

Book Review

International Commercial Arbitration: A Handbook (2nd Ed) Huleatt-James & Gould, ISBN 1 85978 882 3, LLP Limited, London, 1999, £60.00.

- **Reviewed by Martin Odams de Zylva, Director, Centre for Business Arbitration, London.**

To review a poorly written book is easy and quick; the reviewer has to point out the shortcomings of the book and to gently, but firmly, criticise the authors and/or publishers for wasting his time in reading it. It is difficult to review a good book; one has to craft a careful review so that statements as to the worth of the book do not come across as insincere or at worst cronyism.

To my mind this slim, erudite and skilfully compiled book meets the requirements of in-house lawyers, practitioners and students alike for whom it was first written. I was pleased that the authors in the preface state that *“the principal changes ... made to this edition are to take account of the revisions to the arbitration rules of leading arbitration institutions ... [and] recent cases and statutes”*. It was refreshing to read that the authors had resisted the temptation to add to the work.

Armed with the knowledge that the essence of the first edition had been preserved, I found myself staring at a substantially blank piece of paper. However, in the true spirit of a reviewer (with a conscience), I felt I had to do something more than repeat what I said of the first edition. Furthermore, and despite it being flattering (also, of me) simply to repeat what I had said of this super handbook, I was concerned as to whether my comment was consistent with what had been said by my fellow reviewers. I therefore set out to research what had been written by others of the first edition.

I quote:

“To write and analyse in a general light vein on a subject as broad, detailed and various as international arbitration is a challenging task. ... Notwithstanding the difficulties the authors have produced an effective and clear introductory text. ... This book is a very worthy introductory text” - Rhidian Thomas, *Arbitration International* (1997), p. 117

“... [This] is a truly international, impartial and succinctly written handbook on international

commercial arbitration ... the practitioner is excellently served by a most valuable tool in his daily work, as is any other reader, wherever their place is in the process ...” - Detlef Lührsen [1996] 10 ILR

“The authors skilfully highlight the most important legal and practical matters ... Appendices include a very useful comparative table of international arbitration rules and draft arbitration clauses” – CJM, (1996) PLC p.84

“[This book] is one of the finest handbooks that one can possess, to appreciate and understand the intricacies of international commercial arbitration. It is a straightforward, precise, concise, no-nonsense practical book, avoiding verbosity and immediately diving into all the aspects of arbitration ...” - Sandeep Dave, *Corporate Law Adviser (India)* 1997

It gives me great pleasure to conclude that I have nothing further to add. I recommend this book without equivocation to all the categories of readers it seeks to serve. □