ABA Forum on Construction Law: Divisions

The Forum's Divisions are designed to put you in touch with fellow practitioners of specific areas of Construction Law. Members of the Forum may join as many divisions as they wish. Divisions focus on distinct areas of practice:

Division 1: Litigation & Dispute Resolution
Division 2: Contract Documents
Division 3: Design
Division 4: Project Delivery Methods
Division 5: General Contractors
Division 6: Labor & Employment
Division 7: Insurance, Surety & Liens
Division 8: International Construction
Division 9: Subcontractors & Suppliers
Division 10: Energy & Environment
Division 11: In-House Counsel
Division 12: Owners & Project Finance
Division 13: Government Construction
Division: Young Lawyers

An introduction to the Divisions:

Division 1: Litigation & Dispute Resolution

R. Thomas Dunn, Division Chair
rtdunn@pierceatwood.com

Mission Statement
Enhancing advocacy skills of construction lawyers in trials, arbitrations and mediations; and, developing innovative ADR strategies and procedures.

Division Activities
The focus of Division 1 is on advocacy. Our goal is to help build the best construction advocates who have the skills and know the best techniques for efficiently and effectively resolving disputes for their clients – whether in litigation, arbitration, or mediation of a case.
There are lots of opportunities with Division 1 including **getting published** (we maintain *The Dispute Resolver Blog* - [http://abaconstructionforumdivision1.blogspot.com/]), **speaking** (at one of our lunches/breakfasts or virtual programs), and **planning** social events or other special programs like Division 1’s Advocacy Practicums. If you join Division 1, it is our goal to provide first class litigation and ADR updates and opportunities with to pursue within the Forum. Check out the ABA’s YouTube Page for a video on Division 1’s opportunities.

The Division 1 Steering Committee meets by zoom on the second Monday of each month at 3:00 p.m. ET; all members of the Division are invited to attend as it is the best way to find out what is going on and to get involved in the Division activities. Email Tom Dunn to be added to the “Friends of D1” list!

**Division 2: Contract Documents**

Karen Denys, Division Chair
[Karen.Denys@faegredrinker.com](mailto:Karen.Denys@faegredrinker.com)

**Mission Statement**
To study, develop and improve contract documents for the benefit of the construction industry generally and the protection of the interests of all project participants.

**Division Activities**
The Contract Documents Division/Division 2 holds a monthly Zoom meeting on the second Thursday of the month at 12:00 p.m. ET. An agenda and Zoom link is circulated prior to the meeting to all steering committee members and others within the Division who have expressed an interest in becoming involved. In addition to covering Division business and hearing reports from industry and committee liaisons, the meeting offers Division members an opportunity to participate in the development of the Contract Document Division activities and volunteer for publications and presentations. During each meeting, members also have the opportunity to participate in an open dialogue discussion on a Hot Topic chosen and led by one of our members. All current and prospective Division 2 members are encouraged to participate.

Division 2 also publishes a newsletter twice a year (in the spring and the fall), wherein AIA, ConsensusDocs, EJCDC and DBIA each provide updates on new/revised contract forms and resources available to our members and all Division activities and meetings are highlighted.

Feel free to contact Karen Denys for more information about Division 2!

**Division 3: Design**

Joelle Jefcoat, Division Chair
[joelle.jefcoat@perkinswill.com](mailto:joelle.jefcoat@perkinswill.com)

**Mission Statement**
To provide practical knowledge concerning the problems and needs, risks and rewards, and duties and liabilities of each of the parties involved in the design process, with particular emphasis on
design delivery and implementation, construction project development, and project economics and financing in both the public and private sectors.

**Division Activities**
The Design Division/Division 3 holds a monthly Zoom meeting on the first Wednesday of the month at 2:00 p.m. ET. The meeting offers all Division members, in addition to its Steering Committee and Working Group, an opportunity to participate in the development of Design Division activities, publications, presentations, and a network of relationships. At least once each quarter, the monthly meeting extends to a “Hot Topic” presentation on a key issue in design/construction by a guest presenter. An agenda and Zoom information are sent before the call via ABA Connect to all members who have joined the Design Division community. We welcome you to join us for our monthly meetings and Division 3 activities, both remote and in-person at Forum national events.

**Division 4: Project Delivery and Construction Technology**  Joel Heard, Division Chair
jheard@osler.com

**Mission Statement**
To provide a forum for the study and discussion of legal issues related to varying systems of project delivery and construction technology.

