

Former GC For National Intelligence Director Joins MoFo

By Rachel Graf

Law360, New York (September 15, 2017, 1:31 PM EDT) -- Morrison & Foerster LLP has hired the most recent confirmed general counsel for the Office of the Director of National Intelligence to serve as of counsel in the firm's expanding national security and global risk and crisis management practices.

Robert Litt, who helped manage the fallout from Edward Snowden's disclosures about the National Security Agency, joined the firm on Sept. 5 to advise clients about privacy, cybersecurity and risk management and to assist with white collar investigations.



Robert Litt

"I was really struck by [Morrison & Foerster's] commitment to a strong practice in the areas that I'm particularly interested in," Litt told Law360.

Litt was first exposed to national security measures when working in the U.S. Department of Justice as a principal associate deputy attorney general during the Clinton administration. He continued to speak, write and advise certain clients about national security matters after he left the government for private practice and was unanimously confirmed by the Senate to be general counsel at the ODNI during the Obama administration.

At the agency, Litt dealt with the aftermath of Snowden's disclosures by speaking publicly about the matter, pressing internally for greater transparency about intelligence activity and working with Congress on legislation, he said.

Snowden's disclosures raised concerns among Europeans about the safety of data transmitted to the U.S., so Litt helped negotiate the EU-U.S. Privacy Shield with the European Commission. The shield was designed to ensure that companies across the U.S. and Europe comply with privacy requirements.

Litt noted that government attorneys have a responsibility to inform their clients not only of the limits of the law, but also counsel them about whether a technically legal proposal is in the public interest.

In the private sector, attorneys are able to focus largely on the interests of just one client, Litt said. Litt previously worked in the private sector as a partner leading then-Arnold and Porter LLP's white collar practice and at Williams & Connolly LLP.

“Bob’s broad experience in government and private practice will be invaluable to our clients as they navigate complex challenges,” John Carlin, co-chair of Morrison & Foerster’s national security group and chair of its global risk and crisis management practice, said in a statement. “Whether the matter involves a criminal, regulatory or congressional investigation; compliance with European and U.S. privacy laws; or a review by the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States (CFIUS), Bob’s perspective and unique insights will be a great asset.”

--Editing by Alyssa Miller.

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