

DLA PIPER ADVISES ON UAE'S FIRST VIRTUAL ASSETS REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

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[DLA Piper](#) has acted as exclusive global legal advisor for the Dubai Virtual Assets Regulatory Authority ("VARA"), on the creation of the Emirate's virtual asset specific regulatory framework. Published on 7 February 2023, the Virtual Assets and Related Activities Regulations 2023 aim to further VARA's objectives of fostering a vibrant virtual assets ecosystem, promoting innovation, and driving economic growth in the Emirate of Dubai whilst ensuring responsible market participation and consumer protection.

In the formulation of these regulations, VARA saw a global team of DLA Piper lawyers from Dubai, Hong Kong, London and Washington, DC leverage their regulatory expertise and sector knowledge of both virtual assets and financial services regulations. The resulting framework takes an activity-based and technology-agnostic approach to set baseline compliance rules for all operators in the virtual assets sector, with incremental requirements added depending on activity. The regulations apply to all virtual assets, thereby removing some of the complexities persisting in other jurisdictions. This progressive approach is enabled by VARA's unique mandate as the world's first independent regulator for virtual assets.

The project benefitted from the capabilities of TOKO, the wholly owned asset tokenisation engine that forms part of DLA Piper's Law& offering. The firm was able to leverage the platform's unique combination of legal and technological capabilities to support VARA beyond legal and regulatory advice, also supporting on technical elements of blockchain and asset creation with a team led by Founder and Entrepreneur-in-Residence, **Scott Thiel**.

FinTech Partner **Kristi Swartz** (Hong Kong, pictured) led on the projects, alongside the core members of the DLA Piper team involved throughout the project include **Sophie Lessar** (partner, London), **Margo Tank** (partner, Washington, DC), **Amar Fahmy** (consultant, Dubai) and **Winson Lau** (associate, Hong Kong).