**Division Activities**
Division 4 holds a monthly Zoom meeting on the 4th Tuesday of each month, at Noon ET. Those meetings are open to the general membership and you are welcome to join us! Most meetings consist of a brief report from members of our Steering Committee and Working Group, followed by a presentation by a guest speaker on a topic relating to construction project structuring alternatives or the impact of technology on project delivery. An agenda and link to the Zoom coordinates is circulated in advance of each meeting to all members of Division 4 via ABA Connect. Aside from providing excellent learning opportunities, our meetings are a great way to get involved in Division and Forum activities. During each of the Forum’s national meetings, Division 4 hosts a dinner or other event where members can socialize and network in a fun, relaxed setting. We welcome all current and prospective Division 4 members to participate in all that we have to offer.

**Division 5: General Contractors**  Diane Utz, Division Chair
Diane@UtzConstructionLaw.com

**Mission Statement**
Study and development of legal guidelines and suggestions for issues that can arise during each phase of a construction project from the General Contractor’s and Construction Manager’s relevant perspectives.
**Division Activities**
Division 5 holds a Zoom conference on the third Tuesday of each month at 5:00 p.m. EST. Our Teleconferences include relevant “Hot Topic” presentations by industry professionals on topics of interest to general contractors and construction managers, and “Help Desk” calls for members to get real-time feedback from colleagues on current issues. If you are interested in participating and/or presenting, please contact the Division 5 Chair and/or subscribe to Division 5 through ABA Connect on the Forum on Construction Law page. Updates and announcements are made through ABA Connect.

Division 5 holds lunch and dinner meetings at each of the Forum’s three national meetings. The in-person lunch meetings generally include a speaker/panel on a topic of interest, as well as networking opportunities. The dinner meetings are less formal and provide a great way to get to know folks with common interests and practices from all over the country. All current and prospective Division 5 members are invited and encouraged to attend.

Many opportunities exist for getting involved in Division 5 such as planning monthly presentations, planning in-person lunch presentations, writing articles for the newsletter, developing and publishing the newsletter, and planning dinners during in-person meetings. If you are interested in any of these opportunities, please contact the Division 5 Chair at the email address above.

**Division 6: Labor & Employment**

Mission Statement
To provide practical knowledge concerning labor, employment, human resources and 21st century civil rights issues unique to the construction industry.

Division Activities
Division 6 holds monthly Zoom meetings on the last Wednesday of each month at 12 Noon EST, which are open to all Division 6 members or other Forum members interested in Division 6. We are always on the lookout for individuals wanting to become more active in the Forum and our Division. We have a designated column in each edition of Under Construction called "Workplace Chatter." We are always seeking articles discussing hot topics in Labor and Employment issues affecting the construction industry that will be helpful to our Forum friends! One of the best ways to get involved is to join our monthly Zoom call, one of the Division Breakfast Meetings, learn what Division 6 is all about and volunteer to get involved by joining a Working or Standing Committee. The Division 6 Steering Committee and Working/Standing Committee members also meets face-to-face at each Fall or Mid-Winter Forum Meeting. Please join us!
Division 7: Insurance, Surety & Liens

Michael Clark, Division Chair
mclark@siegfriedrivera.com

Mission Statement
Be the leading resource for lawyers and construction industry professionals on developments and trends in construction insurance, surety bonds and lien law through education, networking and industry outreach.

Division Activities
The Forum’s Division on Insurance, Surety & Liens (a/k/a “Division 7”) conducts monthly Zoom conferences on the first Thursday of each month at 1:00 p.m. ET. Every other month, these calls include a Hot Topic presentation. The calls are open to all Forum members and provide an excellent introduction into the activities, publications and speaking opportunities available within the Division and Forum. As a benefit to Division 7 members, Division 7 publishes the quarterly self-styled newsletter “Insurance, Surety & Liens” containing substantive articles, news and events. At each national meeting of the Forum, Division 7 hosts an informal dinner for its members, family and friends and coordinates a Division breakfast or lunch featuring a nationally-prominent speaker. All current and prospective Division 7 members are invited and encouraged to attend and participate in Division 7 activities. Visit Division 7’s website at http://apps.americanbar.org/dch/committee.cfm?com=CI107000 or contact Michael Clark at the email above for further details.

