

Branch Chair Report 2025/2026

Introduction

I am pleased to report that the East Asia Branch has had another good year. In case you do not get to the end of the Branch Chair Report which follows, I thought I would include some of the highlights below:

- **Membership:** Total membership stands at **2,751** members (it was 2,853 members in 2024 and 3,011 in 2023).
- **Finances:** Finances remain healthy, with the net assets value of the East Asia Branch as of 31 December 2025 being HK\$4,338,166 (up from HK\$3,488,701 in 2024). Since 1 January 2019, no subvention has been received from the Chartered Institute (HQ). Notwithstanding this, we finished the year with an operating surplus of HK\$849,465 for the 12 months to 31 December 2025. This is the second year running that we have made a surplus, the last before that being 2019.
- **Courses:** The Adjudication training course delivered for HKIAC in response to the Hong Kong Construction Industry Security of Payment Ordinance, and the training courses held in Wuhan, China have contributed to the financial position achieved above.
- **Events:** Events were well attended. We held over 25 events, including the Annual Dinner and the Fellows Cocktails, all of which were almost fully subscribed.
- **West Wing:** The Branch occupies an office (67 square metres) at West Wing.

I am very grateful for the Committee members and Chapter representatives who have give up your time voluntarily to support the East Asia Branch. The successful delivery of the training courses and seminars have been made possible with the support of the committee members.

Finally, thank you for all members, past and present. I appreciate everything that you have done – and are now doing – for the East Asia Branch. We could not do what we are doing without your support and guidance.

1. The Committee

The East Asia Branch is run by a committee comprising 16 elected members who hold the following positions:

Chair	Gina Leung
Immediate Past Chair	Donovan Ferguson (ex-officio)
Vice Chairs	Ronald Pang Lawrence Lee
Branch Secretary	Micky Yip
Branch Treasurer	John Cock
Public Relations Officer	Gina Leung
Committee members	Stephen Chu, Glenn Haley, Richard Leung, David Luk, Eric Ng, Ronald Pang, Lawrence Tam, Christopher To, Nicholas Turner, Jennifer Wu and Felda Yeung (in alphabetical order of the last name)

In addition to the above, pursuant to Article 12.4 of the Branch Rules, the committee can co-opt a maximum of three members to hold office until the next AGM. For the 2025-2026 term, the three co-opted on the committee members were Mathew Briggs (YMG Co-Chair), Caroline Thomas and Wenny Huang.

2. Membership

As of 22 April 2026, the total East Asia Branch membership stood at 2,751 (down from 2,853 in 2024 and down from 3,011 in 2023). Out of these numbers, 617 (23%) were Associates, 1,111 (40%) were Members and 657 (24%) were Fellows, the rest 366 (13%) were retirees and students.

A table showing the distribution of membership around the region is set out below.

Region	Number as of 22 April 2026 (Brackets are Number as at 22 April 2025)	%
Cambodia	9 (9)	0.3% (0.3%)
Mainland China	573 (502)	20.8% (17.6%)
Hong Kong SAR	1,574 (1627)	57.3% (57.1%)
Indonesia	114 (140)	4.1% (4.9%)
Japan	101 (96)	3.7% (3.4%)
Korea	48 (45)	1.7% (1.6%)
Laos	1 (0)	0.0% (0.0%)
Macau SAR	31 (32)	1.1% (1.2%)
Mongolia	1 (0)	0.0 % (0%)
Myanmar	4 (4)	0.1% (0.1%)
Philippines	117 (110)	4.3% (3.9%)
Taiwan Region	88 (154)	3.2% (5.4%)
Vietnam	89 (100)	3.2% (3.5%)
Others	1 (34)	0.0% (1.2%)
Total	2,751 (2,853)	100

One point I would like to highlight is the number of Peer Interviews for Fellowship grade. More than 47 candidates have been interviewed by the East Asia Branch last year. This is great to see, particularly with many of them living and working in Mainland China.

My thanks go to Micky Yip for looking after our membership affairs, and for the committee members who assisted in conducting the Peer Interviews for Fellows.

3. Financial Position

The East Asia Branch finances remain healthy, with the net assets value of the Branch as of 31 December 2025 being HK\$4,338,166 (up from 2024, which was HK\$3,488,701).

Since 1 January 2019, no subvention has been received from the Chartered Institute (HQ). Notwithstanding the same, the East Asia Branch finished the year with an operating surplus of HK\$849,465 for the 12 months to 31 December 2025. I refer members to the Treasurer's report for further details of the East Asia Branch's financial position.

