



MARITIME ARBITRATION IN NUMBERS: LONDON REBOUNDS AS SINGAPORE AND HONG KONG MAINTAIN MOMENTUM

Arbitration has long played a central role in the resolution of disputes within the international shipping industry. The latest figures from the world's leading arbitration centres provide a useful indication of where parties are choosing to resolve maritime disputes and how global patterns continue to evolve.

This seventh edition of HFW's Maritime Arbitration in Numbers report looks at maritime arbitration activity in London, Singapore and Hong Kong, based on the 2025 statistics from the main maritime bodies¹ in those jurisdictions. The latest data shows a strong rebound for London following a dip recorded in 2024, continued resilience in Singapore, and significant growth in Hong Kong's maritime arbitration caseload.

Taken together, the figures suggest that while Asian arbitral centres continue to strengthen their position, London remains comfortably ahead in terms of overall maritime arbitration activity.

This report should be read alongside our explanation of the statistics in the linked document: [THE MARITIME ARBITRATION UNIVERSE IN NUMBERS: MORE ON THE STATISTICS](#).

A recap of last year's report

Based on statistics recorded in 2024 by the London Maritime Arbitrators Association (**LMAA**), the London

Court of International Arbitration (**LCIA**) and the International Chamber of Commerce (**ICC**), our previous report² identified that approximately 1,818 new maritime arbitrations were seated in London in 2024. This represented an almost 7% decrease compared with 2023, when we calculated the total number of new maritime arbitrations in London to be approximately 1,949.

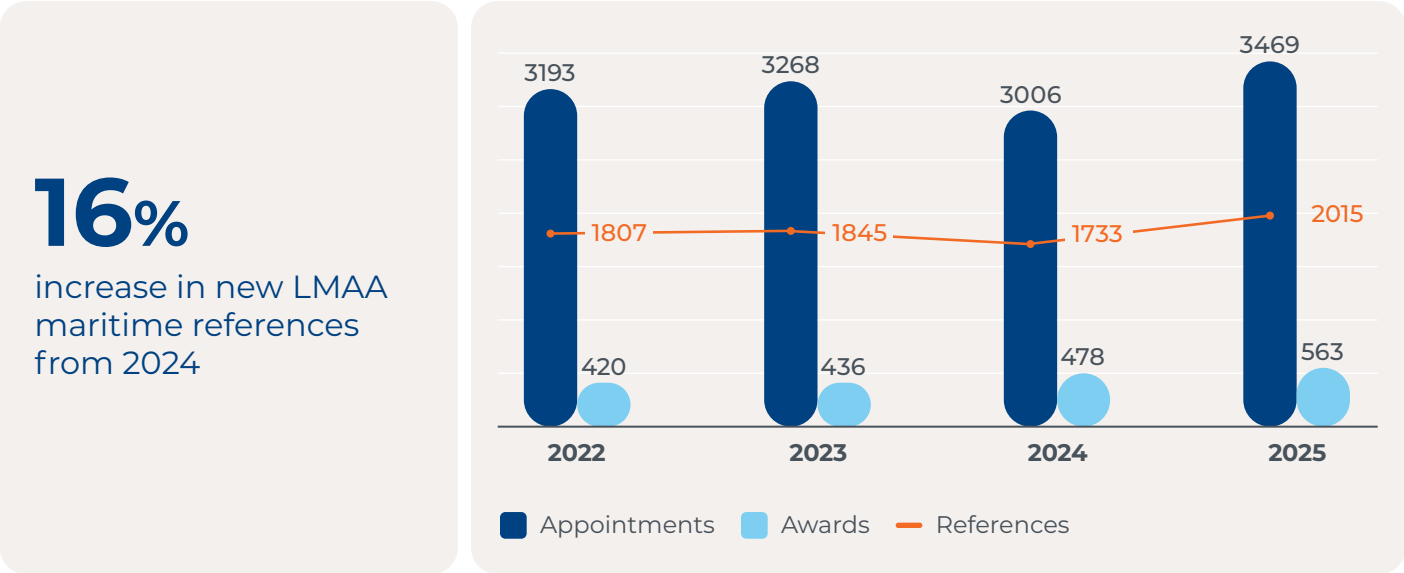
Singapore, by contrast, recorded a particularly strong year in 2024, with 168 maritime-related arbitrations across the Singapore International Arbitration Centre (**SIAC**), the Singapore Chamber of Maritime Arbitration (**SCMA**) and the ICC. That figure represented roughly 9% of London's maritime transport arbitration caseload for the same year, compared with around 7% in 2023 and 5% in 2022, continuing Singapore's steady growth as the leading Asian alternative to London for resolving maritime disputes.

