



David Heffernan

Chair, Transportation & Trade

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A recognized leader in the aviation bar, David serves as chair of Cozen O'Connor's Transportation & Trade Group and co-chair of the firm's preeminent Aviation Industry Team. He is consistently ranked in *Chambers and Partners USA*, listed in *The International Who's Who of Aviation Lawyers*, included in the Legal Media Group's Guide to the *World's Leading Aviation Lawyers*, and admitted to *The Legal 500's* U.S. Aviation and Air Travel "Hall of Fame."

David represents major U.S. and foreign airlines (passenger and cargo); aviation trade associations; aircraft, engine, and equipment manufacturers; aircraft maintenance, repair, and overhaul (MRO) businesses; air travel distribution companies; and air/ground express delivery and logistics companies. He also advises non-aviation businesses, including banks, private equity funds, other aviation industry investors, and corporate owners/users of aircraft.

David's practice is far reaching. He frequently represents clients before the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Transportation Security Administration (TSA), and Department of Justice (DOJ).

He advises clients on U.S. laws, regulations, and federal agency policies with respect to:

Economic Regulations – air carrier economic authority; international frequencies, routes, and traffic rights; air travel distribution issues; air transportation taxes and fees, airport slots and facilities, rates and charges; advertising and consumer protection regulations; and agency enforcement policies, investigations, and actions.

Safety and Security Regulations – FAA and TSA safety and security licensing, regulations, and compliance issues, including responses to agency investigations and enforcement actions.

Commercial Agreements – alliance, joint venture, and other cooperation agreements between airlines; codesharing and wet lease agreements; and related antitrust compliance and antitrust immunity issues.

Corporate Transactions – regulatory aspects of mergers and acquisitions of aviation companies or assets; transactions involving the purchase or sale of aircraft and aviation equipment; aviation industry investment transactions; aircraft management, charter, and fractional ownership agreements; and airport use and lease agreements.

Uncrewed Aircraft – regulatory and other legal issues relating to commercial uses of uncrewed aircraft (drones), electric vertical takeoff and landing (eVTOL) vehicles, and other advanced air mobility (AAM) systems.

David is the author of numerous articles on legal issues affecting the aviation industry. He has been a contributor to *Forbes.com*, a co-editor of two treatises on aviation law (*Aviation Regulation in the United States* and the *Cologne Compendium on Air Law in Europe*), and a regular speaker at legal and industry conferences. He is a former editor-in-chief of *The Air & Space Lawyer*, the quarterly publication of the ABA's Forum on Air & Space Law.

Practice Areas

- Aviation Regulatory
- Government & Regulatory
- Government Contracts
- Infrastructure

Industry Sectors

- Aviation

Education

- Catholic University of America, J.D., *summa cum laude*, 1996
- University College Dublin, M.B.S., 1988
- Trinity College Dublin, B.A., 1985

Bar Admissions

- District of Columbia

Affiliations

- American Bar Association, Forum on Air & Space Law
- Member, International Aviation Club
- Member, Aero Club of Washington

Awards & Honors

- *Chambers & Partners USA*: Transportation: Aviation Regulatory 2007-2024
- Lexology Index, Thought Leaders Global Elite, Transport-Aviation Regulatory, 2025
- Lexology Index, Thought Leaders Transport-Aviation Regulatory, 2025
- Who's Who Legal: Transport - Aviation Regulatory
- Who's Who Legal: Transport - Unmanned Aircraft Systems
- 2015 Air Law Institute Inspiration Award: Law
- JD Supra's Readers' Choice Awards Top Ten Author in the Airlines/Aviation Industry 2016-2019
- Nominated for inclusion in Legal Media Group's *Guide to the World's Leading Aviation Lawyers*, 6th and 9th editions
- Experts Guides: Aviation
- The Legal 500 United States "Leading Lawyer" Transport: Aviation and Air Travel Litigation & Regulation, 2018-2021; Hall of Fame, 2022-2024
- Lawyers of Distinction 2023
- *Business Today*, Top 10 Influential Regulatory Aviation Lawyers Shaping US Airspace in 2023

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