I must express my very sincere thanks to John Cock for his diligence in taking care of the finances of the East Asia Branch.

4. Professional Development & Training

The Branch completed a number of training courses and assessments as follows:

Date	Course	Course
May to September 2025	Module 2 course for HKIE in Hong Kong	13
September to November 2025	Module 1 course in Hong Kong	20
September 2025	Introduction to International Arbitration in Hong Kong	23
September 2025	Introduction to International Arbitration in Wuhan	87
October 2025	ARF course in Japan	14
November 2025	ARM course in Hong Kong	10
November and December 2025	ARF course in Hong Kong	12

Thank you to the faculty who taught and participated in the courses and assessments.

Many thanks to Stephen Chu for organising the training courses and all those who taught on the courses.

A special thank you to Richard Leung for arranging the training courses with HKIE.

There is one additional course which I would like to highlight.

- The East Asia Branch is hosting the Asia Pacific Diploma in International Commercial Arbitration in Hong Kong this week. This is a joint diploma course run by Ciarb Australia, Ciarb Singapore and East Asia Branch.
- I would like to express our sincere thanks to the Course Directors, Glenn Haley and Paul Barrett, for their tremendous efforts in managing and delivering this Ciarb signature training course.
- I would also like to thank Ronald Pang for managing the logistics aspects of the diploma course, which has involved a great volume of work and the tutors from the East Asia Branch for teaching on this course.

5. Mediation

Since 2010, the East Asia Branch has collaborated with other professional bodies and joined the Joint Mediation Helpline Office (“JMHO”) for promoting mediation. We continued this support from last year.

Over the past 12 months, JMHO hosted over 20 mediation related seminars, talks and trainings in Hong Kong and Mainland China, this includes the mediations talks for the Secondary Schools and Youth Homes.

I would like to thank Lawrence Lee and Lawrence Tam for driving the Mediation sub-committee.

6. Adjudication

With statutory adjudication summing into force, on 28 August 2025, the East Asia Branch has provided three training and accreditation courses (May, June and October 2025) for HKIAC which educated and examined 120 potential adjudicators who on successful passing of the requirements have been listed on HKIAC’s panel. This training was provided by a dedicated and diverse team of Ciarb members and other professionals, to which the East Asia Branch is thankful. The courses have contributed a surplus of HK\$528,000 to Ciarb’s account.

We thank HKIAC for working with EAB on this important development in ADR in Hong Kong.

Nicholas Turner has led this initiative, and I thank him for all of his continued hard work.

7. Programme

The East Asia Branch hosted over 26 events including 12 events organised by Young Members Group.

The seminars were all hybrid events that were held virtually and in-person at HKIAC.

The seminars and events for the EAB and the YMG are as follows:

Year 2025 / 2026	Topic	Speakers
22 April 2025	Annual General Meeting and Post-AGM Talk on Trustee Update by Paul Barrett.	Post-AGM speaker - Paul Barrett
24 April 2025	YMG: Joint networking drinks with British Chamber of Commerce Future Leaders Committee	N/A
28 April 2025	YMG: What changes are brought by the new English Arbitration Act 2025 – A Perspective from Shipping Arbitration	Michael Collett KC Karen Maxwell Clare Ambrose
20 May 2025	YMG: Japan Chapter: Ethical Issues in International Arbitration	Small Groups with Moderators
19 June 2025	YMG: Networking Event with YPC of ACFE (HK Chapter) and CPA Australia	N/A
26 June 2025	Hybrid Talk: Arbitrating in Times of Trade and Investment Wars	Yan Zhang
16 July 2025	Hybrid Talk: Arbitration & Technology: Utopia, Armageddon, or Ragnarok	David Huebner
7 August 2025	In-person Talk: Counting Down to Construction Adjudication In Hong Kong	Nicholas Turner, Donovan Ferguson and Glenn Haley
3 September 2025	Hybrid Talk: The English Arbitration Act 2005 Appeals in Arbitration: Comparison Between England and Hong Kong	Dr. Kyriaki Noussia, Dr. David Fong
12 September 2025	YMG Annual Conference 2025	Queenie Lau SC (Keynote)
17 September 2025	YMG: Fireside Chat with Professor Mark Feldman	Professor Mark Feldman
9 October 2025	Joint Talk with Society of Construction Law Hong Kong (Hybrid): The Limits of Adjectival Law: How Important Should Principle be in International Arbitration	David Streatfeild-James KC
9 October 2025	YMG: Japan Chapter: Interactive Workshop and Mock Trial on Procedural Issues	Yoshihiro Takatori (Opening Remarks)
23 October 2025	Ciarb (EAB) x Arbitral Women Diversity Toolkit	Louise Barrington & Mary Thomson
27 October 2025	Hybrid Talk: The Limits and Challenges of International Commercial Arbitration	Prof. Anselmo Reyes SC
20 November 2025	YMG: Navigating construction mediation for infrastructure projects in Hong Kong	Calvin Cheuk Peer Ho Richard Poon
24 November 2025	Ciarb East Asia Branch - Fellows & Members Gathering	-
8 December 2025	YMG: Japan Chapter – Annual Quiz Night	N/A

