smart contracts on an actively traded asset class."

"This represents great momentum for the R3 consortium and the technology providers and supports our aim to move distributed ledger technology from vision to execution."

Participants in the trial included Bank of America, BNP Paribas, J.P. Morgan, State Street, Wells Fargo, HSBC and more.

CACEIS wins landmark Italian mandate from P101

CACEIS has been appointed as depository and administrator for the first third-party managed SICAF to be authorised by the Bank of Italy.

P101, a venture capital firm specialising in investment in digital and technology companies, mandated CACEIS for Programma 101.

The SICAF, or fixed-capital investment company, was recently authorised to operate as an investment management company under the Alternative Investment Fund Managers Directive (AIFMD), with the status of EuVeca, or third-party manager. It is the first of its kind to receive the authorisation from the Bank of Italy.

CACEIS will provide custody and oversight services, including monitoring the limits set out under AIFMD or specifically imposed on the SICAV. It will also calculate net asset value, maintain the register of shareholders and manage report production for supervisory authorities.

Glenda Grazioli, a partner at P101, said: "We are very proud to be among the first to have taken advantage of one of the directive's new provisions, which gives P101 a new institutional character that will also enable us to attract international institutional investors in the future."

Giorgio Solcia, managing director of CACEIS in Italy, commented: "Our longstanding expertise in this industry allows us to provide comprehensive support to SICAFs, vehicles that I believe will play a key part in the future of Italy's asset management industry."

SICAFs are closed-ended undertakings for collective investment, and are established as companies that can either manage assets directly or through a third-party manager.

Subscribers can be either investors or shareholders, and typically take part in the investment management decision-making.

Eagle Alpha data sets take flight

Eagle Alpha has introduced two new alternative data sets to help asset managers to gain alpha.

The company offers help in gaining alpha from alternative data through providing research reports, analytical tools and data sets.

Access to new, previously untapped, alternative data could help asset managers to make better long-term investment decisions.

The first data sets are on UK residential housing and the UK auto industry. Transaction and point of sale data, and Chinese data are expected to be available in Q2 2016.

The housing data set encompasses approximately 80 percent of UK home sales, and includes data such as build-time, geographical information, rental yields and valuations over the last 10 years.

The auto set covers two areas: auto miles per gallon, for which it has 90,000 data points; and MOT records, to help identify high failure-rates, for which it has 355 million records.

Data is gathered through Eagle Alpha's proprietary tools or through relationships with third parties, before it is harvested, cleaned and tested, and delivered to asset managers.

Emmett Kilduff, CEO of Eagle Alpha, commented: "Asset managers are crying out for alternative data sources to crunch and analyse but they can't access them or have the time to find alpha within the data. We're addressing this challenge."

"There are thousands of alternative data sources out there but you need the right technology and people to identify what works and what will really make a difference to a long term investment strategy."

Linedata enhances accounting software

Linedata has launched an updated version of its fund accounting software, Linedata Mfact.

The update focuses on streamlining and automating key processes and enhancing exception management capabilities.

According to Linedata, it offers new business process management capabilities, enhanced corrections processing, an integrated weekend and holiday schedule, and improved handling for irregular paying debt instruments.

Linedata Mfact is part of the Linedata Admin Edge platform, supporting end-to-end fund administration for alternative, traditional and liquid alternatives funds.

This new version of Linedata Mfact also aims to further enhance the job scheduler to support Linedata Optima, adding more processes and enabling greater flexibility in the planning and scheduling of processes.

Linedata Optima's specialist business process management tool will also be added to Linedata Mfact's functionality set, enabling centralised exception management and process monitoring.

Linedata Optima was created to remove manual operations by presenting a real-time view of all processing and exception messages on a single screen.

"With these latest enhancements to Linedata Mfact we are delivering greater automation of core processes and more comprehensive exception management, to enable our clients to handle more effectively the higher volumes and broader instrument requirements that they are experiencing," said Michael Galvin, product manager at Linedata.

"At Linedata we continue to invest in our fund services offering to ensure that our clients can rely on us to meet their administration system needs, in terms of automation, functionality, scalability, regulatory updates and new instrument coverage."

ASX selects Nasdaq for equities and clearing tech upgrade

The Australian Securities Exchange (ASX) has mandated Nasdaq to replace its equities and clearing technology platforms.

The move is part of the exchange's technology transformation programme, outlined in February last year.

Development will be undertaken on the Nasdaq Genium INET Clearing platform, which is already in use for futures clearing on ASX.

Using the same platform is reportedly part of a wider move to consolidate several post-trade platforms, intended to improve efficiency for customers. Nasdaq will also build a CCP clearing capability.

ASX has also recently gone live with Nasdaq's post-trade risk management solution, Sentinel Risk Manager, and the default management component of this is already in operation.

Once it is fully implemented, the platform should provide a risk management solution across both of ASX's clearinghouses, and all asset classes.

Lars Ottersgård, executive vice president for market technology at Nasdaq, said: "The post-trade space is undergoing significant global change from a regulatory, operational and customer requirement perspective."

"Proven technology that can provide flexible and improved product and service capability is critical in meeting the constantly changing post-trade environment."

