Kok Yee Keong

Partner

Asset Recovery, Restructuring and Insolvency

Construction and Engineering

Dispute Resolution

Real Estate



Biography

A consummate disputes lawyer, Yee Keong has acted in a variety of civil and commercial litigation matters at all levels of court, on matters such as ownership disputes, company disputes, contractual disputes, employment disputes, personal injury, torts, fraud, etc.

He acts for various major commercial landlords and Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs) and major managing agents, and advises on various landlords-and-tenants disputes, leasing terms, re-entry, compliance with the FTIC's Code of Conduct for Leasing of Retail Premises in Singapore (CoC), etc.

He acts for numerous instituional clients to pursue asset recovery or insolvency actions for debts owed, and is familiar with navigating creditors through the restructuring or insolvency of debtors, such as winding-up, bankruptcy, moratorium, scheme of arrangement and judicial management.

He has advised over 250 MCSTs Management Corporations (MCSTs), Managing Agents and subsidiary proprietors of various strata-titled developments (be it residential, commercial, retail, industrial or mixed used) on a variety of estate issues including BMSMA compliance, building defects, contractor disputes, etc.

Yee Keong is also a Legal Skills Instructor at the National University of Singapore (NUS), Faculty of Law, since 2016. He teaches the year-long module called Legal Analysis, Research and Communication (LARC). It comprises a class of about 12 to 14 first-year students, two lessons a week, to develop their develop analytical skills, research skills and communication skills (written and oral), including memorials and moots.

He has also authored numerous practical guides for the public to navigate the law.

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Experience

Civil and Commercial Litigation:

- Disputes on ownership of properties (e.g. houses, bank accounts, company shares, chattels) that are jointly-held or on trust or prior representations made.
- Company or shareholders disputes, e.g. breach of director's duties, forgeries, true ownership of shares, unauthorised use of funds, unauthorised communication with clientele or vendors, etc.
- Acting for various claimants or defendants in separate High Court actions in respect of loss of shares worth several million dollars due to fraud involving the pledge of these shares.
- Acting for service residence operator to defend against owner's claim for termination of the 20-year management agreement, with several million dollars in management fees at stake.
- Lead Counsel in successfully defeating a civil claim in High Court, and appeal to the Appellate Division, for unrecovered costs of prior divorce proceedings, by invoking the Maryani prohibition rule, issue estoppel, extended doctrine of res judicata, and no entitlement to 100% full indemnity on costs but only taxation on indemnity basis: see CGG v CGH [2021] SGHC(A) 7.
- Acting for parents and student (a minor) against a school for negligence and breach of contract. Lead counsel in successfully resisting interlocutory application for gag order in GCP (a minor) (suing by her father and litigation representative, GCQ) and others v GCS [2020] SGDC 122.
- Advising on employment, e.g. Employment Act, Retirement and Re-employment Act, restraint of trade clauses, conclusive evidence clauses, reasonable endeavors clauses, employees' collective agreement, implied terms, incorporation of terms, breach of implied term of mutual trust and confidence, etc.

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Experience

Asset Recovery, Restructuring and Insolvency:

- Advised and acted for creditors and debtors on enforcement actions, insolvency and restructuring options, such as scheme of arrangement, judicial management, liquidation, bankruptcy, etc.
- On the panel of lawyers for the Singapore Government for the provision of legal services in relation to debt / property recovery.
- Lead Counsel in successfully obtaining a carveout for landlord from the moratorium orders sought by tenant under Section 65 of the Insolvency, Restructuring and Dissolution Act 2018 ("IRDA"). Milestone decision of the Court in respect of corporate group restructuring, balancing of the proprietary interests of landlords, and relevance of security deposit: see Re Picotin Pte Ltd [2024] SGHC 156
- Acted for a REIT in its ~SGD 108 million claim against the Hyflux Group for premature termination of long-term leases, which court proceedings involve pre-scheme moratoriums, parallel schemes of arrangement, judicial management, and winding-up.
- Advised a creditor in its claim against Dimbulah Coffee (S) Pte Ltd, which had applied to Court for a pre-scheme moratorium.
- Acted for an institutional client in its multi-million claims against a construction company and its individual guarantor (the shareholder and director), which involve matters of company winding-up, individual voluntary arrangement, mareva injunction, COVID-19 Assessor determination, and applications to lift the COVID-19 moratorium and leave to continue proceedings against the company under winding-up.
- Acted for applicants in SK Engineering & Construction Co Ltd v Conchubar Aromatics Ltd and another appeal [2017] SGCA 51, a landmark decision on schemes of arrangement on novel issues of law, e.g. discounts on creditors' votes, certainty of schemes and assessing creditors' relatedness.
- Registration of commonwealth and Hong Kong judgments in Singapore High Court for enforcement.
- Enforcement of share charge in suspended counter on SGX-ST Catalist board.