Hong Kong also recorded increased maritime arbitration activity in 2024. Although the Hong Kong International Arbitration Centre's (**HKCIAC**) maritime caseload fell slightly as a proportion of total filings (from 16% in 2023 to 12% in 2024), the absolute number of maritime cases remained above 2021 and 2022 levels. Meanwhile, reported arbitral appointments at the Hong Kong Maritime Arbitration Group (**HKMAG**) rose from 107 in 2023 to 146 in 2024, an increase of approximately 36%.

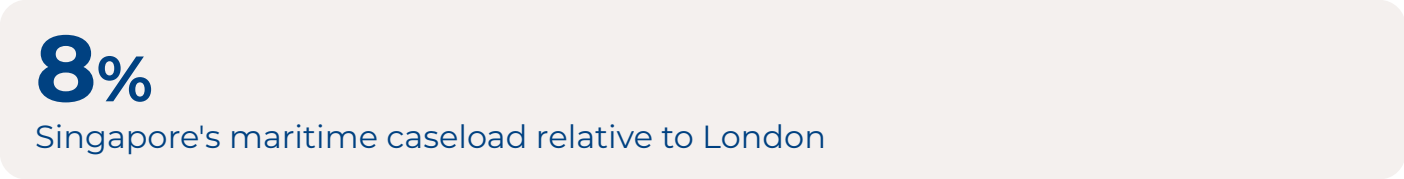
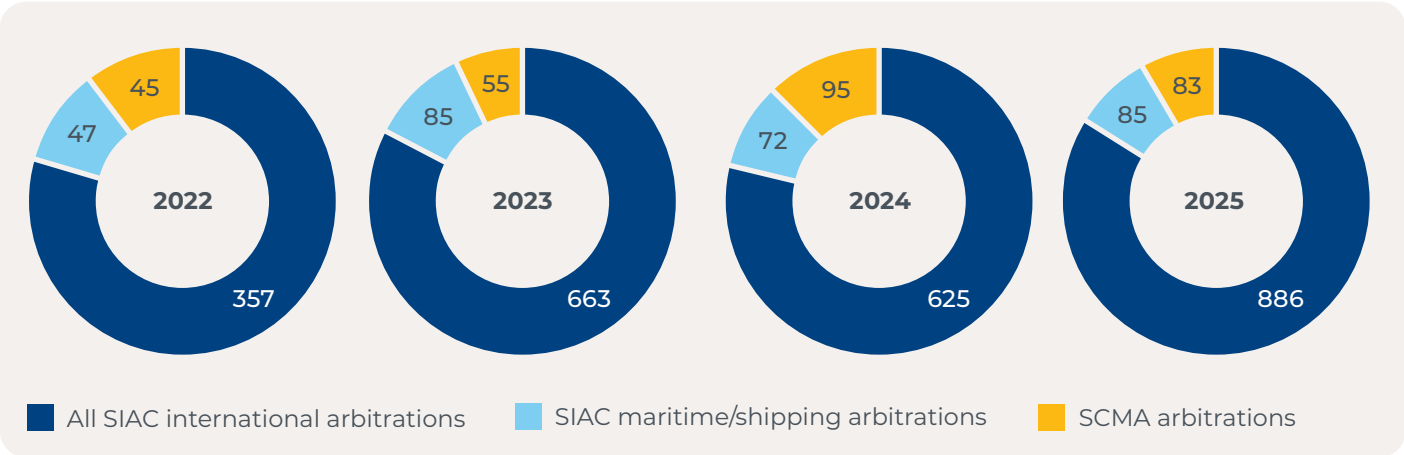
¹ For the purposes of this publication, reference to an arbitral body shall include arbitration institutions, arbitration associations and other organisations and entities involved in maritime arbitration, whether as an administrative body or appointing authority.

