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Von Wobeser y Sierra

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Fortune 500 companies and prominent business people facing law enforcement scrutiny in Mexico regularly seek out the investigations expertise of Von Wobeser y Sierra's lawyers.

Since being founded in 1986, the Mexico City-based firm has grown to 60 lawyers, many of which hail from Mexico, while a small of lawyers come from the US and from Europe. Von Wobeser's lawyers provide legal advice in all areas of the Mexican legal system, save criminal law.

The firm's anti-corruption and compliance practice is led by partner Diego Sierra, who splits his time between white-collar work and arbitration matters. Sierra advises clients in the pharmaceutical, consumer products, entertainment and defence industries in particular.

The investigations practice has handled several high-profile white-collar cases in Mexico, including those involving Fortune 500 companies and leading international financial institutions. The firm was unable to share exact details of its internal investigations cases to GIR. However, it did disclose that in the past two years it has been instructed in multiple internal investigations into corruption allegations, including inquiries into bribery in the liquor industry.

The firm regularly works with practitioners in the US for FCPA investigations and pre-transaction due diligence matters. New York-qualified Sierra, who is a member of Mexico's International Chamber of Commerce Anti-Corruption Commission, is supported by partner Adrián Magallanes, who advises companies on government contract issues. Magallanes often represents global companies caught up in Mexican constitutional and administrative proceedings.

The anti-corruption team can also count on the additional expertise of partners from its tax, antitrust, and banking and finance partners, when necessary.

The firm regularly advises companies on building and implementing compliance programmes in Mexico, in particular in relation to bribery prevention. The demand for anti-corruption compliance advice among major companies based in Mexico has grown significantly over the last few years. President's Peña Nieto's National Anti-Corruption System was voted through congress in April 2015 and the new regime promises to bring about sweeping changes to the way white-collar misconduct is tackled, including the introduction of an 18-year maximum jail term for public officials who take bribes and new powers for the country's Federal Audit Office to search government books and records for corruption at any time. Previously, the office could only conduct an audit two years after a budget was executed.