Tim Thurman, chief information officer at ASX, added: "This post-trade phase of ASX's technology refresh will enable ASX to deliver globally proven technology and significant benefits to the Australian market, including increased flexibility, reduced complexity and scale efficiencies."

"While we have announced that ASX is exploring the potential of distributed ledger technology—or blockchain—to transform settlement processes in our market, we will continue to operate our existing post-trade services as normal."

"This extension of ASX's longstanding and successful partnership with Nasdaq will ensure that Australia's financial market infrastructure remains world-class and meets the needs of participants and investors."

Cinnober selected for JPX upgrade

Japan Exchange Group (JPX) has mandated Cinnober to upgrade the clearing system for its listed derivatives market.

Through the Cinnober technology, the market, operated by Osaka Exchange and cleared by the Japan Securities Clearing Corporation, should benefit from faster clearing and improved risk monitoring.

The solution allows clearinghouses to monitor and manage risk across multiple markets. A netting system allows for margin and settlement savings, better risk management and more efficient operations, as well as faster capabilities for product development.

The exchange aims to improve its delivery capabilities through the modernisation of its clearing system and the implementation of new technical architecture.

Hiroyuki Shibuya, chief information officer at JPX, said: "We now look forward to working together as one team as we move towards implementing a real-time clearing system that meets both global standards and international best practice."

Cinnober CEO Veronica Augustsson said: "As the leading provider of real-time clearing systems, we are positioned with a unique blend of knowledge and experience in this area. Large marketplaces with global ambitions value technology that can reduce risks and handle both today's and tomorrow's demand. This is demonstrated by major exchanges successfully using our technology."

"JPX is known for its high demand on quality and we are therefore extra delighted to have been selected to make this journey together."

Convergex renews BNP Paribas deal

BNP Paribas Securities Services has had its mandate to provide Convergex with custody and settlement services extended from four countries to 26.

The bank has serviced Convergex in Greece, Poland, Turkey and the UK since 2010.

BNP Paribas will now provide direct local custody in 26 markets worldwide, with dedicated expertise allowing the bank to support clients investing in a range of asset classes and investment strategies.

Julien Kasparian, UK head of sales and relationship management for banks and brokers at BNP Paribas Securities Services, said: "We are delighted to be broadening the relationship we have with Convergex."

"This deal demonstrates the trust our existing clients have in our capabilities, the strength of our value proposition for custody and settlement and the depth of the products we offer our bank and broker partners."

SS&C's Geneva gets an upgrade

SS&C Technologies has rolled out an upgrade to its SS&C GlobeOp Geneva service for fund administration providers.

Geneva 15.2 reportedly includes benefits gained from SS&C's acquisition of Advent, announced in February.

The upgrade is intended to improve operational workflows and to provide greater efficiencies. Accounting workflows for swaps and bank debt have been further streamlined, and instrument support for emerging markets has been improved.

According to SS&C, the upgrade is a reaction to the changing demands of fund administration clients, which now require scalable operations for complex asset strategies.

Bob Schwartz, chief technology officer of SS&C Technologies, said: "We invest in upgrading and enhancing our infrastructure and technology and—because we own the technology behind the services—we are able to respond more quickly to evolving customer needs."

AIA Group appoints BNP Paribas for OTC

BNP Paribas Securities Services has been selected to provide OTC derivatives operations to Asian life insurance company AIA Group.

BNP Paribas will provide trade management, collateral management and trade repository reporting for AIA in Hong Kong and Singapore.

Kong Siew Cheong, AIA regional director of investment management for operations, said: "We have been impressed with the expertise and regulatory knowledge demonstrated by BNP Paribas Securities Services in implementing the OTC derivatives service solution for us."

"Each of our locations has its unique operational and regulatory challenges and the team is able to partner with us to find flexible and effective solutions."

"The quality of the support we receive through BNP Paribas's global operating model is excellent, and the commitment and professionalism of the project team is highly commendable."

Philippe Benoit, head of Asia Pacific at BNP Paribas Securities Services, said: "AIA is a leading insurer across Asia Pacific and we are delighted to be supporting such a high quality and forward-thinking business. We look forward to continuing the on-boarding process and partnering with them further in other service areas."

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Positively planning

Delegates at the ALFI Spring Conference were feeling good about blockchain, responsibility and even regulation—although speakers had some warnings, too

The Association of the Luxembourg Funds Industry (ALFI) Spring Conference 2016 was brimming over with optimism about the future, with speakers embracing disruptive technologies, raving about responsible investment, and even welcoming UCITS V with a smile.

In one panel discussion, experts argued that disruption should be a driver for innovation in financial institutions, with Lyron Wahrmann, panel moderator and head of the Citi Markets Innovation Lab at CitiGroup in Tel Aviv, pointing out that the "pace of change and disruption has been dramatically increasing".

While Olivier Renault of Societe Generale Securities Services said that banks' "current model is under attack", with business models changing piece by piece, another speaker, Furio Pietribiasi of Mediolanum Asset Management, argued: "We must be optimistic."

Pietribiasi added that the industry is aware of the technology changes that have to be made, but suggested that instead, "the biggest issue we have in our industry is a culture change", and that success is no longer achieved by simply defining a strategy and sticking to it.