² <https://www.hfw.com/insights/maritime-arbitration-in-numbers-london-leads-asia-surges-and-new-hubs-emerge/>

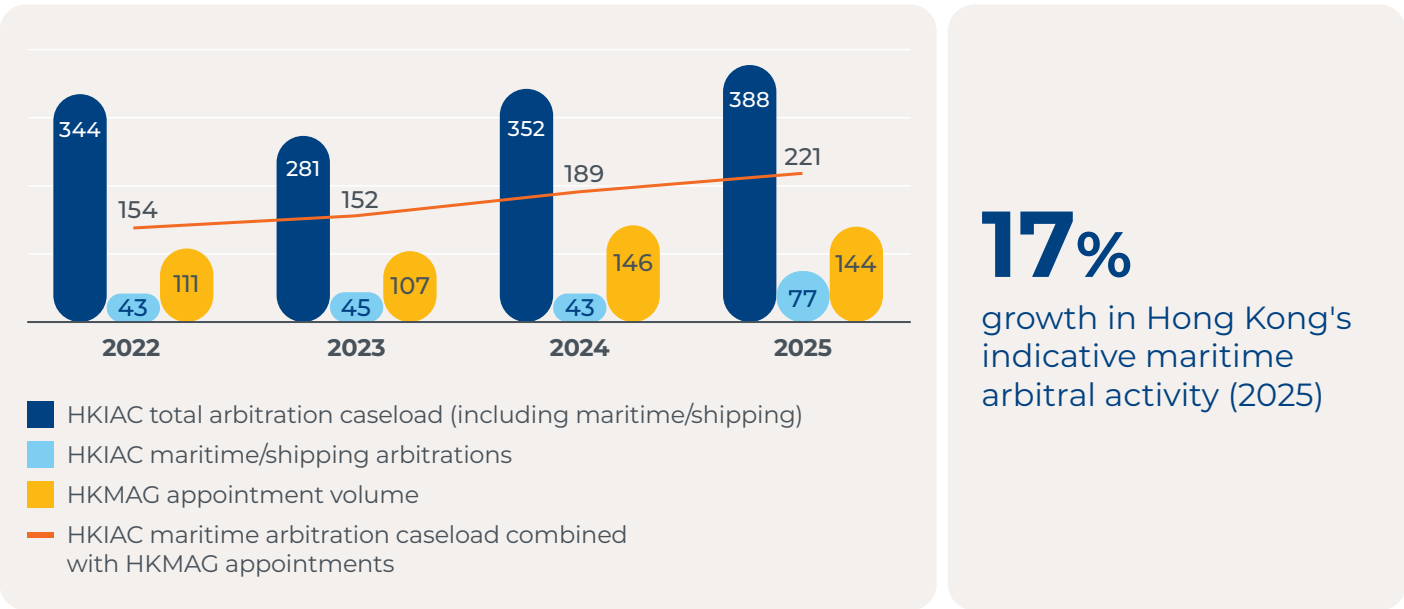
LMAA statistics



Singapore arbitration statistics



Hong Kong arbitration statistics



The latest maritime arbitration numbers for 2025

London – A significant rebound in references

The LMAA remains the most popular maritime arbitration body, consistently recording strong figures. Last year was no exception, with the LMAA recording approximately 2,015 new individual maritime references in 2025, representing a 16% year-on-year increase from 2024 and a 9% increase compared with 2023. This is the highest annual reference figure recorded by the LMAA in more than a decade. Total appointments also increased materially, reaching 3,469 in 2025; a 15% increase from 2024 and a 6% increase over the two-year period since 2023.³

As noted in previous reports, the LMAA does not administer arbitrations directly and relies on members reporting appointments. Some arbitrations conducted under LMAA Terms may therefore go unreported. The marginal decline recorded between 2023 and 2024 may in part reflect under-reporting rather than a true reduction in activity. The 2025 figures nevertheless indicate sustained demand for London-seated maritime arbitration.⁴

At the time of writing, the LCIA's 2025 casework report has not yet been published and corresponding statistics are therefore unavailable. To provide context as to the LCIA's contribution to London's overall maritime arbitration caseload, we instead refer to LCIA 2024 statistics (with the LCIA's agreement), being the most recent publicly available data. In 2024, 29% of referrals under the LCIA's rules fell within the Transport and Commodities sector, representing approximately 92 of the 318 referrals received. As London was the chosen seat in 89% of LCIA arbitrations, this suggests that approximately 82 transport and commodities arbitrations were seated in London in 2024.⁵ These figures have been included for context only and have not been treated as 2025 statistics.

