



David Hodson appointed OBE

The International Family Law Group LLP is delighted to announce that its co-founder and partner, David Hodson, has been appointed an Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) in the Queen's Birthday Honours List, published today, for his "**Services to International Family Law**".

David is a solicitor, mediator, family law arbitrator, part-time family court judge and also Australian qualified solicitor and barrister. He was appointed a Deputy District Judge of the Principal Registry of the Family Division, High Court, London, now the Central Family Court, in 1995.

David is recognised as one of the world's leading and highly innovative and inspirational family lawyers of his generation, with particular expertise in international family law. This is a very complicated area of law as it combines both English and foreign law elements and requires a knowledge and understanding of different laws, cultures and procedures.

He has over the past 25 years informed, explained and educated on the complex yet hugely relevant aspects of international family law to the English legal profession and to many lawyers abroad, from small local groups around England and Wales to keynote speeches at major conferences around the world.

David is a prolific writer in family law journals here and abroad including a weekly opinion piece for lawyers on international matters. He has written several books including the leading textbook, "The International Family Law Practice" (The Grey Book) (Jordans), now in its third edition. He writes the "Letter from London" in the Australian Family Law Journal. He is a commentator on topical legal issues for the national and international media. In 2011 he was awarded the inaugural Jordans Family Law Commentator of the Year.

He was the originator and a creator of the English family law arbitration scheme, now emulated in other countries worldwide. He was one of the creators of the English family law accreditation scheme based on models in Australia and elsewhere. He was co-founder of the world's first metropolitan practice to combine lawyers, mediators and counsellors in a holistic, professionally collaborative model. He is co-founder of The International Family Law Group LLP which is the world's first practice specifically set up to provide legal, mediation and arbitration services and advice for international families and their children.

David was responsible for the groundbreaking English Code of Good Practice in family law to be put into Plain English which contributed to making family law more accessible to the public.

For the past 25 years David has been invited to sit on committees and organisations for law reform and good practice. He has tirelessly advocated for the interests of international families and their children to be taken into account in national laws and by national parliaments, and by the EU, the Hague Conference, and across the world.

David has been supportive of the EU in creating cross-border laws for EU families over the past 15 years but has been critical of the EU significantly extending its powers in making laws to cover England's dealings with families from non-EU countries. He has particularly argued against EU laws which have the effect of discouraging reconciliation, mediation and early settlements.

Throughout his career he has worked persistently to encourage alternative ways to resolve family disputes cost effectively without adversarial final court hearings, including promoting mediation and good, settlement-orientated practice.

He is married and living in Surrey and a keen, lifelong supporter of Southampton FC. He enjoys scuba diving, country walking, chess, international travel, science-fiction, Sherlock Holmes and the Moody Blues. He is a member of St Peter's Church, Hambledon.

Ann Thomas, co-founder of iFLG, said: *"I and all my colleagues at iFLG are absolutely delighted for David. This Honour is so well deserved."*

David Hodson said: *"I am thrilled and humbled. It was never expected. I hope this Honour increases awareness by law makers to the particular needs and issues of international families and their children. In addition, outside their casework many family lawyers work incredibly hard, over decades, for a better system for those unfortunate as to be involved in family breakdowns and disputes. I believe this officially recognises that commitment and endeavour by so many around the country"*

Notes:

1. International family law is English, EU and other international laws applicable for families and children where there is any international element. With very many families from abroad now living in England as well as families from England living abroad or having assets abroad, this has become a very relevant area of law, which is highly complex and specialist. It may be in the recognition of foreign marriages or divorces, whether proceedings should be in England or elsewhere, enforcement against foreign assets, child abduction, child relocation, marital agreements or the many other issues affecting families and their children when more than one country is involved. Many EU and other cross-border laws are very different in their concepts and procedures from English law, being more often based on European civil law traditions.
2. The International Family Law Group LLP (iFLG) was set up by Ann Thomas and David Hodson in April 2007 as they were convinced of the need for a legal service specifically committed to international families and their children. Starting with only 4 staff, iFLG now has a staff of 24 in their offices in Covent Garden, London. iFLG has an associate firm, Watts McCray, in Australia and professional colleagues around the world. It has a contract with the UK government for specialist international child abduction work. iFLG has been involved in some of England's leading international cases which have assisted in developing the law for international families. Two of iFLG's consultants have also been appointed with similar honours; Denise Carter received an OBE for her work with reunite for abducted children and their families and Professor Patrick Parkinson, originally from England and Wales and now one of Australia's leading family law academics, policy advisers and lawyers, received an AM.
3. For further details please see David's biography at www.iflg.uk.com/portfolio/david-hodson and his personal website at www.davidhodson.com.

14 June 2014