

Charles Allen

Arbitration

Charles W. Allen, FCIArb
Independent Arbitrator

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Nationality: United Kingdom
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Charles W. Allen, FCIArb is an independent arbitrator with 35+ years of legal experience in Hong Kong, London and beyond.

Former head of an international law firm in Hong Kong, he specialises in resolving commercial disputes, including international trade, shipping and other business controversies. He brings a global perspective and multi-jurisdictional expertise to the tribunals on which he sits.

Educational/professional memberships

- Chartered Institute of Arbitrators – Diploma in International Maritime Arbitration 2022.
- Fellow, Chartered Institute of Arbitrators 2018.
- Solicitor, Hong Kong 1995 (Higher Rights of Audience (Civil) 2019).
- Solicitor, England and Wales 1991.
- University College London, LLB (Hons) 1990.
- Member, Panel of International Arbitrators, Korean Commercial Arbitration Board, 2025.
- Member, Main Panel of Arbitrators, Singapore International Arbitration Centre 2025 (Reserve Panel since 2017).
- Member, Panel of International Arbitrators, Vancouver International Arbitration Centre, 2024.
- Member, Panel of Arbitrators, Hong Kong International Arbitration Centre 2024 (member of List since 2019).
- Member, eBram Panels of Arbitrators, Mediators and APEC Neutrals, 2021.
- Member, Hong Kong Maritime Arbitration Group 2021.
- eBram Covid-19 ODR Scheme Arbitrator 2020.
- Member, Panel of Arbitrators, Mongolian International Arbitration Center 2020.
- Member, Panel of Arbitrators, Asian International Arbitration Centre 2018-2026.
- Member, Panel of Arbitrators, The Law Society of Hong Kong 2018.
- Member, International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) 2007–present.
- Member, ICC Commission on Arbitration and ADR 2016–2018.
- Secretary, ICC Committee on Commercial Law & Practice 2017–2021, 2023–2025.
- Member, ICC Arbitration Committee 2007-2026 (Secretary approx. 2007-2016); Vice-Chair Nominations SubCommittee approx. 2011–2015.
- eBram Covid-19 ODR Scheme Mediator 2020.
- HKMAAL General Mediator 2013.
- Accredited HKIAC General Mediator 2010.
- Member, HKIAC General Panel of Mediators, approx. 2010.
- Chairman, Buildings Appeal Tribunal Hong Kong, approx. 2015–2018.
- Solicitor Member, Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal Hong Kong, approx. 2013–present.
- Member, Claims Committee of the Hong Kong Law Society's Professional Indemnity Scheme 2001–2019.
- Guest lecturer in LLM Arbitration Law, University of Hong Kong 2023 and 2024.
- Guest lecturer in International Commercial Arbitration, Australian National University 2023.

Professional experience/ areas of expertise

Professional Experience

- Partner, Orrick Herrington & Sutcliffe 2016–2019.
- Consultant, then Partner, Sidley Austin, Hong Kong 2002–2016.

- Associate, Simmons & Simmons, Hong Kong 1997–2002.
- Legal Executive, then Associate, Clifford Chance, London and Hong Kong 1981–1997.

Areas of expertise

- International arbitration.
- Commercial litigation.

Arbitration and mediation experience

As arbitrator

- October 2016 – appointed as sole arbitrator in an ICC arbitration seated in Hong Kong between an Indian Claimant and a Japanese Respondent arising from a contract to sell and buy commodities. Settled.
- September 2019 – appointed as sole arbitrator in two expedited arbitrations seated in Hong Kong under the HKIAC Administered Arbitration Rules between a Hong Kong Claimant and a Thai Respondent arising from contracts to sell and buy commodities. Arbitrations consolidated. Award published January 2020.
- September 2020 – appointed as Chair in an ICC arbitration seated in Hong Kong between two Hong Kong parties arising from an exclusive distribution agreement. “Confidentiality Club” under Article 22 of the 2017 ICC Rules imposed in January 2021. Award published August 2021.
- November 2020 – appointed by HKIAC as sole arbitrator in Hong Kong seated ad hoc arbitration between a German Claimant and a US Respondent arising from a contract for the sale and purchase of steel. Interim award on governing law issued in January 2021.
- December 2021 – appointed by Respondent in a Hong Kong-seated HKIAC arbitration between a mainland China claimant and a US Respondent arising from a contract to buy and sell commodities. Final award save as to costs issued August 2024. Award on costs issued February 2025.
- March 2022 – appointed by Respondent in a Mongolia-seated arbitration under the rules of the Mongolian International Arbitration Center arising from a contract to buy and sell petroleum products. Final award issued in September 2022.
- January 2023 – appointed by SIAC as sole arbitrator in a Singapore seated arbitration between two Cayman-incorporated companies arising from a contract to loan cryptocurrency. Final award save as to costs issued November 2024. Award on costs issued March 2025.
- March 2023 – appointed by the HKIAC as sole arbitrator in a Hong Kong-seated HKIAC-administered arbitration between two individuals (and an Additional Party following a joinder application) in a dispute arising from a term sheet providing for the proposed acquisition and merger of a number of businesses under the common control of the parties. Settled November 2024. Terminated April 2025.
- May 2024 – appointed by HKIAC as sole arbitrator in a Hong Kong seated, HKIAC-administered, arbitration, following the prior appointment of an emergency arbitrator, in a matter concerning the Respondent’s exercise of a disputed right to purchase shares under a subscription and shareholders’ agreement. Suspended June 2025.
- March 2025 – appointed by Claimant in a Hong Kong seated HKIAC expedited arbitration between two Hong Kong parties arising from a Memorandum of Agreement to transfer a commercial vehicles business. Interim award January 2026.
- November 2025 – appointed by SIAC as sole arbitrator in a Singapore – seated consolidated arbitration between two UAE incorporated parties arising from one or more contracts to buy and sell phosphoric acid.