At the time of writing, ICC statistics for London are not yet publicly available and have therefore been excluded from the 2025 statistical analysis. Given the ICC's relatively modest global maritime caseload (only 3 maritime arbitrations seated in London in 2024), year-on-year comparisons are of limited significance as indicators of broader market trends.

Using the most recent available statistics for the LMAA and LCIA, London is estimated to have recorded approximately 2,100 maritime related arbitration references in 2025. This total comprises approximately 2,015 new maritime references recorded by the LMAA in 2025, and an indicative 82 transport and commodities arbitrations seated in London under the LCIA rules, based on the 2024 LCIA statistics. Although the LCIA figure cannot be directly compared with other 2025 statistics, it provides useful context for London's broader arbitration market. Against the approximately 1,818 maritime arbitrations identified for 2024, the 2,100 figure suggests a year-on-year increase of roughly 15%, driven predominantly by a strong rebound in LMAA activity.

Singapore – Sustained activity in 2025

In 2025, the SIAC recorded its second-highest arbitration caseload, with 886 new cases, approximately 89% of which were international in nature. Of these, 85 related to maritime and shipping, representing approximately 10% of the overall caseload.⁶ This marks a recovery from the slight reduction to 72 maritime cases recorded in 2024, and a return to levels broadly consistent with 2023, when 85 maritime cases were also filed. However, as a proportion of the SIAC's overall caseload, maritime disputes fell slightly from approximately 13% in 2023 to 11.5% in 2024 and 10% in 2025, reflecting the broader growth in the SIAC's total arbitration activity.

The SCMA recorded 83 case references in 2025 across a variety of maritime categories.⁷ This follows a record 2024, when the SCMA reported 95 new references, which represented an increase of approximately 73% compared with 2023 and more than double the Chamber's five-year average caseload. Although referrals fell from 95 to 83 in 2025, activity remains substantially above historical norms.

LCIA and ICC data for Singapore are not included in the 2025 figures. For context, the ICC recorded 1 Singapore-seated maritime arbitration in 2024, while the 2 Singapore-seated LCIA arbitrations reported that year could not be confirmed as maritime-related and were therefore excluded. Given the very small number of Singapore-seated maritime arbitrations recorded by the LCIA and ICC each year, we have not included this data in our statistical analysis for 2025.

Taken together, the SIAC and SCMA recorded 168 maritime arbitrations in 2025. This is identical to the combined figure of SIAC, SCMA and ICC arbitrations in 2024.⁸ Singapore therefore appears to have maintained the elevated level of maritime arbitration activity achieved in recent years.

3 <https://lmaa.london/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/Statistics-2025.pdf>
4 The LMAA have confirmed directly to us that the vast majority of their recorded case references have London as the seat of the arbitration but are not able to confirm that all references are seated in London.
5 lcaa.org/media/download.aspx?MediaId=1045
6 <https://siac.org.sg/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/SIAC-Annual-Report-2025.pdf>
7 scma.org.sg/assets/aef9bafa-8dcl-49d9-9fc8-135e9730de7c.pdf
8 SIAC: 72 maritime-related arbitrations; SCMA: 95 maritime arbitrations; ICC: 1 maritime-related arbitration seated in Singapore.



On a comparable basis, Singapore's maritime arbitration caseload in 2025 represents approximately 8% of London's estimated total maritime arbitrations. This is based on Singapore recording a combined 168 maritime arbitrations across SIAC and SCMA in 2025, against an estimated total of approximately 2,100 maritime arbitrations in London for the same period. This represents only a marginal change compared with 2024 and 2023, when Singapore's maritime caseload was equivalent to approximately 9% and 7% of London's maritime caseload respectively, suggesting a broadly consistent proportional relationship between the two jurisdictions.

