

Offshore Financial Centres & AML/CFT

Corporate tax optimisation structures using offshore vehicles are the subject of increased public scrutiny in recent years. Even for publicly listed companies what was considered astute tax planning not long ago has become quite a contentious topic.

Ominously, intransparent offshore structures are also increasingly popular with sophisticated criminals to launder illegitimate money. Complex offshore structures facilitate hiding beneficial ownership of corporations and the combination with certain legal instruments such as trusts or foundations makes it very difficult for banks to establish and monitor their KYC requirements. What are the key risks of these structures and would you recognise ML Red Flags? This workshop will provide you with the tools to help you answer these difficult questions.

Target Audience

This AML/CFT training is especially relevant for Wholesale Clients Bankers, M&A and Corporate Finance specialists, Customer Support staff, Risk Management analysts and AML Compliance officers.

Objectives

At the end of the training, participants will have enhanced their awareness of AML/CFT issues related to Offshore Financial Centres (“OFC”) and be able to:

- Describe the role of OFCs in international tax optimization schemes;
- Explain the difference between tax avoidance and tax evasion and debate the ethical dimension of tax optimization structures;
- Describe the differences between continental European Corporate Trust activities and the Anglo-Saxon Trust structure;
- Assess the AML risk profile of offshore corporate structures;
- Identify and mitigate abuse of Free Trade Zones;
- Explain why offshore corporate structures are attractive vehicles for financial criminals;
- Identify specific OFC related AML Red Flags;
- Advise clients regarding risks with respect to cross-border financial crime;

Topics

By means of presentations, group assignments and case study analyses the following OFC related topics are addressed:

- Basic (international) tax optimization techniques;
- Key OFC features;
- UBO complexities associated with OFCs;
- OFC Typologies and AML red flags;
- AML vulnerabilities of Free Trade Zones