Wahrmann pointed out that expectations are changing, both from banks' customers and their employees, and that they now expect mobile solutions. Citing driverless cars as an example, he suggested that with the 'internet of things', anything can be a computer. Pietribiasi responded to this by suggesting that such dramatic innovation requires massive changes to infrastructure—for example, a driverless car will not work if the roads are not yet mapped, he said.

Real mobility, he argued, is not necessarily achieved through accessing data through "funky" dashboards or apps, but through adapting that data to create more meaningful information, which is much more challenging.

Renault added to this, pointing out that a lot of the data currently available is not 'clean', and that too many intermediaries can render any data effectively unusable. He said: "That is why new entrants have a great advantage."

With regards to big data, however, Pietribiasi reiterated his optimism, suggesting that the industry is in good stead.

Partly, this is because banks tend to have good margins, meaning they have the finances available to restructure their systems, but it is also related to the fact that there is a better awareness of big data now, with banks no longer "hiding behind regulation" or making excuses not to invest in it.

He added that market disruption, both in the areas of big data and blockchain, would be positive, and could be the push that institutions need to get their own projects off the ground.

"We've been talking a lot about this but we need to see more successes," Pietribiasi said.

Renault added that innovation is "a journey" and "something we need to embrace", and that institutions could learn a lot from startups. He suggested that by working with startups either through investment, through purchasing and integrating new technology or through participating in initiatives, institutions could avoid being left behind in the future.

One such technology that is never far from the limelight is blockchain—and, generally speaking, it is a welcome development. Justin Morgan-Harwood of Fidelity Investments suggested that blockchain could affect the entire post-trade value chain including transfer agency, custody, central securities depositories and depository services, as well as having the ability to transfer value through payments, clearing and settlement.

Morgan-Harwood expressed some excitement over the potential, saying it's "not often you get to totally re-engineer a process", while Olivier Portenseigne of Fundsquare said there are "definitely" benefits for asset managers.

Another panellist, Philippe Denis of BNP Paribas Securities Services, added that the full operations of securities services could be affected and that, rather than considering blockchain as additional to the value chain, it should be thought of as a whole new value chain.

Several speakers cited the transparency allowed by the technology, suggesting that this could lend itself to technology for regulatory compliance, or 'reg tech'.

Portenseigne added that blockchain aligns with the industry agenda of creating better transparency, reducing risk and reducing costs, adding that it allows service providers to begin "really designing products for investors".

Morgan-Harwood echoed this sentiment, pointing out that the industry is customer-based, while suggesting "we have to do things faster, cheaper, more transparently", in order to create a better customer experience.

While the general message was positive, panellists also warned that the industry must adopt standards for blockchain in terms of semantics, messaging and processing in order to make it work at all, let alone to glean any value from it.

The panel also agreed that the industry must work together on the technology, with Portenseigne stressing: "Collaboration will be key", while Laurent Kratz of Scorechain warned: "Don't let others innovate for you."

Moving away from technology, another panel focused on the increasing prominence of responsible investment and environmental, social and governance (ESG) factors in the funds industry, as speakers suggested that ignorance of this could be perilous.

Panel moderator Jane Wilkinson, a partner at KPMG Luxembourg, suggested that in the future, 'millenial' investors will be looking for tailored responsible investment products, simple platforms, and good branding, as well as simplicity, flexibility and transparency in their investments.

She added that responsible investment funds are "well positioned to seize these opportunities".

Louise Hedberg, head of corporate governance at the Swedish East Capital International, said that companies that are well managed in every sense are those more likely to achieve long-term results. Although responsible investment may pose a risk, such firms will be better placed to mitigate these risks while capturing the opportunities.

By actively engaging with the emerging and frontier market companies that it invests in, East Capital International can help them to integrate ESG factors and understand where they "can influence valuation over time".

The panel also discussed the recent decision of Morning Star and MSCI to rate investment funds for sustainability.

Hedberg called this "a good start" and a step toward helping investors and retail clients understand what they're getting from responsible investment. She said: "It will certainly help to at least illustrate what actually comes out of responsible investment strategies."

Another panellist, Philippe Zaouati, CEO of Mirova in Paris, also called this a "very important move" that will help to promote ESG funds in the market. But he also expressed concern over the use of only one data provider.

Zaouati added that there are significant differences in the ways that data providers and rating agencies come to a rating conclusion, suggesting that this "could create some strange results".

The panel concluded with Hedberg stressing that management firms are typically aware of the risks involved, but should start to focus on the opportunities, too.

Zaouati expects responsible investment to be a success, as it is in line with conventional society and the demands of millennials. He added that it is important to create a convergence between the fund industry and the way that society is moving forward, advising attendees that it is a case of "investing in the world we would like to happen, not the world we have today".

The attention of ALFI delegates was eventually bought back to the ever-present topic of regulation, with a panel dedicated to the UCITS V regulation, which comes into force on 18 March. However, the mood remained positive, with a panel suggesting that banks are generally welcoming, and in some cases exceeding, requirements for the regulatory update.

From a depository bank's point of view, Jean-Marc Crépin, a partner at Brown Brothers Harriman, said: "UCITS V has led to an improvement of the operational risk framework that a depository bank has."

Although banks complained about the changes, he said, they understand the reasons for the regulations, and welcome industry standards that protect investors.

