

INDEPENDENT MEDIATORS

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"Top mediators join forces"

Four of Europe's leading full-time civil and commercial mediators have joined forces to form a new and unique dedicated mediation "chambers" which offers an entirely new model for independent mediation practice. The mediators, Charles Dodson, Michel Kallipetis QC, Bill Marsh and Nicholas Pryor are acknowledged as some of the leading UK mediators in Chambers Directory and Legal 500, and are among the most experienced in Europe.

Independent Mediators is neither another mediation provider nor a mediator panel, but operates like a barrister's chambers. It offers a wholly new way of making the services of experienced independent mediators available to clients. The mediators are self-employed and independent, and share a central service to administer all their mediations, offering clients the advantages of:

- a single contact point for all four mediators- no need to call each mediator separately;
- instant diary availability and mediation bookings - no need to wait while availability is checked with the mediator, since the mediators' diaries are co-ordinated on-line;
- harmonised referral systems, documentation and fees - with complete transparency on all fees and arrangements;
- availability of first class cover from other leading mediators if a specified mediator is not available - Independent Mediators is exclusively for nationally-recognised leading mediators;
- no separate administration fees are charged to clients.

The structure ensures maximum convenience and speed for clients with minimum overheads. Clients simply pay the mediator's own fees, with no additional administration charges. Through Independent Mediators, the mediators will continue to accept mediations directly and through all the major mediation providers as they have done to date.

Independent Mediators has a London base at the International Dispute Resolution Centre in Fleet Street and access to mediation rooms and facilities there.

David Douglas (formerly chief executive of Littleton Chambers for 17 years) will run Independent Mediators as its first chief executive. David Douglas said:- "This initiative is all about the needs of clients. Clients want quick direct access to top mediators at appropriate cost, and that is what we are offering. The whole set-up is designed to be convenient and easy to use - for example, we can confirm mediator availability and make bookings immediately".

Katie Bradford, Linklaters litigation partner and Head of ADR was very supportive of the concept. She said "Our clients see the independence of mediators as key. This approach combines the best of both worlds - accessible and helpful administration plus assured independence. Radical yet simple."

Chris Warren-Smith who is a professional liability and commercial litigation partner who heads the financial services regulatory team at Barlow Lyde & Gilbert LLP said: "We welcome this initiative. The market needs direct access to the top mediators to be as easy and transparent as possible, and that is what this offers. We wish them well"

Independent Mediators will also be pleased to provide a spokesman on any mediation-related topics and take part in mediation seminars and lectures, both national and international.

For further information, please contact:

David Douglas Chief Executive

Tel: 0207 127 9223

Email: david.douglas@independentmediators.co.uk

Web: www.independentmediators.co.uk