

Morrison & Foerster Adds Another Obama Nat'l Security Atty

By Bryan Koenig

Law360, Washington (March 13, 2017, 5:59 PM EDT) -- Morrison & Foerster LLP bolstered its national security and global risk capabilities last week with the announced hiring of another Obama administration national security attorney, this time a former associate counsel to the president and National Security Council counterterrorism director.

David A. Newman joins Morrison & Foerster in New York as of counsel after having served in the White House most recently as both special assistant and associate counsel to the president in Barack Obama's administration, according to the announcement.



David A. Newman

Newman will apply his counterterrorism and crisis expertise to expanding Morrison & Foerster's national security and global risk and crisis management practices, the firm said. There he will work with former U.S. Department of Justice colleague John P. Carlin, a former assistant attorney general for national security and current co-chair for the firm's national security group and global risk and crisis management practices. Carlin is another recent hire, having joined Morrison & Foerster in January, the firm said.

"I collaborated with David on numerous initiatives while we were both in government positions and am delighted that our clients will now benefit from the outstanding credentials that he brings to Morrison & Foerster," Carlin said in a statement accompanying the March 7 hiring announcement. "David has an extensive breadth of knowledge across national security, crisis management, emerging cyber threats and sanctions—as well as a strong background in litigation—that make him an invaluable resource."

According to Morrison & Foerster, Newman advised both Obama and senior staff on policy and legal matters related to "high-profile counterterrorism," while having also played a key role in coordinating the administration's response to crises both domestic and international.

Before working directly for Obama, Newman held National Security Council staff positions that included director for counterterrorism and the chief of staff for the Office of the Ebola Response Coordinator, according to Morrison & Foerster.

"While at the White House, he advised on a range of complex matters affecting the federal government, overseeing a broad portfolio that included national security matters, crisis response and preparedness and data and technology initiatives, as well as criminal justice reform and civil rights litigation," the firm said last week.

Newman's Justice Department experience, where he worked prior to the White House and after clerking for U.S. Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, was as counsel to the assistant attorney general for national security, Morrison & Foerster said. At the DOJ, the firm said, Newman helped run the National Security Division, coordinated briefings for the White House and lawmakers and advised senior government officials on counterterrorism, surveillance and sanctions, as well as the Committee on Foreign Investment matters.

"I have heard great things about Morrison & Foerster and am pleased to join a firm that has a strong platform across so many different practices," Newman said in a statement. "I look forward to working closely with John again, as well [as] my new colleagues, in helping our clients navigate pressing national security-related challenges ranging from the risks of cyber threats to the implications of proposed transactions involving non-U.S. companies or investors to implementing appropriate compliance programs."

Newman said in an interview Monday that he was particularly drawn to the collaborative experience Morrison & Foerster facilitates, not unlike the environment at the White House.

The White House and DOJ experience leave Newman well-equipped, he said, to work with Morrison & Foerster clients on the wide array of crises they might face, from regulatory issues and beyond. Rejoining with Carlin was also important, Newman said.

"He was a terrific leader" at the DOJ, Newman told Law360, while also expressing excitement for the other high-profile government hires Morrison & Foerster has made in recent years. His first day was Feb. 27.

--Editing by Alyssa Miller.