

PROFILE



Director, Dispute Resolution
Drew & Napier LLC, Singapore
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Qualifications

Advocate & Solicitor of the Supreme Court of Singapore (2017)
LL.B (Hons), University of Southampton (2015)
BBA, National University of Singapore (2012)

Language

English, Chinese

ZHIHUI CHEN

ABOUT ZHIHUI

Zhihui is a Singapore qualified lawyer with a practice that focuses on civil and commercial dispute resolution. He has acted for clients in a wide range of contentious matters, including construction, infrastructure, energy, shipping, international trade, shareholders, joint venture, employment, MCST, and arbitration-related litigation.

Zhihui has experience in international arbitrations, both *ad hoc* and institutional (including SIAC, HKIAC, LMAA, SCMA, CIETAC, etc). He has appeared before all levels of the Singapore courts, and also regularly represents clients in adjudication proceedings under the Building and Construction Industry Security of Payment Act.

Besides contentious work, he regularly advises clients on non-contentious matters, ranging from review and drafting of contracts to general corporate and legal advisory work.

Zhihui read law at the University of Southampton and graduated with First Class Honours. He was also awarded numerous academic prizes, including Seymour J Gubb Prize (top first year student), Law School Prize (top second year student), Swords Prize (best dissertation paper), Macfarlanes Prize (top student in contract law), Moore Blatch Prize (top student in equity and trusts) amongst others. In addition to his legal education, Zhihui also holds a Bachelor of Business Administration from the National University of Singapore.

Zhihui is fluent in both English and Mandarin Chinese.

EXPERIENCE

Some of the matters which Zhihui has acted include the following (*):

Building & Construction

- Acted for the main contractor in an arbitration in relation to a sporting facility (Singapore seat, SIAC rules).
- Acted for the reinforced concrete sub-contractor in an arbitration in relation to a landmark mixed-use development in Singapore with claims and counterclaims concerning issues of delays and defects in excess of S\$70 million (Singapore seat, SIAC rules).
- Advised the structural steel sub-contractor in relation to issues concerning extension of time, delays, and variation works for a public sector project in Singapore.

Infrastructure & Energy

- Advised the contractor in relation to issues concerning delays and disruption and payment dispute in a mass rapid train (MRT) project.
- Acted for the employer in an arbitration against the contractor in relation to a wind farm project in Vietnam (Singapore seat, SIAC rules).

Civil and commercial disputes

- **Arbitration-related litigation** - Acted for a successful claimant in resisting an application to set aside the arbitration award: HC/OA 94/2022 and HC/OA 228/2022 (unreported).
- **International trade** - Acted for a Singapore company in a claim against a Chinese state-owned entity in relation to a supply contract with claims in excess of US\$30 million (China seated, CIETAC rules).
- **Charterparty** - Acted for a shipowner in a claim against charterers for repudiatory breach of contract of affreightment resulting in losses in excess of US\$5 million (Hong Kong seat, LMAA rules).
- **Air & marine cargo insurance** – Advised and acted for air and marine cargo insurers in respect of coverage and subrogated recovery work.

Commercial Advisory & Non-Contentious Work

- Retained by the Singapore subsidiary of a Chinese-listed company to provide general corporate and legal advisory work.

(*includes experience in previous firm)

ACCOLADES

The Legal 500 Asia Pacific

Construction 2026 – Recommended lawyer for 2 consecutive years

International Arbitration 2023 – Recommended lawyer

- *“Zhihui Chen is highly knowledgeable, approachable, and always willing to go the extra mile. He distinguishes himself by his ability to simplify complex legal concepts without losing nuance, and he maintains a calm, strategic focus even under pressure. His attention-to-detail, integrity, and*

reliability have consistently earned my trust.” “Chen Zhihui is a very solid construction disputes lawyer.”

- *“Christopher Chong and Chen Zhihui are always a phone call away to provide professional and sound advice.”*
- *“... a solid team, whether as a whole or individually, are more than capable of pulling their own weight and delivering value to us in the context of the role they play; we must mention ... Zhihui Chen ...”*

Lexology Index (formerly Who’s Who Legal)

Commercial Litigation 2025 – Future Leader

Benchmark Litigation Asia-Pacific

Construction 2026 – Future Star 2 consecutive years

Asialaw Leading Lawyers

Dispute Resolution 2025 – Rising Star

Asian Legal Business (ALB)

Singapore Rising Stars 2026

- *Clients describe Zhihui as someone who is “highly knowledgeable, approachable, and always willing to go the extra mile.”*
- *Clients praise his ability to “simplify complex legal concepts without losing nuance” and maintain “a calm, strategic focus even under pressure.”*

Recognised as one of the 40 exceptional legal talents under the age of 40 – “40 Under 40 list” (October 2025 issue)

- *He has been praised by clients, who describe him as “extremely diligent, analytical, knowledgeable”, “makes complex legal concepts easy to understand”, and “a brilliant lawyer and very easy to work with”.*

APPOINTMENTS/MEMBERSHIPS

- Member, Law Society of Singapore
- Member, Singapore Academy of Law

PUBLICATIONS

- From “Yam Seng” to Divorce: Navigating (in good faith) joint venture agreements in construction projects (co-authored with Kelvin Teo) - Society of Construction Law (Singapore) · Apr 1, 2020
- When can insurers rely on a sanctions clause to refuse to pay a claim? Mamancochet Mining Ltd v Aegis Managing Agency Ltd [2018] EWHC 2643 (comm) [2018] 18(8) Shipping & Trade Law 1
- When is a bill of lading not a bill of lading: The Star Quest and others [2016] SGHC 100 - [2017] 17(2) Shipping & Trade Law 3

- A Golden Victory Indeed: Bunge SA v Nidera BV [2015] UKSC 43 [2015] 15(6) Shipping & Trade Law 4
- Retention of Title Clause and the Demise of Contracts for Sale of Bunkers: PST Energy 7 Shipping LLC and Product Shipping and Trading SA v OW Bunker Malta Limited and ING Bank SA (Res Cogitans) [2015] EWHC 2022 (Comm) (2015) 21 JIML 253
- Rethinking the Market Access Approach [2015] 5 SSLR 40