

SECTOR SPOTLIGHT:*Avoiding and Resolving Disputes in the Aviation Industry*

Robert S. Span is a partner in the law firm of Steinbrecher & Span LLP.

Steinbrecher & Span LLP represents corporate clients in all types of business litigation and regulatory matters. The firm has particular expertise in aviation law.

The firm's clients range from Fortune 100 companies to middle-market companies. It has represented most of the major US air carriers and industry trade associations.

Robert Span specialises in complex business and employment litigation, with a particular emphasis on aviation-related matters. For thirty years, Mr Span has represented major airlines and Airlines For America in a variety of litigation, contract, and regulatory matters. He is particularly experienced in issues concerning the economics of the aviation industry, the airline/airport relationship, federal and local regulation of airlines and airports, and airline labour and employment.

A representative sampling of his experience includes representing airlines:

- In negotiations for new operating agreements at Kennedy and LaGuardia Airports
- In the successful constitutional challenge to the New York State Passenger Bill of Rights

- In appellate challenges to FAA and DOT regulations
- Concerning advice on airports rates and charges
- In litigation and negotiations concerning landing fees and terminal rents at Los Angeles International Airport
- In litigation over property tax payments relating to landing fees at San Francisco International Airport and San Diego Airport
- On construction and environmental issues
- In litigation concerning access to John Wayne Airport (SNA) and Long Beach Airport (LGB)
- In connection with airport access, noise variances, frequent flyer programs and consumer class actions
- In arbitrations under the Railway Labour Act
- In Bankruptcy Code Section 1113 Hearings

Mr Span is the Chair-Elect of the ABA Forum on Air and Space Law, and is a past President of the Association of Business Trial Lawyers. He received his A.B. degree, Phi Beta Kappa, in 1967 from Dartmouth College and his J.D. degree in 1971 from Yale Law School.

Mr Span stated that the most important attributes of professionals dealing with disputes in the aviation industry are a deep knowledge of the economics and business issues within the industry, and the ability to spot potential problems and deal with them before they become disputes.

In order to prevent disputes arising in the first place, Mr Span believes that consultation with experienced legal professionals before entering into agreements or taking steps that might put the enterprise at risk is key.

In conclusion, Mr Span summed up the firm's strengths in resolving issues in the aviation sector: *"We have the experience, knowledge, and contacts throughout the sector to be able to advise at the highest levels."*



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