



R.J. O'Brien Taps Industry Veteran Mark Donlon to Lead New Swaps Desk

Initially Focused on U.S. Dollar Interest Rate Swaps, Desk to Complement Firm's Futures Expertise

CHICAGO / NEW YORK, July 14, 2020 – Chicago-based [R.J. O'Brien & Associates](#) (RJO), the oldest and largest independent futures brokerage and clearing firm in the United States, today announced that industry veteran Mark Donlon has joined the firm to head up a newly established over-the-counter (OTC) swaps sales and trading desk. Initially focused on U.S. dollar interest rate swaps, the desk will expand on the services provided to existing RJO institutional clients as well as introduce new clients to the firm.

Based in New York and reporting to RJO Chief Sales Officer Dan Staniford, Donlon was named Executive Director, Interest Rate Swaps. He has a nearly 30-year career in OTC and listed derivatives with a specialty in fixed income sales and trading at some of the world's largest financial institutions. He built and ran large global interest rate swaps businesses for Citigroup Global Markets and RBS (Royal Bank of Scotland) Securities (now NatWest Markets Securities) and was a key player in establishing and leading the rates swap execution facility (SEF) at GFI Group.

Staniford said: "Mark is an outstanding addition to our team. He is ideally suited to lead our first foray into the interest rate swaps market, which will be a great complement to our existing institutional fixed income futures and options services. As this business has evolved and matured, many of our clients have expressed interest in our ability to provide them with a swaps offering. We have some of the most highly regarded interest rate futures brokers in the business, and our new desk will offer them a powerful new tool to broaden their investing and hedging capabilities on behalf of our clients. Mark's extraordinary relationships in the industry will also introduce new clients to the firm, who likewise will then have access to our deep futures expertise."

Donlon said: "I'm excited to establish and build out this new swaps desk for one of the world's premier futures firms. There is a natural synergy that will enable us to leverage RJO's strong global franchise with a robust OTC offering. We'll work hand-in-hand with RJO global institutional brokerage teams, as well as bring new clients into the firm through independent sales efforts, with the ability to trade and support sophisticated market participants around the clock. While we intend to focus initially on U.S. dollar interest rate swaps, we expect to branch out over time into other G10 currencies and OTC derivatives including options."

The new desk will initially support on-SEF and off-SEF activities, block trades and basis trades, as well as cleared swaps at CME Group and the London Clearing House (LCH).

For the past two years, Donlon was a principal at a private equity firm, overseeing foreign exchange hedging opportunities. Donlon served for several years as Managing Director, Global Head of U.S. and Canadian Dollar Linear Rates Trading for RBS Securities Inc., known as NatWest Markets Securities Inc. since 2018. Previously, he was Managing Director of the U.S. Dollar Rates SEF at GFI Group, one of the largest wholesale OTC brokerage firms. In that role, he managed a team in New York and London from 2013 to 2015, working through the regulatory implementation of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act.

Donlon spent approximately 20 years at Citigroup Global Markets and Citibank N.A., most recently as Managing Director, Global Head of North American Linear Trading, overseeing a staff of traders in New York, London and Tokyo and leading Citigroup's U.S. swaps business into the top-ranked position in the industry. He first joined Citibank in 1993 as a futures specialist and later served as a fixed income analyst. In 1998, he was Vice President/Trader of Canadian Interest Rate Derivatives Trading for Citigroup Global Markets before serving as Director/Trader of U.S. Dollar Swaps Trading. Donlon began his career in 1991 as a trading assistant at Prime International Trading.

While at Citi and RBS, Donlon was deeply involved in mentoring young financial associates. He earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in economics from Villanova University in Pennsylvania.

About R.J. O'Brien & Associates

Founded in 1914, [R.J. O'Brien & Associates](#) is the largest independent futures brokerage and clearing firm in the United States, serving more than 80,000 institutional, commercial and individual clients globally, in addition to a network of approximately 300 introducing brokers (IBs). RJO services the industry's most expansive global network of IBs, a vast array of middle market firms and many of the world's largest financial, industrial and agricultural institutions. The firm offers state-of-the-art electronic trading and 24-hour trade execution on every major futures exchange worldwide. RJO has received the FOW International Award for Non-Bank FCM of the Year for the past four years. Wealth and Finance International Magazine named the company's private client division, RJO Futures, 2018's Most Trusted Financial Brokerage Firm. At the HFM US Quant Awards 2020, RJO won the award for Best Independent FCM – the eighth honor bestowed by the HFM Global publications on RJO and its UK affiliate.

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