He also pointed to some parts of the regulation, such as cash flow monitoring, saying that although they're new in a regulatory sense, banks already had these processes in place. These original processes may have required some adapting, but the changes didn't require too much effort.

With regards to client onboarding rules under UCITS V, Judith Robinson, managing counsel at BNY Mellon, highlighted the importance of exercising due diligence and working in partnership with the client.

She said that procedures should be in place to understand what the client wants from the investment, to identify market coverage and investment strategies, thereby ensuring that a bank can provide the service the client requires. She stressed that the process is "a dialogue with the client".

Crépin agreed that the relationship between clients and depository banks should be a partnership, specifying that relationship managers are "the first line of defence", and an important part of the bank's culture.

He added that regulations are not necessarily set in stone, suggesting that institutions should take into account the 'spirit of regulation', going above and beyond the specific requirements, if they deem it necessary in order to protect the client.

"It's a more collaborative, transparent process now," said Robinson, adding that it is also much clearer where the assets of a fund actually are. Although some aspects of UCITS V still need to be smoothed out, such as the rules around collateral management, she said the regulation is generally a positive thing.

Moderator Marc-André Bechet, director for tax and legal at ALFI, concluded with a simple warning ahead of the impending UCITS V implementation. Bechet told attendees: "Be ready on time." **AST**

Investor services: who are the top picks?

The R&M Investor Services Survey 2016 is the industry's largest survey. Here are some of the key results

Customer service satisfaction is difficult to automatically quantify, because it's a feeling gleaned qualitatively. Then, against some measure or scoring system, it's quantified, almost like a thought put into a speech that's then delivered in a foreign language, before being translated into English and presented as the truth. Try inputting, 'their custody service continues to be excellent', in an online translation tool and then running the foreign language result by a native reader. Is the translation perfect? Machine translations make common mistakes because they lack context or a feeling for the subject matter behind the sentence or words being processed, meaning, subtext, tone and more are lost.

The R&M Investor Services Survey 2016 takes the person-to-person interview approach, producing independent client feedback that investor services players can take on board and learn from. Using 132 responses from some of the biggest investment managers in the world, as well as hundreds from small investment managers, asset owners, sovereign wealth funds, insurance companies and family offices, market research firm R&M assessed the top service providers in asset servicing functions such as custody, securities lending and fund administration.

The results are split into expert and overall score sections, as well as the most improved overall on last year.

The joint winners of the Investor Services Survey were Pictet and RBC Investor & Treasury Services, with the service providers scoring 6.29 each.

Pictet and RBC Investor & Treasury Services also closed the 0.01 point gap that separated them in 2015.

Top 200 Asset Managers

		2016
1	Northern Trust	5.49
2	HSBC	5.35
3	J.P. Morgan	5.34
4	BNP Paribas	5.27
5	BNY Mellon	5.25
6	State Street	4.98

The results then break down into client type and geographic regions, specifically the UK, Switzerland, Europe (excluding the previous two jurisdictions), North America, the US and the rest of the world. The 'experts' portion of the results derives from institutions that responded on five or more service providers and therefore have a broad perspective and are well placed to compare service levels between one provider and another.

Commenting on Pictet's performance, one respondent said: "Pictet provides a top class service and support."

The respondent added: "The relationship team is very knowledgeable and supports us very well [with] all our questions. The only potential improvement I could see concerns online reporting."

The Experts

		2016	2015	Change 16/15
1	HSBC	5.17	-	-
2	BNY Mellon (1)	5.07	5.59	-0.52
3	State Street (2)	5	5.38	-0.38
=4	J.P. Morgan (5)	4.98	5.21	-0.23
=4	RBC (3)	4.98	5.31	-0.33
=6	BNP Paribas (7)	4.9	4.87	0.03
=6	Northern Trust (4)	4.9	5.26	-0.36

(Managers responding on multiple providers, last year's position shown in brackets)

HSBC received the backing of the experts, scoring higher than second-placed BNY Mellon and third-placed State Street.

"The service received from HSBC has been good, and this is broadly in line with the previous year. In our experience, HSBC compare favourably with their peers," commented one respondent.

Another said: "Everyone we deal or have dealt with at HSBC is very professional and has a very good knowledge in all areas."

This is high praise for the bank amid a time of expansion. In December 2015, HSBC launched a US direct custody and clearing offering, increasing its direct custody network and internalising the chain of custody for clients investing in to the US. The service is designed to offer increased levels of asset safety for global institutional investor clients. HSBC now provides global custody to 39 markets through its own affiliates, and, impressively, to 89 markets in total.

"We work with Pictet on one global equity relationship," qualified another. "We find the individuals with whom we work to be of the highest quality and the service level is exceptionally good. We have worked with Pictet for over five years now and are very happy with the team and the firm."

Marc Briol, CEO of Pictet Asset Services, comments: "We're delighted to have been ranked first by R&M Consultants for a third consecutive year. It is a recognition that our clients not only value the range and quality of the asset services that we provide, but also appreciate the trust and expertise upon which our long-term relationships are built."

"Our strategy as a niche player with an integrated offer of private custody, global custody, fund solutions and execution services, is clearly paying off. It will continue to be our focus as we seek to broaden our appeal to institutions and asset managers in the years ahead."