Division 8: International Construction

Richard Wong, Division Chair
rwong@osler.com

Mission Statement
People: Accessing a vibrant and collegial network of international construction lawyers and consultants.
Programs: Trading best practices on project development and dispute resolution issues alike from the U.S., Canada, Mexico, and other common law and civil law jurisdictions.
Publications: Providing resources to understand the evolving balance between the trend to globalization and the importance of local norms in the construction industry.

Division Activities
Hello! For anyone who has international offices, has international clients, who has American clients involved in international projects, or want to be plugged into a world-wide referral network, this is a Division you must check out.

Join us by phone on monthly Zoom calls on the third Wednesday of the month at 1:00 p.m. Eastern Time. We frequently feature an international construction presentation with guest speakers as part of these meetings.
At the Forum’s three yearly in-person meetings, we hold either a breakfast or a lunch program on a current international construction topic, often partnering with other Divisions. In addition, members of Division 8, family, and friends gather for a social dinner at a local restaurant typically just before or on the first night of the meeting to catch up.

Many opportunities exist for getting involved in Division 8 such as planning monthly presentations, planning in-person lunch presentations, writing articles, and planning dinners during in-person meetings. Our “ABA Connects” page has a Division 8 “organizational chart” and agendas from our prior monthly meetings so you can quickly check us out.

If you are interested in any of these opportunities (or need assistance in accessing the ABA Connects page) please contact the Division 8 Chair at the email address above!

**Division 9: Subcontractors & Suppliers**
Jeremy Brummond, Division Chair
jbrummond@lewisrice.com

**Mission Statement**
To serve those who generally represent subcontractors, specialty trade contractors and suppliers in the construction industry. Division 9 keeps its members up to date on current issues and developments affecting these groups in construction law through seminars, programs, publications, breakfasts and monthly calls.

**Division Activities**
At each of the Forum’s meetings, Division 9 organizes a meeting featuring a speaker on a topic important to subcontractors and suppliers. All are welcome, so please join us at the Forum’s meetings! Division 9 also gets together for a dinner or other social event at each of the three Forum meetings, generally after the Welcome Reception. We also have monthly Zoom calls on the third Wednesday of each month at 12 Eastern where we often have industry leaders present on hot topics of interest. Information on our calls, including login information can be found on the ABA Connect website. Remember: “Things are fine in Division 9!”

**Division 10: Transportation, Energy & Environment**
Ben Patrick, Division Chair
bpatrick@grsm.com

**Mission Statement**
Division 10's mission is to assemble and publish to Forum members all pertinent existing legislation and recent case law dealing with both transportation and energy construction and environmental issues, with a special emphasis on monitoring the "green" or sustainable trends emerging in the construction industry. Division 10’s publications and presentations focus on issues surrounding the evolution and transformation of transportation and energy construction projects, and the impact of environmental issues on all aspects of construction.
Division Activities
A great number of opportunities to participate, research, write and present are found within Division 10. We are always looking for contributors to our quarterly newsletter, 2X4X10. Our monthly meetings regularly feature presentations from members on construction projects, new legislation, important court opinions, and issues related to transportation, energy, and environmental concerns. Division 10 also holds a lunch meeting and a dinner at each national Forum event. The lunch meeting features in-person presentations on these issues, and the dinner is purely social, affording our members and their family and friends an opportunity to connect with peers from across the country.

Division 11: In-House Counsel
Erin Cannon-Wells, Division Chair
Erin.Cannon-Wells@keller-na.com

Mission Statement:
Our mission is to help in-house counsel become better construction industry lawyers. We do this by helping to make the ABA Forum on Construction Law the premier organization for construction law education, training, and professional networking. We collaborate on designing, planning, and executing programs and publications of interest to in-house counsel. We create and promote an inclusive, welcoming membership environment that encourages participation, informal learning, and social opportunities for members to share knowledge and expand their professional network.

Division Activities:
Membership in the Division for In-House Counsel is limited to construction lawyers who are currently working (or were formerly working) as in-house counsel for a public or private company, non-profit entity, or public agency whose primary mission is not the provision of legal services to third parties, or those whose primary job is as a legal educator (at the university or post-graduate level). The Steering Committee plans the breakfast/lunch programs, networking and educational activities, and other D11 events for the Forum’s national meetings; offers quarterly presentations on “Hot Topics”; and hosts monthly calls that allow D11 members to stay abreast of Forum activities. All Division 11 members are encouraged to participate in the monthly Steering Committee calls, which occur via Zoom on the third Thursday of the month at noon Eastern. Information regarding upcoming calls and other Forum updates are regularly shared with the Division 11 community via ABA Connect.

