

GEN RE / FARADAY

London, UK

Size

65,000 square feet

Project Highlights

Consolidated all Gen Re and Faraday's operations into one building; Utilized both company's design standards; Separate and distinct identities for both organizations within a cohesive design; Operational and space efficiencies maximized; Predominantly open plan with various underwriting groups sharing one large open plan floor and shared support areas centrally positioned

Services Provided

Full interior design and architecture;
Workplace strategies





The fortuitous alignment of several lease events allowed General Reinsurance (Gen Re) the opportunity to rationalize the company's real estate holdings in London. In the UK market, the company operates both as Gen Re and as Faraday, a separate, wholly-owned subsidiary. Faraday was previously located in a different building and maintained a distinct identity.

IA was asked to relocate Faraday to an open floor in the same building as Gen Re and to review Gen Re's own occupation of its space with the goal of producing a sizeable sublet area. At the same time, IA was asked to reinforce Faraday's distinct identity while increasing the efficiency of space use and eliminating duplicate support facilities between the two organizations.

IA undertook an extensive workplace strategy investigation of both Gen Re and Faraday to highlight their operational and cultural similarities and differences. With this understanding, IA produced multiple scenarios restacking the two existing Gen Re floors and the new Faraday floor, while eliminating redundant space and improving workspace efficiency. The resulting design maintained Gen Re in its existing floors while creating a significant sublet area out of excess space. Faraday was located on a new floor and given a separate reception and identity.

Workplace standards were fine-tuned for each company: Gen Re maintaining the North American space standards the company uses worldwide and Faraday adopting a more typically European, open, and less formal workplace style.

The Faraday floor is predominantly open plan and organized similarly to many insurance companies: with various underwriting groups sharing one large open plan floor. Administrative groups such as finance, marketing, and human resources are located on the opposite side of the building. Shared support areas such as reception, boardroom and smaller meeting rooms, staff breakout areas, and a file room utilizing a high-density, rolling file system are centrally positioned.

The overall appearance is bright, airy, colorful, and modern, reflecting Faraday's culture. Wood paneling on the reception walls is made of strips of natural oak adhered to a terracotta-colored substrate, while the flooring is highly figured Italian travertine. A fully-glazed meeting room separates the reception area from general office space allowing sunlight to reach to reach deep into the reception area and provide visitors with glimpses of the company at work. A second waiting area adjoining the main reception, complemented with several private transaction booths, is provided for the external brokers with whom Faraday conducts business.