Overall Score				
		2016	**2015**	**Change 16/15**
=1	Pictet (1)	6.29	6.31	-0.02
=1	RBC (2)	6.29	6.3	-0.01
3	Northern Trust (4)	5.87	5.83	0.04
4	J.P. Morgan (3)	5.69	5.91	-0.22
5	BNY Mellon (5)	5.65	5.8	-0.15
6	BNP Paribas (6)	5.64	5.58	0.06
7	HSBC	5.59	-	-
8	State Street (7)	5.15	5.27	-0.12

(Two or more regions)

RBC Investor & Treasury Services was similarly praised, particularly for its global service. "In general, we have found RBC to have a very broad based platform that is truly global. This compares to others that are not truly global," explained one respondent.

"In spite of the complexity inherent in global operations, RBC, with its focus on technology, timely dissemination of information and staff that has an approach to truly solving problems on a timely basis, [is] an excellent choice."

A second respondent added: "We work with different service providers in Germany, Switzerland and Luxembourg. Compared to these other providers, the services provided by RBC are of a consistently high quality."

Francis Jackson, head of global client coverage at RBC Investor & Treasury Services, comments: "We are focused on putting the client right at the centre of everything we do and on anticipating what they really want from their service provider in order to keep pace with the evolving regulatory and operational environment, and respond to their own clients' needs. We are increasingly adopting an agile approach with our clients, involving them from the outset in the development of new products and services and it is gratifying to see our approach endorsed by such an influential and independent client survey."

Finally, R&M included a new section in this year's survey, revealing the top 200 managers. Northern Trust came out on top here, with one respondent calling the bank a "highly rated custodian and financial services provider".

"Northern Trust is a well organised service provider with high quality staff and client orientated service," revealed a second respondent, while another was down to earth but positive: "Overall we feel that although the fees are reasonable, the quality of services is reflective of that. So relatively fair all around."

Peter Cherecwich, head of global fund services at Northern Trust, comments: "In today's fast-paced environment, Northern Trust has concentrated our efforts on developing technology innovations that move the needle. We value survey results as they help us benchmark our services and are pleased that Northern Trust was ranked first in the list of top 200 managers. We look forward to continuing to work closely with all our clients to ensure that we are meeting their needs and giving them solutions that help them to make better business decisions." **AST**

Geographical rankings

UK				
		2016	**2015**	**Change 16/15**
1	Pictet (1)	6.14	6.01	0.13
2	RBC (2)	5.89	5.92	-0.03
3	Northern Trust (3)	5.74	5.81	-0.07
=4	BNP Paribas (6)	5.62	5.32	0.3
=4	HSBC	5.62	-	-
6	J.P. Morgan (4)	5.46	5.59	-0.13
7	BNY Mellon (5)	5.28	5.36	-0.08
8	State Street (7)	5.19	5	0.19

Europe excluding the UK				
		2016	**2015**	**Change 16/15**
=1	Credit Suisse (1)	6.82	6.85	-0.03
=1	UBS (2)	6.82	6.84	-0.02
3	RBC (3)	6.45	6.34	0.11
4	Pictet (4)	6.08	6.25	-0.17
5	Northern Trust (7)	5.93	5.81	0.12
6	J.P. Morgan (5)	5.86	5.96	-0.1
7	BNP Paribas (6)	5.76	5.89	-0.13
8	BNY Mellon (8)	5.52	5.46	0.06

Europe excluding Switzerland and the UK		
		2016
1	RBC	6.61
2	Northern Trust	5.92
=3	BNP Paribas	5.86
=3	J.P. Morgan	5.86
5	BNY Mellon	5.52
6	State Street	4.78

North America				
		2016	**2015**	**Change 16/15**
1	Pictet (2)	6.58	6.55	0.03
2	RBC (1)	6.54	6.59	-0.05
3	Northern Trust (5)	6.07	5.94	0.13
4	BNY Mellon (4)	5.93	6.04	-0.11
5	J.P. Morgan (3)	5.82	6.14	0.32
6	State Street (6)	5.32	5.45	-0.13

Switzerland				
		2016	**2015**	**Change 16/15**
=1	Credit Suisse (1)	6.82	6.85	-0.03
=1	UBS (2)	6.82	6.83	-0.01
3	Pictet (3)	6.15	6.25	-0.01

Canada				
		2016	2015	Change 16/15
1	RBC (1)	6.56	6.6	-0.04
2	CIBC Mellon (2)	5.81	6.37	-0.56

US				
		2016	2015	Change 16/15
1	Pictet (1)	6.58	6.55	0.03
2	Northern Trust (3)	6.07	5.93	0.14
3	BNY Mellon (4)	5.98	5.87	0.11
4	J.P. Morgan (2)	5.82	6.14	-0.32

Rest of the World				
		2016	2015	Change 16/15
1	Pictet (2)	6.67	6.54	0.13
=2	BNY Mellon (5)	6.33	5.91	0.42
=2	RBC (3)	6.33	6.52	-0.19
4	Northern Trust (6)	5.9	5.67	0.23
5	J.P. Morgan (4)	5.58	5.98	-0.4
6	HSBC	5.54	6.96	-1.42

About the R&M Investor Services Survey

The survey is carried out by asking investment managers, asset owners, such as pension and sovereign wealth funds, and other organisations that deal with banks for regional and global custody and related investor services to rank providers based on the quality of service.

