

Damon So

Partner

Hong Kong

Biography

Damon So is initially qualified as a Chartered Civil and Structural engineer. Since becoming qualified as a lawyer with the Construction and Engineering practice, he has advised clients on the full remit of issues that clients may face in the construction sector. Advising on both contentious and non-contentious issues, he has particular experience in the areas of arbitration, litigation, and alternative dispute resolution.

Damon has been with the firm for his entire legal career after he became a Chartered Engineer. He is a rare breed of lawyer who has done a large volume of both contentious and non-contentious work and understands the needs of both commercial and litigious clients.

In terms of contentious work, Damon has handled a large amount of litigation and arbitration, acting for statutory bodies, employers, contractors, consultants, and insurers, in respect of building and civil projects and in commercial disputes. He acts as an arbitrator and is a HKMAAL Accredited Mediator.

His non-contentious work includes advising on, preparing, and negotiating construction-related documentation (including consultancy agreements, main contracts and subcontracts, performance bonds, guarantees, warranties, and joint venture agreements) for projects in Hong Kong, Macau, Thailand, Vietnam, and the PRC. They involve the use of different standard



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Languages

Cantonese
English
Mandarin

Practices

International Arbitration
Litigation Services

Industries

Aerospace and Defense
Energy and Natural Resources
Real Estate
Diversified Industrials

Areas of focus

forms of contract including the HKIA/HKIS forms, FIDIC, NEC3, Hong Kong Government forms, and standard forms of major statutory bodies in Hong Kong.

Damon is a popular speaker and has been invited regularly over the years by various professional organisations and professional and engineering companies to speak on topics relating to construction, arbitration, and dispute resolution.

Representative experience

Preparing and advising on numerous tender and contract documents for developers, contractors and subcontractors including negotiating terms.

Advising a public body in Hong Kong on two construction projects using the NEC3 form of contract.

Advising and acting for various parties in various forms of dispute resolution including mediation and expert determination and in both court and arbitration proceedings.

Acting for a chemical manufacturer in enforcing a CIETAC arbitration award against a PRC company in a high profile court case in Hong Kong.

Acting for a contractor in High Court proceedings in relation to disputes with its JV partner in a water treatment plant project.

Acting for a developer in disputes involving arbitration and litigation with contractors, suppliers and professional advisers regarding defective works in a development.

Acting for a distributor of lubricants in an ICC arbitration against the manufacturer and supplier in relation to a mining project in Mongolia.

Acting for a main contractor in major consolidated arbitration proceedings with the employer and a subcontractor.

Acting for a major statutory and publicly funded body in Hong Kong on a major dispute with a local contractor.

Alternative Dispute Resolution
Construction and Engineering
IERP Dispute Resolution

Education and admissions

Education

LL.B., University of Wolverhampton,
1995

B.Sc., The University of Hong Kong,
1991

Memberships

Member, Hong Kong Institution of
Engineers (Civil & Structural)

Member, Institution of Structural
Engineers

Accredited Mediator, HKMAAL

Chartered Engineer

Fellow, Chartered Institute of
Arbitrators

Fellow, Hong Kong Institute of
Arbitrators

Advising a developer in relation to the construction of a major hotel and casino project in Macau, including preparation and negotiation of all contract documentation.

Advising a Hong Kong contractor in an arbitration against a mainland developer for outstanding payments before the Beijing Arbitration Commission.

Defending a major engineering firm in negligence claim in respect of a civil project in Hong Kong.

Defending a negligence claim against an established architect's firm in arbitration proceedings in respect of the design of a residential project in Hong Kong.

Awards and rankings

- Hall of Fame, Construction (Hong Kong), *Legal 500*, 2020
- Construction, Leading Individual, *Chambers Asia Pacific*, 2011-2020
- Construction, Leading Individual (Hong Kong), *Legal 500 Asia Pacific*, 2013-2020
- International for Construction Legal Work, *Client Choice Award*, 2014
- Global Leader - Construction (Hong Kong), *Who's Who Legal 2020*, 2020-2021

Latest thinking and events

- News
 - Statutory bodies – forced to enforce?
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- News
 - "Finality or justice" – Hong Kong court considers challenges to arbitral awards
- News
 - "Finality or justice" – Hong Kong Court Considers Challenges to Arbitral Awards
- News
 - Educational lesson – Hong Kong court stays just

and equitable winding-up petition to arbitration

- News

- American built – Hong Kong court dismisses application to set aside leave to enforce U.S. award