Hong Kong – Record HKIAC maritime share as overall caseload grows

In 2025, HKMAG, Hong Kong's specialist maritime arbitration body, maintained the high levels of appointments seen in 2024, with 144 reported appointments, compared with 146 in 2024.⁹ Meanwhile, a total of 582 cases were submitted to the HKIAC in 2025, including 388 arbitration references. Of the registered cases, 19.9% were reported to be maritime disputes or disputes arising from the maritime sector. Applying that percentage proportionately to the arbitration caseload indicates that approximately 77 arbitration references were maritime in nature. Maritime disputes therefore represented a significant component of the HKIAC's arbitration activity in 2025, second only to Corporate and Shareholder Disputes (23.6%), with 97% of all arbitrations commenced during the year seated in Hong Kong.

This latest HKIAC statistic represents a noticeable increase on previous years. Maritime disputes accounted

for 12% of registered HKIAC cases in 2024 and 16% in 2023, equating to an estimated 43 and 45 maritime arbitrations respectively when those percentages are applied proportionately to the arbitration caseload in each year. The 2025 figures therefore represent both the highest number of estimated maritime arbitrations, and the highest maritime share of the HKIAC's overall caseload in recent years.

Although the HKIAC and HKMAG employ different reporting methodologies meaning their statistics cannot be combined to produce a definitive measure of total maritime arbitral activity, considered together they provide a useful indication of maritime arbitral activity in Hong Kong. Viewed in this way, the combined volume of HKIAC maritime arbitrations and HKMAG appointments shows a clear upward trajectory over the past five years, rising from 142 in 2021 to 221 in 2025. This represents overall growth of approximately 56%, including a significant year-on-year increase of 17% between 2024 and 2025.

The increase in maritime disputes is particularly noteworthy given Hong Kong's position as the leading arbitral seat for PRC-related disputes. A key factor underpinning its attractiveness is the Arrangement Concerning Mutual Assistance in Court-ordered Interim Measures, which enables parties in eligible Hong Kong-seated arbitrations to seek asset preservation and other interim relief from PRC courts.¹⁰ Hong Kong remains the only arbitral seat outside Mainland China to benefit from this mechanism, making it especially attractive for disputes involving Chinese counterparties or assets.

The LMAA's figures show clear growth, not only recovering from the slight dip seen in 2024 but also returning to and exceeding previous levels not seen since 2014, underscoring the continued strength and demand for LMAA and London-seated maritime arbitration.

Commentary

The 2025 statistics reinforce London's position as the leading global centre for maritime arbitration. The LMAA's figures show clear growth, not only recovering from the slight dip seen in 2024 but also returning to and exceeding previous levels not seen since 2014, underscoring the continued strength and demand for LMAA and London-seated maritime arbitration. Whilst at the time of writing 2025 statistics from the LCIA remain unavailable, based on the most recent available data, transport and commodities disputes continue to form a meaningful proportion of LCIA casework, reflecting its contribution to London's wider arbitration market.

The LMAA has observed that caseload levels appear to fluctuate, at least in part, in response to broader geopolitical conditions and the health of freight markets. Historically, appointment numbers have tended to be relatively high in the aftermath of financial crises, ease during periods of weaker market conditions and relative geopolitical stability, and to rise again during periods of heightened global disruption, such as the Coronavirus pandemic and recent geopolitical conflicts, which have also coincided with stronger freight market conditions. This pattern is consistent with the view that international commercial arbitration is, to some extent, countercyclical, with disputes (and therefore demand for arbitration) increasing during periods of economic and political uncertainty.

Legislative developments

The Arbitration Act 2025, which came into force on 1 August 2025, also appears to have strengthened London's attractiveness as an arbitral seat. The reforms, including clearer rules on governing law, enhanced early dismissal mechanisms for weak claims, and strengthened disclosure obligations, contribute to maintaining London's position as a modern and procedurally robust arbitration forum. Notably, both the LMAA¹¹ and LCIA¹² have launched consultations on updates to their respective procedural terms, prompted not only by the Arbitration Act 2025

reforms but also by growing user demand for greater procedural and cost efficiency, enhanced tribunal powers and improved transparency, balanced against the need to maintain arbitral confidentiality. The consultations are not intended to overhaul frameworks that are already well established and proven to successfully support London's leading position in maritime arbitration, but rather to refine and modernise them, future-proofing the regimes against technological developments and emerging risks.

