Our Firm

We help our clients manage legal complexity and unlock opportunity in Africa.

We have an enviable track record of providing legal services to the highest professional standards in Africa. We work for clients across numerous African jurisdictions on corporate, finance, competition, taxation, employment, technology and dispute resolution matters.

With eight offices in six African countries and over 400 specialist lawyers, we draw on our unique knowledge of the business and socio-political environment to advise clients on a wide range of legal issues.

Everywhere we work, we offer clients a service that uniquely blends expertise in the law, knowledge of the local market, and an understanding of their businesses. Our aim is to assist clients to achieve their objectives as smoothly and efficiently as possible while minimising the legal and regulatory risks.

Our clients include domestic and foreign corporates, multinationals, funds and financial institutions, across almost all sectors of the economy, as well as state-owned enterprises and governments.

Our expertise is frequently recognised by independent research organisations. Most recently, our Kenyan practice won the 2022 Chambers Africa Award for Law Firm of the Year in Kenya. In 2022, Bowmans won six IFLR Africa Awards including overall M&A Team of The Year; Jurisdictional Firm of the Year: South Africa; Loans Firm of the Year: South Africa; M&A Firm of the Year: South Africa; and Project Finance Firm of the Year: South Africa. We also advised on the deal named M&A Deal of the Year. At the 2022 Africa Legal Awards, we won four practice awards including Banking and Finance Team of the Year; Capital Markets Team of the Year; Tax Team of the Year and Transportation and Infrastructure Team of the Year.

Recognising the size and enormous diversity of Africa, our approach to providing legal services across the continent is intended to offer on-the-ground advice in the countries that matter for our clients. Our presence in Africa is always evolving to meet the changes that are shaping the future of this vast continent.

Currently, we have our own offices in six African countries: Kenya (Nairobi), Mauritius (Moka), South Africa (Cape Town, Durban, Johannesburg), Tanzania (Dar es Salaam), Uganda (Kampala) and Zambia (Lusaka).

We work closely with our Bowmans Alliance firms in Ethiopia (Aman & Partners LLP) and Nigeria (Udo Udoma & Belo-Osagie). These are two of the leading corporate and commercial law firms in their jurisdictions.

We have a special relationship with a competent practitioner in Mozambique. We also have a non-exclusive co-operation agreement with French international law firm Gide Loyrette Nouel that provides our clients access to assistance in francophone west and north Africa. The arrangement provides complementary access for Gide’s clients and lawyers to markets in central, southern and eastern Africa.

On the global front, Bowmans has long-standing and excellent relationships with a range of international law firms with whom we often work on Africa-focused client mandates. We are also a member firm of Lex Mundi, a global association of more than 160 independent law firms in all the major centres across the globe. Lex Mundi gives us the ability to connect our clients with the best law firms in each of the countries represented.
Our Shipping and Logistics Practice

Our Shipping and Logistics Practice enjoys more than 125 years’ experience in the specialist field of maritime and transport law.

We operate out of Cape Town and Durban and have an intimate understanding of the unique aspects of the South African jurisdiction, which is one of the world’s most favourable jurisdictions for securing maritime claims.

Whether our clients are concluding deals or looking to protect their interests, we provide efficient and cost effective shipping and logistics law solutions.

We are also internationally recognised for our expertise in providing emergency response throughout all major southern African ports. Our reputation has been built on more than a century of experience, 24-hour availability and speed of response.

We serve a wide range of international and South African clients. They include shipowners, P&I Clubs, port authorities, marine underwriters and financial institutions.

We are listed correspondents for the following P&I insurers who list legal correspondents in South Africa:

- American Club
- British Marine
- Japan P&I
- North of England
- Skuld
- Standard Club
- The Shipowners Club
- West of England

On the corporate and regulatory front we represent/advise:

- South African lenders doing business in regional shipping and offshore matters;
- international financial institutions and traders engaged in commodities; and
- regulators on port infrastructure

Our Specialist Services

Our expertise covers the entire range of maritime legal services, including:

- Access and examination orders
- Arrests, attachments and security arrests
- Bills of lading
- Bunker disputes and arrests
- Cargo claims
- Carriage of goods
- Charterparties
- Commercial agreements including standard trading conditions
- General average
- International trade agreements and letters of credit
- Judicial sales and mortgage foreclosures
- Liens
- Logistics, including all modes of transport, clearing, forwarding and customs
- Marine resources
- Maritime casualties, collisions, grounding and salvage
- P&I, hull and cargo insurance
- Personal injuries
- Pollution
- Ports and terminals
- Salvage
- Ship finance
- Ship sale and purchase
- Shipbuilding and repair
- Ships agency
- Stowaways
- Wrecks and wreck removal
Our Signature Matters