Year 2025 / 2026	Topic	Speakers
16 December 2025	Talk: Key Arbitration Updates in 2025	Bryan Fok, Fanghan Chen, Hugh Kam, Kelvin Cheong
14 January 2026	Hybrid Talk: Impact of sanctions on international arbitration	Calvin Koo, Genevieve Lam, Isuru Devendra, Felda Yeung
24 January 2026	YMG: Social Tennis & Networking with Hong Kong Law Society	N/A
6 February 2026	YMG: Developments and Trends in Shipping Arbitration	Mr Chris Howse and Captain Lee Fook Choon
12 February 2026	Hybrid Talk: Transformation of Arbitration Laws: the UK, HK, US and China and the UNCITRAL effect	Anthony Neoh KC, SC
10 March 2026	Ciarb (EAB) x ArbitralWomen Diversity Toolkit	Louise Barrington & Felda Yeung
5 March 2026	YMG: Joint Networking Drinks with ICC YAAF, YBC and Young ITA	N/A
18 March 2026	Ciarb East Asia Branch Annual Dinner	Guest Speaker - Neil Kaplan

The Chapters have also various events in their respective region.

Thank you David Luk and Felda Yeung for organising our events this year.

8. Regional & Chapter Development

The East Asia Branch continues to have strong support and enthusiasm from its members throughout the East Asia Region: Indonesia, Japan, Macau, Mainland China, Myanmar, the Philippines, South Korea, Taiwan and Vietnam. Local chapters / committees / convenors manage the affairs in each territory and regular communications and reports are sent to the East Asia Branch.

We appreciate that all our Chapters, like us, are volunteers. Various events, seminars and training courses have been held in the region over the past 12 months, and we thank those who have supported our activities in the region.

This past year has seen a fantastic continuation of enthusiasm and support across the region, and a number of training courses are scheduled already for this coming year.

Thank you very much, Glenn Haley for your fantastic job in conducting different training courses in different parts of the East Asia Branch.

9. Mainland China

The EAB collaborates with Wuhan Arbitration Commission for running a series of training course in Wuhan.

In September 2025, the EAB hosted “Introductory to Commercial Arbitration” course. The course was very well attended with over 80 participants and most of the participants have completed the course and become Associate Members.

In March/ April 2026, the China subcommittee rolled out the Module 1 course which has attracted over 70 candidates. Successful completion of this course will enable the candidates to become MCiarb.

To promote the Ciarb brand in the Mainland China, the EAB is developing initial plans for knowledge sharing sessions and seminars, in order to foster connection and relationship building with EAB members in mainland.

I would like to thank the China Subcommittee Chair Richard Leung, along with Mingchao Fan, Micky Yip and Charles Zhao for their valuable contribution.

10. Young Members Group (“YMG”)

YMG has had a wonderful year, with the YMG committee arranging a variety of events (including seminars, social events and its Annual Conference).

Mathew Briggs, Johnson Ng and the YMG Committee have done a great job for the YMG, with Mathew and Johnson asking me to specifically highlight:

- The YMG’s 6th Annual Conference was held in Hong Kong at HKIAC on 10 October 2025 and had participants from across East Asia, including Hong Kong, Korea, Japan, Taiwan, Macau, Vietnam and Indonesia.
- The ‘Practitioners Insight’ series continued from the previous year, with members continuing to have the opportunity to hear from leading individuals about their background and career path, along with their thought on matters relevant to YMG members.
- YMG increased the number of events in conjunction with young members divisions of various organisations, including the Hong Kong Law Society, Hong Kong Bar Association, ICC, ITA, Young ICCA, ACFE, CPA Australia and the British Chamber of Commerce. The YMG looks forward to helping members to expand their professional connections and networks.