The survey is broken down into different service elements, ranging from core processes such as settlements and income collection through to reporting, cash management, transparency of foreign exchange rates and securities lending.

It uses a scale of one to seven, with one being ‘unacceptable’ and seven being ‘excellent (consistently exceeds expectations)’. The scores are calculated by taking the average received for each provider across all the service elements. No weighting is applied based on size of the assets held with the provider. Approximately 600 responses were received from 40 different countries.

To find out more, visit www.clientalkback.com

Funds and games

In a region as geographically, culturally and economically diverse as Asia, funds passports have a tricky road ahead if they're to redefine the industry

With the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) ranging from the buzzing and impeccably clean financial centre of Singapore to barely-developing Myanmar, and the economically scatty likes of Thailand and Vietnam in between, it's no wonder that Asia is often synonymous with fragmentation.

Throughout the continent, the markets vary wildly in their financial robustness, economic status and their very culture. With such little synchronicity, cross-border trading is inevitably tricky, and while Europe presses ahead with the Target2-Securities (T2S) harmonised settlement system, the Asian markets are increasingly in danger of being left behind.

According to Margaret Harwood-Jones, managing director and head of intermediaries and investors for transaction banking at Standard Chartered Bank, this fragmentation could have serious ramifications.

Inconsistency between markets means increased risk, which means increased cost of operations. On top of this, with no one regulatory body, as is seen in Europe, cross-border participants have to contend with differing regulations between markets.

"This means that the costs of entering a market or even continuing to remain in a market may be too high compared to the potential revenue opportunities," says Harwood-Jones. "Unified standards are difficult to achieve across the region."

The lack of alignment presents extra complexity, says Philippe Benoit, head of Asia Pacific at BNP Paribas Securities Services. Meeting multiple sets of trading rules and settlement timeframes can lead to additional issues around risk and liquidity management.

"Part of the fiduciary responsibility of BNP Paribas Securities Services, aside from safeguarding assets, is to act as a bridge between regulators and market participants," he says.

Ryan Cuthbertson, head of product development at HSBC Securities Services, calls Asia a "cluster of markets", highlighting additional concerns such as currency restrictions, exchange controls and differing tax requirements.

However, he also points to market initiatives that are working towards aligning Asian infrastructure with international standards and enabling funds to be marketed across borders.

The ASEAN Collective Investment Scheme (CIS) funds passport came in to fruition with a memorandum of understanding signed by the relevant authorities in Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand in 2013. The passport was designed to integrate the mutual fund market in ASEAN regions by removing barriers between borders, however it is yet to attract much international attention.

Harwood-Jones points out that "those managers who have funds approved for distribution under the legislation are localised in nature", while Cuthbertson suggests that a lack of clear direction is delaying action.

He says: "The regulators, based on feedback from the industry, continue to work to clarify on issues and questions. International asset managers, while awaiting clarity on the regime, continue to use local fund structures in Asian markets feeding to their UCITS structures."

Next came the Asia Region Funds Passport (ARFP). Initial signatories, Australia, Singapore, South Korea and New Zealand, were later joined by the Philippines and Thailand, and the overlap of the countries involved could mean an opportunity to learn from any shortcomings.

Although it's acknowledged that any move towards common standards will take time and resources, ARFP is being cautiously hailed as the passporting scheme that will succeed.

Harwood-Jones notes its similarity to UCITS III—the version of the UCITS product that she says first achieved global reach. She says: "That was very much focused on retail investors and dealt successfully with the initial teething problems of the earlier versions of UCITS regulations."

Cuthbertson agrees, saying the ARFP "is certainly shaping up to be an Asian equivalent to UCITS".

He also likens the ASEAN CIS passport to earlier versions of the UCITS product, which he says "also had limitations on the range of permitted asset classes that the fund could invest in, making it increasingly difficult to promote as an attractive investment opportunity".

Although reminding that neither scheme has been fully implemented yet, Benoit says: "We think long-term they will both be positive initiatives for the Asia Pacific in becoming globally competitive and growing trading volumes."

He gives no specification on how long long-term actually is, however it is clear that there are still hurdles for any passporting initiative to overcome. As Harwood-Jones points out, requirements will include audits in each country where a fund is sold, plus translation services, local transfer agency, tax harmonisation, currency exchange and capital controls.

"All of this translates to significant cost for fund managers and promoters, and ultimately depresses the returns for investors in these funds."

"A passport regime requires scale if it is to work," she says. "The demographic drivers in the region, such as the pension time bomb and a historically low allocation of wealth into securities, will drive monies into fund structures over time, just as we have seen elsewhere."

The ASEAN CIS scheme also has specific requirements, which could prove to be a barrier. Fund managers have to register with their home regulator and gain approval from their host regulator before they can start distributing. Predictably, regulations are not harmonised, but there are also differences in tax regimes, and Thailand has currency restrictions in place, too.

Cuthbertson says: "This lack of a common economic union and a common currency has brought its own share of challenges. Incremental rules, clarifications and easing would require all the participant countries to sign up to the changes involving an extended consultation period."

