

Christopher Humby

Barrister

INTRODUCTION

I accept briefs in all areas of commercial law but I have particular experience acting in complex construction and engineering disputes. I am regularly instructed as counsel (both led and unled) in litigation, arbitrations (both domestic and international), mediations, and expert determinations.

I am recognised by Doyle's Guide as a leading construction and infrastructure junior counsel in Australia (2024 – 2026) and South Australia (2023 – 2026). As a solicitor I was noted by Legal 500 UK 2021 for International Arbitration and selected as a "Rising Star" by US legal publication Law360 for 2019 in the area of construction.

Prior to being called to the Bar, I was an Of Counsel at Quinn Emanuel Urquhart & Sullivan LLP in London. In that role I managed arbitrations and related litigation arising out of significant construction and energy projects in the Middle East.

I hold a Master of Laws from the University of Melbourne specialising in construction law and dispute resolution. I am a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators. I have also published and presented on construction, energy and arbitration issues in Australia, the UK and the Middle East.

QUALIFICATIONS

2009 – 2012	University of Melbourne Master of Laws (LLM) (Construction Law)
2005 – 2007	University of Adelaide Bachelor of Laws (LLB) (Honours)
1999 – 2003	Flinders University of South Australia Bachelor of Justice & Society

ADMISSION

July 2022	Admitted to the South Australian Bar
March 2009	Admitted as a solicitor

EXPERIENCE PRIOR TO ADMISSION TO THE BAR

July 2015 – July 2022	Quinn Emanuel Urquhart & Sullivan <i>Of Counsel in the international construction arbitration team</i>	London
November 2009 - June 2015	Thomson Geer <i>Senior Associate in the construction and litigation teams</i>	Adelaide and Brisbane

February 2008 –
November 2009

Clayton Utz

Perth

*Articled Clerk and then Lawyer in the construction and
litigation teams*

SELECTED MATTERS

Arbitrations

- Led by Nicholas Floreani KC (Jeffcott Chambers) and instructed by K&L Gates (Sydney), acting for an international JV contractor in ongoing arbitration proceedings (Sydney seat, LCIA administered) against a principal in relation to a substantial wind farm project in South Australia.
- Led by Duncan Miller SC (7 Wentworth Selborne) and Damian O’Leary SC (Bar Chambers), and instructed by LK Law (Adelaide), acting for a state government in arbitration proceedings involving a Project Co and Builder arising out of a large PPP hospital project in Adelaide (at the time, one of the most expensive buildings in world). Total claims in excess of AUD 1 billion.
- Instructed by a boutique law firm in Dubai, UAE in relation to disputes arising on a wastewater treatment project in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.
- As a solicitor, acting for Qatar Foundation in a decade long, multi-billion-dollar London seated, Qatari law governed ICC arbitration against a JV contractor in relation to the Sidra Hospital in Doha, Qatar.
- As a solicitor, acting for a Saudi Arabian state-owned manufacturer of steel products in a USD 300 million London seated, Saudi law governed ICC arbitration.
- As a solicitor, acting for a Danish subcontractor in long running ICC arbitration proceedings seated in Brisbane arising out of the development of the Port of Gladstone for the export of liquified natural gas.

Litigation

- Instructed by K&L Gates (Sydney) in the successful defence of judicial review proceedings in relation to an adjudication determination under the SA Security of Payment Act:
 - SA Supreme Court: *Goyder Wind Farm 1 Pty Ltd v GE Renewable Energy Australia Pty Ltd & Ors* [2024] SASC 108
 - SA Court of Appeal: *Goyder Wind Farm 1 Pty Ltd v GE Renewable Energy Australia Pty Ltd & Ors* [2025] SASCA 39
 - High Court of Australia: Successfully resisted an application for special leave led by Bret Walker SC (5th Floor St James’ Hall) and Nicholas Floreani KC

- Instructed by Norton Rose Fulbright (Sydney), acting for an international developer of student accommodation in proceedings relating to defects in a large building project in Adelaide.
 - SA Supreme Court: *Synergy Construct Australia Pty Ltd v GSA North Terrace Pty Limited* (3 January 2025) (unled, resisted an injunction sought against a call on bank guarantees, and successfully had the proceedings stayed and referred to arbitration).
 - SA Court of Appeal: *Synergy Construct Australia Pty Ltd v GSA North Terrace Pty Limited* [2025] SASCA 72 (led by Nicholas Floreani KC).
- Instructed by Thomson Geer (Brisbane), acting for a builder in a dispute against a subcontractor concerning a high-rise development on the Gold Coast:
 - District Court of Queensland: *Starline Interiors Pty Ltd v Tomkins Commercial and Industrial Builders Pty Ltd* [2025] QDC.
 - Supreme Court of Queensland: *Tomkins Commercial & Industrial Builders Pty Ltd v Starline Interiors Pty Ltd* [2025] QSC 226 and *Tomkins Commercial & Industrial Builders Pty Ltd v Starline Interiors Pty Ltd* [2026] QSC 2. Led by Dan Piggott KC in the successful challenge to an adjudication decision.
- Sole counsel, instructed by Clyde & Co, and acting for Robert Bird Group (RBG) Engineers in proceedings in the District Court of South Australia in relation to a building project in Queensland.
- As a solicitor, defending challenges in the English High Court under the Arbitration Act to arbitration awards:
 - *Obrascon Huarte Lain SA (T/A OHL Internacional) & Anor v Qatar Foundation for Education, Science & Community Development* [2019] EWHC 2539 (Comm)
 - *Obrascon Huarte Lain SA (trading as OHL Internacional) v Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development* [2020] EWHC 1643 (Comm)
- *Rossdale Homes Pty Ltd v Torrens Road Developments Pty Ltd* [2024] SADC 90 (application for security for costs)
- *Allied Grain Systems v Inheritance Capital Asset Management* [2023] SASC 175 (an application by a contractor for relief from the Court in relation to unlicensed building work)
- *Wang v Gelnar* [2023] SASC 43 (a single Judge appeal in the Supreme Court of SA from a decision of the Magistrates Court of SA)