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Experience

Asset Recovery, Restructuring and Insolvency:

- Advised on successful private restructuring of a company with ~S$1.4 million debts.
- Obtained summary judgment of over S$6 million for a creditor under a convertible loan agreement, and enforcement of judgment, including examination of judgment debtor (EJD), writ and seizure (WSS) of sale of shares and court auction, winding-up proceedings, representations to ACRA, engaging auditors to trace assets and directors' misfeasance, etc.
- Routine debt collection (e.g. demand letters, court proceedings and enforcement actions) for major landlords, REITs, a leading integrated private healthcare provider in Asia, an accredited registrar and classification society with global operations in more than 100 countries, etc.

Construction, Engineering and Infrastructure:

- Acted for numerous MCSTs and unit owners on construction defects – see MCST matters below.
- Acted for a replacement main contractor to successfully stay court proceedings by former main contractor in favour of parallel arbitration proceedings by employer, and subsequent successful strike-out of the court proceedings due to arbitral findings.
- Acted for individual landowners on construction of houses, e.g. main contractor failed to complete ~S$2.55 million works, damage to neighbouring land, and encroachment of boundary lines.
- Advised on breaches of joint venture agreement between companies in relation to a construction project.
- Acted for builder to restrain the unconscionable call of performance bond by employer.
- Advised main contractor in the termination of contract by employer and defects liability period.
- Acting in proceedings under the Building and Construction Industry Security of Payment Act 2004 (SOPA). Projects ranges from Design-Build-Own-Operate projects, executive condominiums, school buildings, government-linked projects, etc. Claims include original contract works, variation works, liquidated damages, fit-for-purpose obligations, changes due to authorities, etc. Achieved Adjudication Determinations of up to ~S$4.5 million or full dismissal on jurisdiction. Example: BDM Pte Ltd v BDN Pte Ltd [2020] SCAdjR 480.

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Experience

Landlords and Tenants:

- Advises and acts for various major commercial landlords, REITs and managing agents, in a gamut of tenancy matters, e.g. review of leases, rental arrears, breach of tenancy terms, option to renew, reinstatement, premature termination and re-entry and forfeiture, compliance with the FTIC's Code of Conduct for Leasing of Retail Premises in Singapore (CoC), etc.
- Advised a tenant in its successful premature termination of lease and substantial reduction of the landlord's initial claim for ~S$280,000.
- Advised a statutory board on retrospective claim for unauthorised subletting after a court judgment found a sub-tenancy arrangement between lessee and occupier.
- Acted for an embassy to defend against a landlord's claim for damage to tenanted ambassador's residence.
- Advising on licensing agreement for the interfacing of 2 commercial buildings in CBD.
- Advised various tenants on wrongful conduct of landlord including breach of quiet enjoyment.
- Advised landlord on severe no-fault damage to the leased premises resulting in substantial areas being untenantable and the tenant's obligations owed to tenant under the compromised lease.
- Advising landlords and tenants on the COVID-19 (Temporary Measures) Act 2020, including the notification for relief, assessor determination, passing on property tax rebate, and rental relief framework for SMEs.

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Experience

MCSTs and Managing Agents:

