



2020 Annual Conference Series

Biographies of speakers

Session 1

Mr Sean Wilken QC has practised in high profile, complex, international and domestic litigation for over 20 years. His caseload has included: the major litigation arising from the 1990's UK domestic property collapse; the consequences of 9/11 and 7/7 domestically and internationally; the international consequences of the 2008 collapse; as well as various international, environmental and commercial crises. He is currently extensively engaged in issues arising from Covid-19 both domestically and internationally. He has advised and acted in major disputes dealing with practical and legal ramifications of disease outbreaks; toxic spills; terrorist incidents; local and international lockdowns and no fly orders. He acted in one of the most recent large scale force majeure disputes before the English Courts dealing with the impact of border disputes on charterparties.

He has detailed experience resolving or litigating disputes in the financial; energy; infrastructure; insurance; commodities and construction sectors. His extensive domestic caseload ranges from North Sea energy disputes; to large scale PFI Projects (M6 Toll Road; Olympics infrastructure; the National Programme for Infrastructure in IT; numerous schools, hospitals, roads, prisons and light rail systems); to the application of UN sanctions in domestic law; to RIPA; to high value property developments in the UK; to the 2012 Olympics; to national security and telecoms issues.

Internationally, his case load has recently included: acting as counsel for Leighton Contractors Asia in the Shatin-Central Link Public Inquiry in Hong Kong; a US\$5bn dispute over block allocation in the energy sector in Africa; a £1bn dispute over infrastructure in the Middle East; a US\$50m dispute over the funding of oil fields offshore Africa; a US\$400m dispute over offshore drilling in Africa; disputes totalling over £1.5bn in the UAE; a HK\$3bn dispute over infrastructure; a US\$1.5bn dispute over energy in the Middle East; a BIT dispute over inbound investment; as well as major mutual and bank collapses in the Caribbean.

In addition to the above, Sean has been instructed in multiple other cases in Hong Kong including: disputes over the design and construction of social housing; a dispute over the renovation of the water systems for Kowloon and Mong Kok; potential disputes over the financial issues arising from the redevelopment of properties in Sha Tin as well as advising on numerous property based HKSE issues.

"The man is a machine, with an absolutely phenomenal ability to process information, and frighteningly clever." Chambers UK Bar 2020



Mr James Howells QC practises across a broad range of disputes in litigation, arbitration, adjudication and all methods of alternative dispute resolution. He has particular experience in energy and power-related disputes, and information technology disputes.

Much of his work is international in nature and throughout his career he has advised on disputes in Australia and across Asia, Africa, Europe and the Middle East. James has wide experience in advisory, preparatory and advocacy work for international arbitration and other forms of dispute resolution (using ICC Rules and other recognised arbitration rules such as UNCITRAL, LCIA and Stockholm Chamber of Commerce as well as ad hoc arbitration).

His experience of domestic disputes covers a wide range of technical disputes from construction and engineering to energy and power to telecommunications and computer systems and software. James has experience of all major (and many of the lesser used) construction and engineering standard forms of contract.

James is recognised by The Legal 500 and Chambers and Partners for his work in Asia-Pacific. He is also ranked in the UK Bar directories in the fields of Construction, International Arbitration, Information Technology and Professional Negligence.



Ms Jennie Wild is ranked as a leading junior in the Legal 500:

1. Construction: ‘Senior beyond her years ...’ ‘She gives excellent, clear, commercial advice. She is a master tactician and someone you want on your team’;
2. International Arbitration: ‘A highly skilled and talented barrister – her attention to detail, knowledge of the facts and law, and ability to produce thoughtful, concise submissions and advice sets her apart’;
3. The Middle East: ‘Very methodical in her approach and meticulous in her preparation’.

She is also featured in a text of “40 under 40” rising arbitral practitioners from around the world.

Her practice covers a broad spectrum of commercial disputes including energy, construction, engineering, professional negligence and associated insurance disputes. She has experience of heavy, complex and high-value claims in international arbitration and the TCC. In addition to led work, Jennie advises in her own right and regularly appears as a sole advocate in the High Court and County Courts.

Jennie’s highlights include:

- Middle East: Four Middle-Eastern airport arbitrations, a \$2billion ICC arbitration arising out of the termination of a hospital project and a desalination plant dispute.
- Rest of the world: A \$127m ICC arbitration concerning an Australian offshore LNG development project and two South African power station disputes (DAB and arbitration).
- Domestic: A £46m TCC trial concerning the sale of machines to a Saudi Arabian company (*Hamad Aldrees & Partners v Rotex Europe Limited* (2019) 184 Con LR 145), a three week TCC trial concerning an on-shore gas pipeline in Shetland (*Van Oord UK Ltd v Allseas UK Ltd* [2015] EWHC 3074 (TCC) and [2016] 1 CostsLO 1), an emergency injunction application seeking the withdrawal of a call on a €24m bond and an adjudication enforcement hearing concerning issues of natural justice and excess of jurisdiction (*Stellite Construction Ltd v Vascroft Contractors Ltd* (2016) 165 ConLR 108).

She has recently advised contractors on claims arising as a result of Covid-19 (including force majeure and change of law) under amended FIDIC and NEC forms in relation to three energy projects and a domestic infrastructure project.



Jennie is also a contributor to the Construction Law Reports, Keating on Construction Contracts, Keating on JCT, Keating on Offshore Construction and Marine Engineering, PLC and Halsbury's Laws. Before coming to the Bar, Jennie worked at the Law Commission on the reform of insurance law, unfair contract terms and fiduciary duties and prior to that, in Australia, at the Victorian Government Solicitor's Office and for the Principal Judge of the Victorian Commercial Court.

Ms Ellen Pang is developing a broad practice in civil matters with an emphasis in construction disputes. She has experience in handling cases involving the financial, insurance and construction sectors. Recently, Ellen acted as counsel for the Hong Kong Government in the Shatin-Central Link Public Inquiry in Hong Kong.

Ellen completed her LLB in Chinese Law at Peking University and obtained the PRC Legal Qualification Certificate in 2011. She worked as an associate at a PRC firm in Beijing before obtaining her Juris Doctor degree with First Class Honours at the University of Hong Kong and her Bachelor of Civil Law degree at the University of Oxford.

Ellen was awarded the Bar Scholarship in 2015 and the Charles Ching Memorial Scholarship as well as The Society of Construction Law Hong Kong Bar Scholarship in 2016.



Mr Kaiser Leung has a broad civil and commercial practice, with a particular emphasis on construction law. He has been involved in a number of construction litigations and arbitrations, including disputes relating to works carried out in construction projects for shopping malls and works carried out in renovation projects for residential buildings.

His recent notable cases include acting for the MTR Corporation Limited (led by Mr. Philip Boulding QC and Mr. Jat Sew-Tong SC) in The Commission of Inquiry into the Construction Works at and near the Hung Hom Station Extension under the Shatin to Central Link Project.

Kaiser has been recognised in the Recommended Junior Counsel category by the Doyles Guide for Leading Construction & Infrastructure Litigation Barristers - Hong Kong, 2020.

Kaiser is a recipient of the Bar Scholarship (2014), the Charles Ching Memorial Scholarship (2015), and the Society of Construction Law Hong Kong Scholarship (2015). He was called to the Bar and joined Des Voeux Chambers in 2015 after obtaining First Class Honours in both Bachelor of Laws and Master of Laws at the University of Durham and the University of Cambridge respectively. He is a contributing editor to the Hong Kong Civil Procedure.