Special thanks to YMG Co-Chairs Mathew Briggs and Johnson Ng for their continued hard work.

11. Vis East Moot

The Willem C. Vis (East) International Commercial Moot celebrated its 23rd year in 2026.

Vis East was held physically at the West Wing from 16 March 2026 to 20 March 2026.

Vis East had 176 successful team registrations within the deadline and 170 teams successfully submitted the written memoranda prior to the in-person oral arguments. Despite the flight disruptions in the Middle East, 160 teams took part in the oral arguments in Hong Kong.

This was another great year to showcase the strength of the arbitration community. Vis East had approx. 250 arbitrators review and rank written memoranda and ultimately over 500 arbitrators take part in Hong Kong in oral arguments.

All of this would not have been possible without Louise Barrington (Chair of Vis East and Director), Sherlin Tung (CEO), Maricel Somerville (COO) and Eric Ng for their continued dedication to Vis East.

Thank you also to Jennifer Wu for taking care of the East Asia Branch's relationship with the Vis East Moot (taking over from the respected Karen Mills).

12. Working with other institutions

The East Asia Branch acted as the supporting organisation for a number of events:

- a) Paris Arbitration Week 2026 - IDRC Roundtable: Individual Rights versus Geopolitical Sanctions: The Fridman Legacy on 26 March 2026
- b) Australian Disputes Centre's 40th Anniversary Conference on 27 March 2026.
- c) Hong Kong Arbitration Week (HKAW) 2025 by HKIAC from 19 - 24 October 2025.
- d) China Arbitration Week "Saudi Arabia's Evolving Arbitration Landscape: Legal Frameworks Enabling Sustainable Cross-border Investment and Effective Dispute Management" will be held on 19 September 2025.
- e) Hong Kong Legal Week 2025

13. Newsletter, Website and Social Media

The Newsletter is published quarterly. This year, the Newsletter featured recaps and articles contributed by authors from around the region, focusing on topics ranging from new developments in adjudication, transnational developments in international arbitration, updates on insurance arbitration in offshore jurisdictions, and pending developments in sports arbitration.

The East Asia Branch continues to maintain its website (www.ciarbasia.org) to provide a central hub for members to obtain information about the Branch and pending events, as well as access to recaps and photos from past events.

The EAB LinkedIn page has been a particular focus this year, and it has become a key driver of views, followers, and engagement regarding Branch events and activities. As of April 2026, the LinkedIn page has 2,327 followers, up from 1,874 last year, representing a 24% growth in followers in just one year. Followers of the LinkedIn page come from all different regions of Asia and Oceania, including Hong Kong, Singapore, India, Malaysia, and Australia. Members of the Branch are encouraged to follow the EAB LinkedIn page in order to obtain the latest information regarding activities of the Branch.

Thank you Eric Ng for managing this sub-committee and your contribution.

14. Chartered Institute Representation

The Branch continues to hold important positions within the Chartered Institute. Our former Branch Chair, Paul Barrett, represents the East Asia region on the Board of Trustees.

15. Development Business Plan 2025/ 2026

The East Asia Branch will continue to provide education, training, events, talks, workshops, and to build relations with universities and other professional bodies. We will also continue to support and collaborate with other arbitral bodies (locally and internationally) and organisations including government departments in the arbitration and ADR sphere.

We will explore ways to collaborate and develop partnerships with the business community with a view to broadening the membership. We will encourage further development of YMG activities, including the formation of additional YMGs in the Chapters, and also promote diversity and inclusion, in all its forms.

16. West Wing

I am also pleased to report that the East Asia Branch has continued to make use of its Units 305 and 307 at the Legal Hub of the West Wing of the Central Government's Office.

17. Vote of Thanks

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all committee members, subcommittee members, Chapter Convenors, co-opted members, guest speakers and all Branch members for their support and active participation in the past year.

The East Asia Branch is run by volunteers who give up their time, for which I am sincerely grateful.

In particular, I must thank our Treasurer John Cock, a long serving EAB Committee member, who has decided to step away from the committee. John Cock has been a great help to me last year, and has also been such a great ambassador for EAB.

Gina Leung
Branch Chair
22 April 2026