In a similar wave of legislative reform across leading arbitration seats, and presumably responding at least in part to English law developments, both Singapore and Hong Kong have initiated recent reviews of their arbitration frameworks. In 2024, Singapore initiated a comprehensive review of its international arbitration regime and the International Arbitration Act 1994 of Singapore (IAA), commissioning the Singapore International Dispute Resolution Academy (SIDRA) to undertake a study alongside public consultation.¹³ Likewise, in September 2025, Hong Kong announced legislative reforms to its Arbitration Ordinance (Cap. 609), aimed at maintaining Hong Kong's competitive positioning.¹⁴

Key reform objectives in both jurisdictions reflect recent English Arbitration Act developments, with broad themes of improving procedural efficiency and legal certainty, including issues of governing law, as well as an overall review of arbitral frameworks. Singapore's consultation also expressly addresses appeal rights and summary disposal powers and related procedural mechanisms¹⁵, whereas Hong Kong's review is stated to focus more broadly on matters including scope of arbitral disputes, tribunal powers and jurisdiction, court powers, and the use of artificial intelligence in arbitration.¹⁶

What is apparent is that these reviews and reforms are part of broader strategies to strengthen international arbitration regimes by aligning with international best practice, increasing attractiveness and maintaining competitive positioning as leading global forums.

9 As most disputes handled by HKMAG proceed on an ad hoc basis, comprehensive statistics remain difficult to obtain. HKMAG records appointments reported by members, rather than the number of arbitrations it administers. Its figures cannot therefore be directly compared or combined with HKIAC case statistics or accurately compared with other jurisdictions.

10 https://www.doj.gov.hk/en/mainland_and_macao/pdf/arbitration_interim_e.pdf

11 The proposals were discussed during a seminar titled 'LMAA Terms 2026 – what you need to know' as part of London International Disputes Week in June 2026.

12 <https://www.lcia.org/media/download.aspx?MediaId=1077>

13 [MinLaw Seeks Feedback on Singapore's International Arbitration Regime and the International Arbitration Act 1994](https://www.doj.gov.hk/en/community_engagement/press/20251117_pr1.html)

14 https://www.doj.gov.hk/en/community_engagement/press/20251117_pr1.html

15 [Review of the Singapore International Arbitration Act \(2024\) | SIDRA | Singapore International Dispute Resolution Academy](https://www.doj.gov.hk/en/community_engagement/press/20251117_pr1.html)

16 https://www.doj.gov.hk/en/community_engagement/press/20251117_pr1.html; P2025111700488_520463_1_1763382266775.pdf

Singapore's growing influence

The impact of such strategies is particularly evident in Singapore, which has further consolidated its position as the leading Asian centre for maritime arbitration through a combination of strong caseload volumes and a series of profile-raising events and activities, including hosting the International Congress of Maritime Arbitrators (ICMA XXIII) in March 2026. This represents a significant reputational milestone, underscoring Singapore's ambition to rival London as a trusted platform for maritime law and a centre of thought leadership in maritime dispute resolution.

The SIAC's 2025 figures clearly demonstrate continued strength in maritime and trade-related disputes, reflecting Singapore's established reputation for efficiency, neutrality and strong institutional support as well as the SIAC's growing prominence not only as a regional maritime arbitration centre but increasingly as a global cross-border hub, with SIAC users spanning 79 jurisdictions in 2025. Viewed together with the SCMA's consistently strong caseload and the ongoing development of specialised maritime arbitration procedures, including the expansion of cross-border frameworks through strategic cooperation agreements, and procedural advancements relating to digitalisation and enforcement, these trends indicate that, while volumes remain below those of London, Singapore continues to successfully consolidate its position as a compelling forum for high-value, complex maritime disputes, and as the leading arbitration seat in Asia.

