

## Building reputations

### *Chan Tan & Partners moves into the new millennium*

**Focus** is good. It allows one to concentrate and stick to what one does best. In a world dwarfed by large firms offering diversified services in every practice area possible, boutique firm, Chan Tan & Partners, commits to one - construction law.

Most of the work the firm deals with, as much as 85 per cent in fact, relates to construction and engineering law matters. Chan Tan & Partners is generally regarded as the only firm in Singapore that has based its practice almost exclusively in this area. Otherwise, the firm does some commercial litigation, conveyancing and non-contentious work.

Although they have already earned a reputation as one of the top construction law firms, and have been recognised as such in the Asia Pacific Legal 500, Chan Tan & Partners constantly seeks improvement through their involvement with construction-related councils and institutions.

The firm's adoption of the notion that "focus is nothing without standards" is clearly reflected through its commitment to the International Council for Building Research Studies and Documentation (CIB) and various regulatory bodies such as the Singapore Institute of Architects (SIA) and the Real Estate Developers Association of Singapore (REDAS).

The firm also engages non-legal professionals and technical staff to provide expertise on quantity surveying and engineering matters.

A partner from Chan Tan & Partners commented that the construction industry in Singapore holds a positive outlook as Asia recovers from the economic downturn. "The past one or two years has been quite negative, but construction is now moving forwards with the economy. In any case, there are many factors that could affect the industry besides the economy. Changes in government policies is one of them. Moreover, the demand for housing in general can also have its effects on the industry."

But for the sector to sustain continued growth, added the partner, local companies will have to venture overseas, rather than pine for more foreign investments into Singapore. "We have already witnessed a lot of foreign projects coming into Singapore, mostly from Japanese and some European companies, the latter of which are largely specialist contractors. Moreover, as there is a limit to the number of projects within the country, one requisite for further growth, now and in future, is that locals venture overseas," he explained.

#### THE PARTNERS

The key partners in the firm, George Tan and Raymond Chan have represented various building and construction institutions. Mr. Tan is the Singapore representative to International Council for Building Research Studies and Documentation (CIB) on post-construction liability and a member of its task group on dispute resolution. He is also a member of the Panel of Referees, construction management and economics.



Mr. Chan is an Honorary Legal Advisor to Real Estate Developers Association of Singapore (REDAS) and the Singapore Institute of Architects (SIA) and a part time lecturer in law in the School of Architecture, National University of Singapore.

Both Mr. Tan and Mr. Chan have been engaged as lead counsel for contentious construction related matters in court and in arbitration proceedings and act also as Arbitrators.

Both are in the Panel of Arbitrators of the Singapore International Arbitration Centre and the Singapore Institute of Architects. Mr. Chan has also been appointed as a Sole Arbitrator by the International Court of Arbitration in an international arbitration.