



Managing Partner | Solicitor (New South Wales, Australia)

Aaran Johnson

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KEY PRACTICES

Corporate & Commercial

Corporate Services

Criminal

Employment & Industrial
Relations

FinTech

International Arbitration

International Trade

Real Estate & Construction

Restructuring & Insolvency

QUALIFICATIONS

The University of Newcastle,
Australia: LLB/ BA (Majoring in
Broadcast Journalism)

The College of Law, Australia:
LLM (Master of Laws majoring in
Commercial Litigation)

The Law Society of NSW,
Australia: Accredited Specialist in
Commercial Litigation

MEMBERSHIPS

Member, Law Society of NSW

Member, Royal Automobile Club
of Australia

Member & Advisor, Australia
Malaysia Business Council
(NSW)

Aaran is the Managing Partner of PDLegal's Australian legal services offering and a Sydney-based litigation and corporate advisory professional with significant experience in Australia and across the Asia Pacific.

A trusted advisor known for his strategic thinking and pragmatic approach, Aaran combines deep legal expertise with commercial acumen to help clients resolve disputes, manage risk, and position their businesses for long-term success. He acts for individuals and organisations of all sizes, delivering practical, business-focused outcomes in complex litigation, contract structuring, compliance, risk management, cross-border matters, and strategic business advice.

With a well-developed network across the Asia Pacific, Aaran provides tailored solutions for clients entering or expanding into the region, as well as for international businesses seeking entry into the Australian market. His work spans diverse industries and backgrounds, always grounded in a results-driven and collaborative approach.

Aaran is as committed to his community as he is to his clients, reflected in his down-to-earth manner and ability to work effectively with stakeholders from all walks of life. Outside the office, he is a passionate supporter of the South Sydney Rabbitohs and the Sydney Swans.

WORK HIGHLIGHTS

COURT & LITIGATION EXPERIENCE

- Litigation conducted across all federal and NSW court jurisdictions.
- Development of case theory and implementation of strategies to achieve case theory.
- Appeared in district court hearings, local court general division hearings, small claims division hearings, the General Commercial and Building Divisions (NCAT).

PUBLICATIONS

“Winning the Award but Losing the Recovery: Forum Selection, Security and Enforcement Strategy in APAC Transactions”, published 13 April 2026

“The Risks of Parallel Negotiations”, Law Society Journal, October 2011

- Appeared in urgent ex parte hearings, such as injunctions, Anton Piller orders, Mareva orders and extensions of caveats.
- Advisory services in respect of all facets of litigation.
- Drafting all forms of pleadings for various causes of action: statements of claim, summons, list statements, defences, responses, cross claims and notices of motion/applications for federal and NSW court jurisdictions as well as applications and responses for the NCAT.
- Acting in formal and informal settlement conferences, mediations and pre-litigation negotiations.
- Running various litigated insolvency matters in the Federal Court and Supreme Court. Experience includes creditor’s petitions concerning the service of creditors statutory demands, wind up applications, substituted service applications, preferential payment claims, examinations and terminating and/or staying liquidation.
- Security of Payment Act adjudications, including payment claims and schedules, and various related court actions resultant from determinations of adjudicator.

EXAMPLES OF LITIGATION EXPERIENCE IN PRACTICE

- Represented Leppington Pastoral Company, a prominent Australian dairy farming family, in proceedings in the Supreme Court of NSW concerning a stamp duty dispute connected to development arrangements over landholdings at Oran Park. The Chief Commissioner of State Revenue assessed approximately AUD\$27 million in duty, interest and penalties were payable by Leppington Pastoral on the basis that an agreement between related entities (Leppington Pastoral and Greenfields Development Corporation) constituted a declaration of trust. That assessment was later reduced to about AUD\$14 million, but Leppington Pastoral maintained no dutiable transaction arose. The Supreme Court upheld the Leppington Pastoral’s position, finding the agreement did not effect a declaration of trust, with the assessment set aside and costs awarded.
- Acted alongside defendant counsel in a large-scale Supreme Court of NSW Commercial List dispute resulting in the successful defence of the claim made by Woolworths and Coles, a grocery duopoly in Australia, holding approximately 65 percent of the market together, and a property holding company (Fabcot Pty Ltd). Also acted in the appeal proceedings, with the decision subsequently appealed in the NSW Court of Appeal. The complexity and size of the matter required appropriate project management as well as aspects of public relations and

accountability objectives relevant to the client, the defendant counsel and to its constituents.

- Acted for a financial services provider and resolved the matter on a commercial basis for the client. The matter involved an amount of AUD\$1.25 million relating to the provision of finance under hire purchase agreements for several luxury boats to a business. The matter was commenced via possession proceedings in the Supreme Court of NSW and several other parties, including a receiver of the business, claimed retention of title to the boats in competition with the client's claim.
- Acted for two plaintiff development companies in a Supreme Court of NSW Commercial List dispute involving breach of contract, fair trading, trade practices and civil liability; the amount of the dispute was AUD\$10 million.
- Acted for a building company as plaintiff in the Construction and Technology List of the Supreme Court of NSW. Ran several injunctions in conjunction with counsel. The building company was forced into voluntary administration and eventually liquidation as a result of the proceedings; the amount in dispute was AUD\$15.6 million. Subsequently acted for the building company (in liquidation) in examination proceedings in the Corporations List of the Supreme Court against the directors of the defendant companies.
- Acted for a substantial development company in the defence of Office of State Revenue recovery proceedings related to assessment of stamp duty (approximately AUD\$25 million) on an AUD\$140 million development. Primary issues concerned the development and finance documents and legal nature of relationships between related entities involved in the development.
- Acted for the director of an AUD\$140 million Australian petrol supply business in criminal law proceedings in Thailand. Led the successful appeal of conviction post jail direction which allowed the client to return to Australia having spent four months remanded in custody in Thailand. This case was only the third time in the history of Thai criminal law that a person, pending appeal of conviction and jail directive, allowed to return to domicile.
- Various private investigations and private inquiries in the Philippines and Thailand concerning due diligence, asset reviews and investment concerns.