- Advised or acted for over 200 MCSTs of residential, commercial, retail, industrial and mixed developments.
- Routine debt collection for MCSTs against subsidiary proprietors, e.g. demand letters, MCST Charges, exercising MCST's power of sale, court proceedings for judgment and enforcing the judgments including bankruptcy and winding-up.
- Advising MCSTs on estate issues, e.g. unapproved renovation works, no proper handover of records by developer and previous managing agent, potential breach of duties by previous council members, privatisation levy, common property, dealing with contractors, breach of by-laws or BMSMA, etc.
- Acted for a MCST in its High Court suit against builder, architect and engineer on their use of monolithic tempered glass for balustrades despite its susceptibility to spontaneous shattering. The statutory regulation requiring laminated glass was only introduced after the building was completed. The Building and Construction Authority (BCA) has filed an AEIC to weigh in.
- Acted for a MCST in its High Court suit against the developer, main contractor and subcontractors on outstanding rectification works under various warranty agreements.
- Acting for a MCST in relation to disputes with Main Contractor on a settlement agreement concerning various defects to the development such as sunken soil areas in the development and debonded titles in the water features.
- Acted for a MCST in claims against neighbouring MCST for encroachment, soil erosion and damage to separating retaining wall.
- Acted for a subsidiary proprietor of multiple levels in a development in its High Court suit against the architect for non-compliance with the Fire Code 2002 due to lack of smoke stop lobbies at the exit staircase of the building, as well as advising on legal options against the MCST for the same.
- Successful settlement of court claims by subsidiary proprietor against Managing Agent for water damage from sprinklers allegedly being left open for excessive period after fire was extinguished.
- Acted for Managing Agent in claims against rogue employee who embezzled estate monies.

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Experience

Personal Injury and Property Damage (PIPD):

- On the panel of lawyers for the Singapore Government for the provision of legal services in relation to motor accidents
- Member of the PIPD Committee of The Law Society of Singapore 2019 - 2025
- Successfully acted for claimants where the defendant's insurer repudiated policy liability.
- Instructed by an Embassy to advise and act in civil claim for its national who was injured in a group attack where perpetrators face parallel criminal proceedings.
- Achieved ~S$1.7 million settlement for an employee injured in the Middle East, with resulting disabilities.
- Successful dependency claims for parents of deceased in a fatal motor accident where driver faced parallel criminal proceedings.
- Achieved ~S$100,000 settlement of a motor accident court action at 3-year impasse within 8 months.
- Advised the insurer of a main contractor in a government project, on the ~S$330,000 claim by a passer-by who had tripped and fallen due to uneven surface of a public footpath.
- Private Prosecution (Magistrate's Complaint) for victim against perpetrator for causing hurt and assault.
- Advised and acted for a motor insurer to defend its insureds, e.g. handling claims, negotiation, court mediation, trials on liability and assessment of damages hearings.

Others:

- Appointed amicus curiae in Tan Song Cheng v PP and another appeal [2021] SGHC 138, which is a watershed judgment on sentencing for tax evasion offences, where the Honourable Justice See Kee Oon recorded his appreciation to Yee Keong "for diligently preparing an objective, detailed and comprehensive analysis from which [the Judge] derived considerable assistance".
- Volunteer Defence Counsel, Criminal Legal Aid Scheme (CLAS), Law Society Pro Bono Services. Handled drugs offences, unlicensed moneylending, voluntarily causing hurt, theft and disorderly behaviour, etc.
- Volunteer lawyer at community legal clinics, dispensing free legal advice on bread-and-butter issues to residents, e.g. debt recovery, employment, family law, wills and probate, motor accidents, neighbour disputes, criminal offences, etc.

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Awards & Accolades

- Rising Star Partner, Restructuring and Insolvency – IFLR1000 2026
- LexisNexis 40 Under 40 Southeast Asia List 2026
- ALB Rising Stars Singapore 2025
- Singapore's 18 most influential lawyers under 40 by the Singapore Business Review in 2021
- Best Feature Article by a Young Lawyer 2021, Law Gazette, Law Society of Singapore
- NUSS Medal for Outstanding Achievement 2014; Ella Cheong Intellectual Property Scholarship 2012
- Moots: ECC-SAL Int'll Moot 2016 (Singapore) – Semi-Finalist Team; William C. Vis Int'll Commercial Arbitration Moot 2014 (Vienna) – Honourable Mention Oralist; GNLU Int'll Moot 2013 (Gujarat) – Best Oralist and Champion Team; 13th D. M. Harish Memorial International Moot (Mumbai) 2012 – 13th Speaker & 10th Team; Advocacy Cup 2012 (Singapore) – Semi-Finalist; Red Cross Int'll Humanitarian Law Moot 2011 (Hong Kong) – Semi-Finalist Team; etc.

