

Sports Due Diligence Case Studies

Bribery and corruption are rife in the world of professional sports. Billions of dollars each year move around the world as players are traded, stadiums are built, and matches are won and lost. Obfuscated ownership and sanctions risk are also key concerns for global sporting organizations, investors, and service providers. Identifying these risks without holding up the game requires nuanced contextual knowledge and judgment. Human-led due diligence is an essential tool for cutting through the noise to distinguish critical risks from media coverage and unsupported allegations.

REGIONAL CASE STUDIES

China

When an international sports franchise needed due diligence assistance in China, PSA embarked on a series of research projects that identified suitable counterparties to represent a household brand.

Middle East

PSA responded to significant allegations of wrongdoing against a key rights holder of a regional sports franchise in the Middle East. The investigation required the mapping of complex onshore and offshore ownership and control structures, the review of financial data, the examination of documents in Arabic, French, and English, and the discreet collection of supporting intelligence from human sources within the industry. PSA then led in-person interviews with active participants in the scheme. These interviews were conducted on the ground in Lebanon, the UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Europe. From this, we collected a trove of additional documents, witness statements, and in two instances, affidavits detailing the identities, parties, mechanisms, and payments as part of the scheme. When presented with this information, the counterparty agreed to the premature cancellation of their contracts and is now barred from any further work for the client or its affiliates.

India

PSA was engaged by a sporting body to look at allegations of abuse and corruption taking place within a national-level franchise. Our research uncovered significant material supporting these allegations, which was provided to the sport's governing body.

TOPICAL CASE STUDIES

Illegal Distribution

PSA was engaged to map out a multinational distribution network, identify the key individuals behind the network, and provide a basis for the calculation of a quantum of loss in a dispute. PSA used a network of existing in-country resources to coordinate a multinational program to evidence the widespread availability of pirated access to the client's content across the Middle East, North Africa, and South Asia. PSA then identified and mapped the parties involved in the multilayered distribution network. Technological insights including digital fingerprinting and network analysis ultimately enabled the identification of key entities in regional nodes, and through this, exposed the identity of two individuals responsible for the multinational scheme. Having evidenced and mapped the distribution network in action, this material was then provided as the basis for a robust quantum of loss calculation used to resolve the matter before the courts of international arbitration in Paris.

Reputation Management

PSA was the appointed exclusive due diligence provider for a controversial global sporting event. As part of substantive efforts to change the perception of the event and the game, PSA was engaged to conduct due diligence on key partners, supporting the highest level of compliance and anti-bribery as part of the overall strategy to create a cleaner game.

Bribery

PSA was engaged to respond to allegations that an individual was the recipient of bribes from interested sponsors. PSA was able to prove that the individual was indeed receiving illicit payments. This information led to the matter being referred to the sport's governing body and concluded in line with its own code of conduct.

Disclaimer: To safeguard our clients and their interests, important details regarding our previous experience have been changed to intentionally obscure the nature of the assignments and the Parties involved. Similarities to any real person(s), companies, or events is purely a coincidence. In the event that we state a Party is guilty, it is understood that the Party rejects this assertion, and has refuted this statement.

In 2023, PSA provided services in 151 countries on six continents.

PSA supports a truly global portfolio of 250+ multinational clients to mitigate risk in every corner of the world.



● Countries with completed reports in 2023.



Pacific Strategies & Assessments

Established in 2000, PSA is a specialist risk consultancy delivering critical information to our clients through our Due Diligence, Investigations, and Advisory services. We operate where our clients do business, with regional offices staffed by investigators and responders who have extensive in-region experience gained from professional

backgrounds in corporate investigations, government intelligence and law enforcement. With a disciplined focus on information collection, we have a 23-year track record of supporting businesses in conducting assessments of complex operating environments.



Due Diligence

Our DD products are tailored to our clients' needs and based in deep understanding of best practices and regulatory guidelines. We scale from desktop research to on-the-ground investigations with multiple process-based due diligence options.



Investigations

PSA has a proven record in supporting companies in complex, international investigations. Our investigative abilities can be scoped to accommodate a variety of engagements, including whistleblower response, fraud investigations, and asset tracing.



Advisory

PSA provides strategic guidance to firms to address specific concerns. We tailor services to support clients on a variety of complex issues, including complex disputes, country-specific operational risks, emerging regulatory issues, and point-specific human risks.