EMPLOYMENT LAW EXPERIENCE

- Work health and safety (WHS) experience in responding to SafeWork NSW investigations and notices, drafting WHS policies and advising on issues relating to potential WHS risks.
- Advice on breach of employer policies.
- Anti-discrimination, including acting for employers when defending a complaint surrounding discrimination to employees or to the Australian Human Rights Commission, responding to a discrimination complaint on behalf of employers.
- Prepare and review confidentiality and termination agreements.
- Employee management, including advice on employee performance management, redundancies, termination and deeds of release.
- Assist in workplace investigations and dispute notices.
- Defend and advise on work, health and safety prohibition notices and prosecutions.
- Defend and advise on underpayment, unfair dismissal litigation and unfair contract litigation.
- Advising on restraint of trade/non-compete, confidential information and intellectual property covenants.
- Advice and representation at conciliations and mediations together with fair work commission/federal magistrate court hearings.
- Presenting various seminars and information sessions.

NOTABLE MATTERS & JUDGMENTS

- *Brown v The Stables Perisher Management Pty Ltd (No 4)* [2024] NSWSC 1153
- *Leppington Pastoral Co Pty Ltd v Chief Commissioner of State Revenue* [2023] NSWSC 463
- *In the matter of Mark Bassal, The Kingdom of Thailand, Court of Justice* (Both at first instance subsequent conviction and thereafter Appeal) 2023
- *Kazoo Pet Co Pty Ltd v MVI Industries Pty Ltd* NSWSC 2023
- *Elderton Homes Pty Ltd (Administrators Appointed)* 2022

- Yung Jin Lee v Strathaven Holdings Pty Ltd trading as The Palace Hotel NSWSC 2022
- In the matter of Citywide Civil Engineering (NSW) Pty Ltd (In Liquidation) NSWSC 2022
- Nadav Soloman v Max Brenner Australia Pty Ltd, Federal Circuit Court: SYG2272/2022
- Greenfields Development Company No. 2 & Perich Property v ADCO Constructions Pty Ltd NSWSC 2022
- In the matter of Pacific Steelfixing Pty Ltd [2021] NSWSC 655
- In the matter of Reserve Hotels Pty Limited [2021] NSWSC 487
- In the matter of Reserve Hotels Pty Limited [2021] NSWSC 376
- Brown v The Stables Perisher Management Pty Ltd [2021] NSWSC 1688
- In the matter of Hawkesbury House Pty Ltd (in liquidation) [2020] NSWSC 618
- Sandpiper Kooragang Pty Ltd v Fortis Products Pty Ltd [2020] NSWSC 1256
- Canterbury-Bankstown Council v Payce Communities Pty Limited [2019] NSWSC 1803
- Canterbury-Bankstown Council v Payce Communities Pty Ltd [2019] NSWSC 1419
- Kyrollos 4M Pty Ltd v Bassal [2018] NSWSC 833
- Bobi Damcevski v Emilios Demetriou & Ors [2018] NSWSC 988
- Personnel Concepts WA Pty Ltd v Adam [2018] NSWSC 1616
- The Real Thing Food Supplements CC v Media Tag Pty Ltd [2018] NSWCA 318 and NSWSC 585
- TX Australia Pty Ltd v Network Ten Pty Ltd & Nine Network Australia Pty Ltd [2018] NSWSC
- Lex Fitness Pty Ltd ATF Lex Family Trust v Australian Fitness Management Pty Ltd; Australian Fitness Management Pty Ltd v Lex Fitness Pty Ltd ATF Lex Family Trust [2017] NSWSC 157
- Ingham Property Development Pty Ltd v Impeccable Construction Pty Ltd [2017] NSWSC 298

- Leppington Pastoral Co Pty Ltd v Chief Commissioner of State Revenue [2017] NSWSC 9
- Bassal v Commissioner of Police (NSW Police Force) [2017] NSWCATAD 276
- Bassal v Savilles (NSW) Pty Ltd (No. 3) [2017] NSWSC 911
- Ward v Lombos [2017] NSWCA 35
- The matters of Gondon Five Pty Ltd and Cui Family Asset Management (Series of litigated disputes between 2016 – 2019)
- Yes Family Pty Ltd v Sphere Healthcare Pty Ltd NSWSC 2016 (series of Judgments related to Preliminary Discovery)
- Lombos v Ward [2016] NSWSC 885
- Larsen v Grace Worldwide (Aust) Pty Ltd [2014] NSWSC 90
- In the matter of Joe & Joe Developments Pty Ltd (subject to a Deed of Company Arrangement) [2014] NSWSC 1444
- Joe & Joe Developments Pty Ltd (subject to a Deed of Company Agreement) [2014] NSWSC 1703
- The matters of AT Air Group Pty Limited, Aquatic Air v Dieter Siewert NSWSC (Series of litigated disputes between the parties with multiple Judgments spanning from 2012 - 2018)
- Lewisham Estates Pty Ltd v LMW Advisory Pty Ltd (Trading as Landmark White) NCAT COM12/50563
- Buskermolen v Mackay & Ors 2011/88216 (5 May 2014)
- Fabcot Pty Ltd -v- Port Macquarie-Hastings Council [2010] NSWSC 726 (2 July 2010)
- Narellan Pools Pty Ltd v Huntsman Chemical Company Australia Pty Ltd [2010] FCA 267
- Love v Griffith [No 2] [2008] WASC 302