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Publications

- The Straits Times' article, "Condo by-laws cannot limit owners' right to rent out units: BCA", 26 June 2026
- The Straits Times' article, "Geylang condo owners, management at odds over foreign worker housing ban", 17 June 2026
- The Straits Times' article, "Condo owners may lose their apartment for owing maintenance fees", 17 May 2026
- The Straits Times' article, "Businessman's assets frozen to cover remaining $7.6m of $20m divorce settlement", 16 February 2026
- E-briefing, "Freeze! Don't move (your assets)!", 9 February 2026
- Lianhe Zaobao's article, "Knowing the Law Through Real Cases: Don't Panic When an Unreasonable Landlord Withholds Your Deposit – Go to Court Only If Negotiations Fail", 1 February 2026. English version (unofficial translation - for reference only), click here
- CNA938's Evening Show, "No proof, no payout: lawyers' advice on construction-related disputes", 8 October 2025
- CNA's article, "Should interior designers be licensed? Some say regulation needed for renovation industry", 16 September 2024
- Legal Upate, "Keep Calm and Carry On Restructuring (While Paying Rent)", 21 June 2024:
  (featured on Singapore Law Watch > Commentaries > Judgments, on 25 June 2024: see https://www.singaporelawwatch.sg/Commentaries)
- Part of the Editorial Team for the practitioner textbook, Chow Kok Fong, Security of Payments and Construction Adjudication (LexisNexis, 3rd Ed, 2022)
- E-briefing, "Second bite of the cherry on legal costs?", 26 August 2021:
  (featured on Singapore Law Watch > Commentaries > Judgments, on 1 September 2021:
  see https://www.singaporelawwatch.sg/Commentaries)
- Lianhe Wanbao's article on tenancy matters, "富太租户锁大门扼"金"沙发 女屋主进不去两次报警", 28 June 2021
- The Singapore Law Gazette, "Perhaps It is Time to Consider a Spandeck Approach to Developing Sentencing Frameworks", Featured Article, May 2021:
  see https://lawgazette.com.sg/feature/perhaps-it-is-time-to-consider-a-spandeck-approach/
  (Best Feature Article by a Young Lawyer 2021, Law Gazette, Law Society of Singapore; cited in Tang, Hong and Lim, "Sentencing Frameworks for Consistency" (2024) 36 SAcLJ 380, 5 Aug 2025)

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Publications

- E-briefing: August 2020 must-knows for commercial landlords- Keeping abreast with recent amendments to the COVID-19 (Temporary Measures) Act and its (Rental and Related Measures) Regulations 2020, 12 August 2020
- The Straits Times' article, "Court rejects school's bid to seal case file over girl's alleged sexual assault", 27 May 2020
- E-briefing: Summarising the Covid-19 (Temporary Measures) Act 2020 for Commercial Landlords, 10 April 2020
- E-briefing: The Final Phase of Singapore's Efforts to Modernise and Strengthen Its Corporate Rehabilitation and Debt Restructuring Regime, 15 October 2019
- The Singapore Law Gazette, "Demystifying the Assessment of Damages for Personal Injury Claims", Featured Article, Oct 2019: see https://lawgazette.com.sg/feature/demystifying-assessment-of-damages-personal-injury-claims/
  (Ranked Top 10 Most Read Articles of 2024 on the Singapore Law Gazette)
- Asia Law Network, "Strategic use of Offers to Settle (OTS) to negotiate motor accident claims", 26 Jul 2019
- E-briefing, "What to do in a motor accident? A comprehensive practical guide to motor accident claims in Singapore", 8 Jul 2019:
  (adopted as further reading for the Legal Aid Bureau Practitioner's Guide, Chapter 1, Accident & Personal Injury Claims, October 2021, page 13:
  see https://lab.mlaw.gov.sg/files/Chapter1-Accident-Personal-Injury-Claims.pdf)
- E-briefing: Open, says me! Basic Guide for Re-entry by Landlords in Singapore, 2 November 2018
- E-briefing: Whose scheme is it anyway? The law on schemes of arrangement in Singapore after SK Engineering Construction Co Ltd v Conchubar Aromatics Ltd and another appeal [2017] SGCA 51, 28 September 2017

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Professional Memberships | Directorships

- Member, Inquiry Panel of the Law Society of Singapore (2026-2028)
- Accredited Mediator of the Singapore Mediation Centre (SMC)
- Legal Skills Programme Instructor, National University of Singapore (NUS), Law Faculty, since 2016: https://law.nus.edu.sg/people/yee-keong-kok/
- Member, Community Legal Clinics (CLC) Committee 2020 - 2025, Law Society Pro Bono Services
- Member, PIPD Committee 2019 - 2025, The Law Society of Singapore
- Member, Singapore Academy of Law
- Member, The Law Society of Singapore

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