As counsel (inter alia)

- 1992–2002 – numerous ad hoc marine and international trade related arbitrations in London and Hong Kong, primarily under LMAA rules.
- Approximately 2002–present – solicitor to numerous parties in commercial litigation or international arbitration, including parties, attempting to resolve their disputes by means of mediation, in Hong Kong and elsewhere.
- 2002–2007 – representing Mainland Chinese Respondent in an ICC Lausanne arbitration against a Belgian Claimant arising from a joint venture agreement, to include advising in respect of associated legal proceedings in Mainland China, Cayman Islands, Belgium and Mauritius.
- Approximately 2007–2009 – acting for the Respondent investee in an UNCITRAL Rules arbitration seated in Hong Kong commenced by private equity investor Claimants, to include resisting application to tribunal for interim injunction.
- Approximately 2008–2010 – counsel to Hong Kong Claimant in a successful LCIA London arbitration against an Indian company Respondent relating to a contract for the supply of manganese ore, and advising on related proceedings in the Indian courts.
- 2008–2011 – solicitor to FG Hemisphere in its efforts to enforce two ICC arbitral awards against assets of the Democratic Republic of Congo in Hong Kong in the Hong Kong Court of First Instance, Court of Appeal and Court of Final Appeal.
- 2006–2012 – counsel to Pacific China Holdings Limited, the arbitration under HKIAC Administered Arbitration Rules commenced by the buyers of a Hong Kong financial services company. Settled. Respondent to an ICC Hong Kong arbitration in which the Claimant was Grand Pacific Holdings Limited arising from a loan agreement. Also acting for the client in associated arbitration related enforcement and other proceedings in the Hong Kong Court of First Instance, Court of Appeal and Court of Final Appeal, and advising on associated proceedings in various other jurisdictions including Taiwan and Mainland China.
- 2012–2013 – solicitor to PT First Media TBK in its efforts in the Hong Kong Court of First Instance to resist enforcement of an SIAC arbitral award in HK.
- 2015–March 2016 – counsel to BVI incorporated Claimants in UNCITRAL Arbitration Rules ad hoc arbitration in Hong Kong against Bahamas incorporated Respondent resulting in successful award by sole arbitrator. Acting and advising in relation to associated litigation in the Hong Kong court of First Instance and Court of Appeal, and in Singapore and the Bahamas
- July 2016–2019 – advising a financial institution in respect of a potential Hong Kong-seated arbitration under the HKIAC Administered Arbitration Rules threatened by the buyer of a significant shareholding in a Mainland Chinese bank. Dormant.
- 2017–2019 – counsel to Hong Kong Respondents to an arbitration under the HKIAC Administered Arbitration Rules commenced by a Hong Kong Claimant arising from a share sale and purchase agreement. Settled.
- 2018–2019 – counsel to individual Respondents to expedited
- 2020–present – solicitor to Claimants under multi-million US dollar Convention award seeking enforcement in Hong Kong.
- 2020 – counsel to Claimant in SIAC arbitration seeking payment of multi-million US dollar sum due under a Master Supply Agreement. Settled.
- 2020–2021 – counsel to PRC claimant in HKIAC arbitration concerning an insurance coverage dispute.
- 2022–2024 – counsel to Respondent successfully contesting CIETAC arbitration concerning a technology contract.
- 2022–2023 – counsel to Claimant in a Hong Kong-seated ad hoc arbitration arising from an ACMI aircraft wet lease.
- 2023–2024 – solicitor to Respondents in AAA arbitration resisting recognition of final award in Hong Kong.
- 2024–2025 – counsel to Respondent in an HKIAC expedited arbitration resolving a dispute in the aviation industry arising under an IATA Standard Ground Handling Agreement. Settled.

Other tribunal experience

- Appointed as member (or Chair) in eight Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal matters. Has written or contributed to numerous decisions in both contested and uncontested cases.

Languages: English