Although many of these restrictions will not apply under the ARFP, Cuthbertson points out outstanding issues that have not been addressed, such as investor protection rules and issues around tax.

Benoit also highlights tax as a "sticking point". He explains: "In order for these passporting programmes to develop further, jurisdictions will need to re-examine their tax regimes, with a view to making them more conducive to cross-border fund sales."

Generally, we are likely to see development, and different versions of both passports in the future, with more participants. As regulators adapt to the demands and become more comfortable with the schemes, service providers must evolve to accommodate them.

Harwood-Jones says: "Demand for more sophisticated investment products is likely to provide a challenge for managers, service providers and regulators, as they try to develop the necessary experience and understanding to manage and oversee the inherent risks in such products."

Such an environment is rich for those service providers that can help clients make the most of the opportunities at hand. While some institutions will be looking to invest in new technology, others will be looking to outsource their whole back office—although, Harwood-Jones says, this may be easier said than done.

"In some cases the fragmentation we see across the region makes a full outsourcing option less commercially viable from a provider's perspective," she says.

"The most successful solutions will likely take a more modular approach, allowing participants to assess specifically which processes they would prefer to outsource in each market."

She adds: "A winning formula will be one which can bridge market gaps and address regulatory challenges, as well as being a creative solution that addresses the challenges of a fragmented region."

Cuthbertson suggests that, in the wake of the regulatory onslaught, institutions will be more likely to look for risk containment while also trying to reduce their costs as much as possible. Value-added services such as account operations and third-party clearing will be in demand—along with those that promise to reduce capital costs.

Brokers may move away from their own clearing structures to third-party providers, while, wary of regulatory requirements, banks and custodians will try to gain closer proximity to central securities depositories, mandating account operators.

With the cost burden increasing, Cuthbertson argues that, actually, there is an increasing interest in outsourcing the entire trade processing and enrichment channels. For banks, he suggests that the costs of upgrading systems may not be worth it.

"The cost of running a middle and back office is high and with regulatory change it continues to increase. Most banks and brokers run on very old technology that is expensive to maintain and change."

According to Benoit, BNP Paribas is already seeing evidence of this—the securities services business recently won a mandate for outsourced clearing and settlement activities in the region.

"Part of this mandate includes optimising liquidity on behalf of the bank at settlement," he says. "This service is a trend we are continuing to see for banks as they look to optimise capital and reduce their cost of capital."

Whether they're banks, brokers or asset managers, Benoit says institutions are looking for long-term relationships with their service providers. "It's therefore paramount that the providers they choose are adaptable and forward-thinking," he says. "This is particularly true in Asia, where banks and brokers have the ambition to regionalise and internationalise."

Cuthbertson adds to this, suggesting that in the market as it stands today, "only strong and committed service providers will be able to sustain the prolonged demand for capital and resource investments".

He says: "As an investor or a trader moves from emerged markets to emerging or frontier markets, their need to find a trusted service provider and partner increases greatly."

"The service provider is at the heart of the conversation with infrastructures and regulators over changes in each market. As markets mature, more investors are attracted and trading volumes increase."

They key potentially lies in a mutually beneficial relationship—and one that is sustainable in the long term. Harwood-Jones highlights the importance of integrity in choosing a service provider.

She says: "Any decision a client makes today in choosing a provider is no longer a private matter. It is not beyond the scrutiny of others, including the regulators, which means the robustness and integrity of the selection process must be of the highest standard and able to withstand the challenge of others."

She also warns: "Unwinding a broken relationship is both stressful and extremely costly."

However service providers choose to approach the market, it appears that they have to be prepared to adapt with the industry as it, and its various funds passporting schemes, evolve.

As Benoit concludes: "At the moment, one of the biggest challenges is actually keeping up with the pace of change, as countries move to create greater investment harmony across the region." **AST**

Industry Recruitment

Exceptional Developer—Hedge Fund

Recruiter: Selby Jennings
Location: London

My client is a hedge fund based in London; and through continued expansion they are looking for a talented developer to join their team.

Head of Depositary

Recruiter: HornbyChapman Ltd
Location: London

Our client, a major European asset servicing provider, is looking for a head of depositary for their London operation.

Senior Relationship Manager—Securities Services

Recruiter: Selby Jennings
Location: Zurich

A leading Swiss bank is looking for a senior relationship manager based in Zurich. The successful candidate has gained experience in client focusing positions within custody services, or securities services in the Swiss market.

Pension Sales—Investor Services

Recruiter: HornbyChapman Ltd
Location: London

Our client, a major global custodian, is looking for a driven, senior pension sales person to cover the UK market.

Industry Events

FundForum International

Date: 06-08 June 2016

Location: Berlin

We are delighted to bring you news of the new look, new location FundForum International 2016.

NeMa 2016—Network Management

Date: 14-16 June 2016

Location: Dubrovnik

NeMa is the premier network management event for the securities industry.

For more events visit assetservicingtimes.com/events/events.php

Big changes at Deutsche Börse, ICE Clear and more

BNY Mellon has named Christine Gill as head of its newly formed investor solutions group within the bank's asset servicing business.

As head of the investor solutions group, Gill is responsible for managing the sub-accounting and transfer agency businesses, overseeing client relationships and leading strategic growth opportunities for these services.

