

Peter Beattie signs up to Joe Hockey consultancy

By **KYLAR LOUSSIKIAN**, BUSINESS EDITOR

9:59AM FEBRUARY 19, 2022 •  33 COMMENTS

Joe Hockey is still recruiting.

Some two years after founding Bondi Partners – a strategic consultancy and lobby shop – the former Australian ambassador to the United States has signed another major political figure.

In April, he will be joined by Peter Beattie, the former Queensland premier and current Australian Rugby League commissioner.

Beattie will join a consultancy already stacked with major political and diplomatic figures including former US Navy secretary Richard Spencer and Howard-era minister Peter McGauran.

Beattie said Australia could “become the Switzerland of the Asia-Pacific” if it was able to connect its talent and entrepreneurship with the commercialisation expertise and capital from the US.

“In a sense, Australia is a bit at the crossroads, we’ve come out of the pandemic and innovation will be key,” Beattie said. “You need capital to make that work, you need the right partners, and that happens to be largely America.”

Among his higher-profile appointments, Beattie has spent plenty of time in the US. He was, for the majority of his tenure as the Queensland premier also the state’s trade minister.

He was later the Queensland Trade and Investment Commissioner to the Americas.

When he joins Bondi Partners, Beattie expects to provide strategic advice to local companies expanding their ties with the US.

“Australia needs to make better use of the skills and knowledge of its former representatives to grow the economy,” he said.

“The US is better at this than Australia. We need to do better. Bondi Partners is an opportunity to do this,” he said.

“One of the issues that has always frustrated me is that, when I was in the US, a lot of companies just thought, ‘well, going into the American market is like going into the Australian market’.

“It’s not, you need to find the right partner and finding the right partner is critical to success.”

Beattie’s arrival at Bondi Partners has come at a busy time for the company. In November, it closed fund raising for a private investment play into national security alongside Ellerston Capital.

The backers of that investment fund, known as 1941, are a group of high net worth figures from the US and Australia who want to put private capital behind technology in defence, intelligence and space industries – which can also be adapted to commercial uses.

The Australian has previously reported that backers include the Saltieri family, the founders of US investment bank Jefferies, and Ajay Banga, the global chairman of MasterCard.

Bondi Partners – which counts as its chief financial officer Melissa Babbage, Hockey’s high-profile banker wife – already has a slew of clients, the best known being rapid Covid-19 test companies Ellume and Atomo.

Hockey told The Weekend Australian that Beattie was considered by many “on both sides of the aisle, as one of Australia’s best ever premiers”.

“We are incredibly honoured that Peter has chosen to join our strategic advisory and investment firm and we look forward to harnessing his insights as our clients seek strategic counsel in a rapidly evolving world,” he said.

“I am so proud of the team we have built at Bondi Partners in just two years, ranging from former senior politicians, to uniquely experienced national security, trade, financial and corporate sector experts. As with all our of senior advisers, Peter’s experience cannot simply be replicated by teams of analysts.

“The world is getting more complicated, not less, and the mixture of real-life senior experience at Bondi is proving a very successful formula for our clients looking to unlock growth.”

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Kylar Loussikian is The Australian's Business Editor. He has been recognised with a Walkley Award and was twice named the Higher Education Journalist of the Year at the National Press Club. Kylar was previously... [Read more](#)