We handle high profile shipping litigation and commercial transactions in the shipping and logistics sector. We have represented clients in many of the major casualties in South Africa. Recent examples include:

- the grounding and total loss of the “Kiani Satu”
- the loss of containers overboard the “Seroja Lima”
- the heating of a chemical cargo on board the “NS Qingdao”
- the grounding and wreck removal of the “Smart”
- the fires aboard the “Tai Shan” and the “Maersk Lomrina”
- the collisions involving the “Sunrise Jade” and the “Chemstar Jewel”

In addition to our casualty work, we regularly conduct litigation to enforce maritime claims on behalf of our clients. Recently we represented the successful appellant in the “Seaspan Grouse” before the Supreme Court of Appeal, in a matter concerning the status of protective writs under South African law and following from the financial collapse of Hanjin Shipping. We also acted for respondents in the “Fonarun Naree” before the Supreme Court of Appeal, in an important judgement that clarified the scope of evidence required to establish a ‘genuine and reasonable need for security’ in a security arrest.

‘Sources are quick to commend the group for its “accurate, responsive and results-oriented” approach and “in-depth market knowledge as a specialist legal adviser in South Africa.” They continue: “The lawyers are very knowledgeable and very experienced, as well as being very prompt in their services.” Others add that the team is “very thorough” and “understands how the shipping business works.” Several consider it “definitely a top-tier firm for admiralty law.”’

- Chambers & Partners, 2019

Accolades

AFRICAN LEGAL AWARDS 2022
Bowmans won four practice awards including Banking and Finance Team of the Year; Capital Markets Team of the Year; Tax Team of the Year and Transportation and Infrastructure Team of the Year.

CHAMBERS AFRICA AWARDS 2022
Bowmans’ Kenyan practice was named Kenya Law Firm of the Year and chairman and senior partner, Ezra Davids, was named South Africa Lawyer of the Year.

DEALMAKERS AFRICA AWARDS 2021
Bowmans was DealMakers top dealmaker in East Africa for 2021 by number of M&A transactions worked on. The firm had more than 26% market share and advised on the deal named Deal of the Year.

DEALMAKERS SOUTH AFRICA AWARDS 2021
Bowmans placed first by deal flow and second by deal value in the Unlisted M&A Transactions category; and first by deal flow and third by deal value in the BEE Deals category.

IFLR AFRICA AWARDS 2022
Bowmans received a total of six awards including overall M&A Team of the Year; Jurisdictional Firm of the Year; South Africa Loans Firm of the Year; South Africa M&A Firm of the Year; South Africa; and Project Finance Firm of the Year: South Africa. The firm also advised on the deal named M&A Deal of the Year.
CHAMBERS & PARTNERS 2022 RANKED US IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS

IFLR1000 2022/2023 RANKED US IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS

THE LEGAL 500 EMEA 2022 RANKED US IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS

Key Contacts

The following Bowmans contact people are available 24 hours a day for advice and service: +27 21 480 7920.

CRAIG CUNNINGHAM
Head of Shipping, Aviation and Logistics
Cape Town, South Africa
T: +27 21 480 7803
E: craig.cunningham@bowmanslaw.com

LANA STOCKTON
Partner
Cape Town, South Africa
T: +27 21 480 7803
E: lana.stockton@bowmanslaw.com

ANDREW PIKE
Head of Ports, Transport and Logistics
Durban, South Africa
T: +27 31 109 1156
E: andrew.pike@bowmanslaw.com

MARK VAN VELDEN
Partner
Durban, South Africa
T: +27 31 109 1160
E: mark.vanvelden@bowmanslaw.com

JEREMY PRAIN
Partner
Cape Town, South Africa
T: +27 21 480 7811
E: jeremy.prain@bowmanslaw.com

To view profiles of our lawyers, please visit www.bowmanslaw.com

BAND 1

KENYA
Banking & Finance
Corporate/M&A
FinTech Legal
Intellectual Property
Projects & Energy
Real Estate

SOUTH AFRICA
Capital Markets: Debt
Capital Markets: Equity
Competition/ Antitrust
Corporate Investigations
Corporate/M&A
Employment
Environment
IT & Telecommunications
Projects & Energy
Shipping
Tax

TANZANIA
General Business Law

UGANDA
General Business Law

BAND 2

AFRICA WIDE
TMT

KENYA
Employment
Private Wealth Law

SOUTH AFRICA
Administrative & Public Law
Banking & Finance
Dispute Resolution
FinTech Legal
Media & Broadcasting
Restructuring/Insolvency

OTHER NOTABLE

ZAMBIA
Financial & Corporate
Project Development

74 Recognised Lawyers
41 Recognised Lawyers
31 Recognised Lawyers