

PUBLICATION

DOJ Antitrust Leader William Baer Departs to Take No. 3 Position in Justice Department

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On April 11, U.S. Attorney General Loretta Lynch announced that William Baer, Assistant Attorney General (AAG) and head of the DOJ Antitrust Division, would resign from the Antitrust Division and be appointed acting Associate Attorney General, the number three position in the Justice Department. Baer replaces Stuart Delery, who resigned a few weeks earlier and held the position since September of 2014.

Baer served as AAG for the Antitrust Division since December 2012 and is credited with implementing President Obama's pledge to step up antitrust enforcement at the Division. Within a month of his appointment, Baer moved to block Anheuser-Busch InBev's proposed acquisition of Grupo Modelo. He is also credited with bringing the high profile "e-books" antitrust action against Apple and actions against financial institutions for alleged antitrust violations. In the insurance industry, Baer's Antitrust Division is currently engaged in a significant review of the Anthem/Cigna and Aetna/Humana deals. In criminal antitrust matters, under Baer's stewardship, the Antitrust Division increased criminal fines from \$1.02 billion in 2013 to \$3.63 billion in 2015.

Several days later, on April 15, Attorney General Lynch announced that Renata Hesse would replace Baer at the Antitrust Division, becoming acting AAG for Antitrust. Hesse previously served as Baer's principal deputy. In announcing the appointment, Lynch stated that she was "confident that under [Hesse's] guidance, the Antitrust Division will continue to excel in its work to ensure free and fair markets and to protect American consumers."