There are numerous ways to get and stay involved with D11, including actively participating in monthly calls, becoming an In-House Counsel Fellow, serving as a Division liaison, presenting on a “hot topic,” and writing an article for On In-House Counsel’s Desk in Under Construction.
Division 12: Owners & Project Finance  
Kristen Sherwin, Division Chair  
KSherwin@winstead.com

Mission Statement:  
Education and practical advice on the unique concerns of owners and lenders in all aspects of the construction process.

Division Activities:  
Division 12 holds monthly Zoom “Hot Topic” Meetings on the second Wednesday of each month at 12 Noon EST (except in months where there is a national meeting). The meetings are open to all Forum members. Be sure to check Division 12’s ABA Connect Page for the Zoom log-in information (https://connect.americanbar.org/constructionlawconnect/communities/community-home?CommunityKey=29c9b19e-343b-44b6-bacf-e4ff6f3f3c). The monthly meeting covers forum and division activities, speaking and writing opportunities and Hot Topic presentations by our sponsors, exhibitors and/or members on topics that are of interest to Owners and Owner’s counsel. Prior to each call, we circulate an agenda through ABA Connect. During each national program, Division 12 holds a breakfast or lunch meeting with a speaker. We also host a Division dinner or other event for relaxed networking and introduction of those interested in joining our fantastic Division. We encourage active participation in the Division including publishing articles and speaker presentations at national, regional and long-distance learning seminars organized by the Forum. Sign up today to be a part of Division 12!

Division 13: Government Construction  
Anna Oshiro, Division Chair  
aho@hawaiilawyer.com

Mission Statement:  
To provide a forum for the study and discussion of legal issues inherent in federal, state and local construction contracting.

Division Activities:  
Division 13 is an active and engaged group consisting mainly of lawyers whose practice include working on matters involving State and/or Federal public construction, consultants who work in both areas, as well as some government counsel. Division 13 offers many opportunities for its members to get involved in ways that benefit both the division and the forum. These include the following:

1. Monthly calls: Under the leadership of Bill Franczek, Division 13 established monthly conference calls (open not only to the steering committee, but also to all members) the second Wednesday of every month at noon ET. This practice has continued through the tenure of succeeding chairs Barbara Werther and Paul Varela. The division now meets via zoom conference.

2. Hot Topics: during the monthly zoom meetings, we start off with a hot topic, with topics ranging from issues of the day (Covid 19) to a recent three month jury trial over litigation stemming
from claims against a designer on a design-build public construction project. These topics provide an opportunity to showcase a member of the division while also providing education.

3. Newsletter: Division 13 produces a quarterly newsletter with government construction tips and information, with a rotating editorial board

In addition, Division 13 usually has stand alone or joint luncheon seminars at the three national meetings, encourages writing and publishing articles for the newsletter, which are then encouraged to be repurposed for other publications. Division 13 interfaces with other public contracting sections of the ABA and other social activities at our national meetings. Division 13’s contribution to the Concepts Book, proposing an annual meeting on the subject of government contracts, was a large impetus behind the public contracting midwinter meeting of January 2019. Division 13 is seeking to increase membership in the division (and the Forum) by continuing to foster learning, speaking, as well as networking opportunities for its members.

**Division: Young Lawyers Division**

Luke LaRocca, Division Chair
luke@spsr-law.com

**Mission Statement:**
Building the best young construction lawyers through fun, fellowship, and opportunities for leadership and professional development.

**Division Activities:**
If you are a lawyer who has been admitted to practice within the past five years, or is thirty-six years old or younger, then the Young Lawyers Division is for you. The Forum YLD provides opportunities for Young Lawyers to get involved with the Forum by hosting a Forum YLD outing at each National Meeting on the Wednesday prior to the meeting so you can meet and network with other young lawyers, partnering with a Division at each National Meeting for a Breakfast or Lunch Meeting so that you can learn about all of the Divisions within the Forum, providing speaking and writing opportunities for young lawyers, co-sponsoring a food bank donation drive to help the local community at the National Meetings, developing programming and supporting the ACE Mentor Program, nominating a National Outstanding Young Lawyer for the ABA National Outstanding Young Lawyer Award and appointing liaisons to each of the ABA Forum’s Standing Committees. The YLD holds a monthly Zoom conference on the first Friday of the month at 12:00 p.m. ET, which is open to all members.