This is consistent with research undertaken by Queen Mary University of London (QMUL) and White & Case LLP; their 2025 International Arbitration Survey ranks Singapore as the second most preferred arbitral seat globally, behind London, and the SIAC's Arbitration Rules as the third most preferred worldwide, after the ICC and HKIAC rules.¹⁷ Although the survey is not maritime-specific, the findings align with HFW's maritime arbitration analysis, in which London, Singapore and Hong Kong emerge as the three most preferred arbitration seats.

Hong Kong's strengthening reputation

Hong Kong similarly continues to strengthen its position, with the latest HKIAC figures particularly notable given Hong Kong's rise in the QMUL International Arbitration Survey ranking. The 2025 data suggests that Hong Kong's growing international status is increasingly reflected in maritime arbitration activity as well, suggesting stronger competition between the two jurisdictions for maritime disputes.

From a Hong Kong perspective, three structural factors are likely to continue driving this trend. First, the ability to obtain interim relief from Mainland Chinese courts in support of eligible Hong Kong-seated arbitrations remains a unique and highly material advantage. Secondly, Hong Kong's pro-arbitration judiciary, together with tribunal powers to grant interim measures, supports efficient case management and effective enforcement. Thirdly, Hong Kong offers a high degree of procedural familiarity for maritime users, with HKMAG terms closely modelled on the LMAA framework, reducing the practical and procedural adjustments required when choosing an Asia-based seat instead of London.

Hong Kong is also increasingly positioning itself as a broader dispute resolution hub, rather than solely an arbitration centre. The establishment of the International Organization for Mediation (IOMed)¹⁸ in 2025 reflects growing demand, particularly among Asia-Pacific users, for integrating mediation with arbitration, and further strengthens Hong Kong's reputation as a centre for amicable as well as adjudicative dispute resolution.

Final remarks

The data analysed in this 7th Maritime Arbitration in Numbers report points to a global maritime arbitration market that is becoming increasingly competitive, albeit not yet evenly balanced. The key theme is not the displacement of London as the leading global centre for maritime arbitration, but the continued strengthening of maritime arbitration in Asia, reflecting an increasingly diversified and credible choice of forum for parties to maritime disputes.

¹⁷ <https://www.qmul.ac.uk/arbitration/research/2025-international-arbitration-survey/>

¹⁸ <https://www.iomed.int/>

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About HFW

HFW is a leading global law firm in the aerospace, commodities, construction, energy, insurance, and shipping sectors. The firm has 700 lawyers, including 185 partners, based in offices across the Americas, Europe, the Middle East, and Asia Pacific. HFW's shipping practice is the world's largest, with more than 200 specialist lawyers and over 10 mariners advising clients throughout the industry on the full range of dry shipping, admiralty and crisis management, and transactional matters. Recognised by The Times as "a disputes powerhouse", HFW has the highest win rate of any top litigation firm in the English Commercial Court, while its International Arbitration practice is one of the most active in the world, handling approximately 750 arbitrations at any one given time. HFW has more top-tier rankings for shipping in Chambers and Legal 500 than any other law firm, and its lawyers have featured in Lloyd's List's ranking of the 100 most influential people in the shipping industry for five consecutive years.

To find out more about HFW's global shipping practice, visit: www.hfw.com/Shipping and our global dispute resolution practice visit: www.hfw.com/Dispute Resolution.

About the report

This report is based on a combination of primary and secondary research undertaken between March and July 2026. Primary research included direct engagement with arbitral bodies, who were invited to respond to a series of questions regarding maritime arbitration statistics for 2025. We are sincerely grateful for the contributions and engagement received. Secondary research involved the review and analysis of publicly available reports and data relating to maritime arbitration statistics and trends. The findings presented in this report reflect the information received, published sources, and the professional judgment, experience, and interpretation of the HFW author team and the wider HFW Shipping group. This report reflects information available as of mid-July 2026, and subsequent developments may not be reflected. This report is intended as a comparative and informative guide for those involved in maritime arbitration. While every care and effort has been taken to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the information, it is provided for general guidance only and does not constitute legal advice. Referencing this report is permitted with appropriate attribution to HFW, and inclusion of the original URL to the report from HFW's website: <https://www.hfw.com/insights/maritime-arbitration-in-numbers-london-rebounds-as-singapore-and-hong-kong-maintain-momentum/>