Continuing a 15-year career at BNY Mellon, **Christine Gill** is now heading up its new investor solutions group

Gill has been at BNY Mellon for 15 years and was previously a managing director in the bank's global client management group with responsibility for building and nurturing relationships with key strategic clients globally.

Daniel Smith, head of asset servicing in the Americas at BNY Mellon, said: "Christine Gill brings to the position very strong experience working for and with investment managers and broker-dealers."

He added: "Her additional expertise creating, growing and acquiring businesses will be beneficial as we expand upon our leadership in providing investor solutions to our clients."

Eurex has implemented a new leadership structure for its trading and clearing business.

Thomas Book, managing director at Deutsche Börse Group, has been named the new CEO of Eurex Frankfurt and Eurex Zurich, as part of his new role as head of derivatives markets trading for Deutsche Börse Group.

Michael Peters, who has been a member of the executive board since 2006, is the new deputy CEO of Eurex Frankfurt.

Thomas Book is head of derivative markets trading at Deutsche Börse, after a shake-up of leadership

Erik Müller, managing director at Deutsche Börse Group responsible for group strategy, mergers and acquisitions, treasury and investor relations, will take over as CEO of Eurex Clearing from 1 July.

Current COO of Eurex Clearing Heike Eckert has become deputy CEO. She had served as COO since April 2013.

Andreas Preuss, previously responsible for the Eurex segment, is now in charge of the newly created IT, operations, data and new asset classes division. Preuss is also deputy CEO of Deutsche Börse.

Conifer Financial Services LLC has hired industry heavyweight Jeff Strauss to join its business development team as managing director, based in New York.

Strauss previously held several senior roles at various fund administrators, most recently serving as president of Mitsubishi UFJ Fund Services.

He spent most of his career at Goldman Sachs and also helped launch the prime brokerage business at Smith Barney.

Strauss said: "The fund administration industry continues to evolve, with increasing demands from regulators and investors alike."

"As a competitor, I've long admired Conifer's reputation for exceptional client service and enviable technology. I'm also attracted by their strategic focus on exciting new areas of the business that others are ignoring. I'm very excited to be joining the team at such an exciting time in Conifer's history."

Exchange-traded fund (ETF) provider Source UK has hired Julian Ide as CEO.

Source UK has hired **Julian Ide** as CEO after a record year of growth and a spate of European hires

The appointment comes after a record year for Source, whose assets under management increased by 26 percent in 2015. The company is now planning on expanding its product range to capitalise on the effect that ETFs are having on the asset management industry.

Ide has 25 years of financial services experience, most recently as CEO of Old Mutual Global Investors, a position he held between 2011 and August 2015.

He has also held senior roles at BBVA Asset Management, Credit Suisse Asset Management and ABN AMRO Asset Management. He will join Source in mid-April.

Lee Kranefuss, executive chairman at Source, said: "Source believes it has one of the most experienced teams in the ETF industry globally, and someone of Julian Ide's calibre and skills will complement and extend this to new heights."

"His appointment is a clear reflection of the significant impact ETFs are making across retail, wholesale and institutional markets and of Source's ambitions to be the leading, most innovative provider of traditional and actively managed ETFs in our chosen markets."

Ide's appointment follows a number of new hires at Source. In February, the firm announced 17 promotions across Europe, and January saw the hire of six new country heads in Europe.

According to Source, the expansion is part of a strategy to meet the needs of different investor groups within key markets.

Intercontinental Exchange (ICE) has appointed Hester Serafini as COO of ICE Clear in the US.

Hester Serafini joins ICE Clear from J.P. Morgan, and will now manage clearinghouse operations

Serafini joins from J.P. Morgan, where she led the over-the-counter clearing and intermediation business for credit, foreign exchange and rates derivatives in Europe, the Middle East and Africa. In her new role, she is responsible for managing the clearinghouse operations, and interpreting and implementing regulatory changes.

David Farrell has been promoted to COO of ICE Futures in the US.

Farrell joined ICE in 2012 and has held leadership roles in market supervision, product management, commodity operations and, most recently, as head of global soft commodity operations across ICE Futures in the US and Europe.

“These appointments support our ability to better serve our customers and to build on our growth strategy,” commented Jeff Sprecher, chairman and CEO of ICE.

“Dave Farrell and Hester Serafini’s deep operational and risk management backgrounds, together with industry experience will position these businesses for continued growth by strengthening the service we provide.”

Investment management company Invesco has appointed Henning Stein as new head of institutional marketing for EMEA.

Reporting to EMEA head of marketing David Bower, Stein will be part of the distribution leadership team, based in Zurich.

Henning Stein joins Invesco to lead the Zurich-based distribution leadership team

Stein joins Invesco from Deutsche Asset Management where he was head of EMEA marketing for the active business and academic foundation, focusing on the development of research-based marketing programmes for institutional investors.

The role was previously filled by Carsten Majer, chief marketing officer for Invesco in contenental Europe. Majer will now focus more time on his primary responsibilities.

Bower said: “I am delighted to welcome Henning to Invesco. His expertise across Europe’s core institutional markets will allow us to develop thought leadership programmes that provide clients with a wide range of perspectives and research, helping them to continue to develop ideas and solutions to address their wider financial requirements.” **AST**

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