

Rui M. Fernandes

Partner and Co-Chair, Transportation and Logistics Group

Get in touch

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Executive summary

Rui advises domestic and international clients involved in private international trade, transportation, insurance, and related industries. His practice spans all aspects of the supply chain, including aviation, marine, trucking, rail, freight forwarding, logistics, customs and trade, and warehousing. Rui provides guidance on the sale of goods, commercial contracts, employment and commercial matters, as well as regulatory compliance and risk management. He also advises foreign clients establishing and operating businesses in Canada.

Rui maintains a substantial insurance practice, advising on policy drafting, coverage issues, errors and omissions claims, and professional liability matters. His experience includes marine and aviation insurance, inland marine, property and casualty defence, products liability, surety, and subrogation. He regularly represents insurers, as well as insurance brokers, agents, managing general agents, and marine surveyors.

An experienced dispute resolution practitioner, Rui holds certificates in ADR and Advanced ADR from the University of Windsor and completed Pepperdine University's STAR (Systematic Approach to Mediation Strategies) program. He is a qualified arbitrator and holds both the Q.Arb designation (2019) and the FCI Arb designation (2020). Rui has conducted numerous mediations and arbitrations, acting both as counsel and as a mediator or arbitrator.

Rui also brings a strong business perspective to his legal practice, having founded and operated successful businesses in areas including vessel chartering, biotechnology, small hydroelectric power, and publishing. He has represented clients before courts and tribunals across Canada, including appellate and superior courts, federal courts and tribunals, and industry-specific regulatory bodies.

EDUCATION

London School of Economics and Political Science, LLM, 1981

Osgoode Hall Law School, JD, 1979

University of Toronto, BSc, 1976

Q.Arb, 2019

FCI Arb, 2020

BAR ADMISSION

Ontario, 1982

Expertise

Transportation & Logistics

Insurance & Claims

International Trade/Business/Corporate Commercial

Arbitration & Mediation
Energy
Litigation & Dispute Resolution

Insights

Publications

“Marine Insurance Law of Canada”, Butterworths Canada, 1987

Co-author of “The Annotated Canada Shipping Act”, Butterworths Canada, 1988

“Shipping and Admiralty Law”, Carswell, 1995

Contributing Editor “Canadian Encyclopedic Digest: Insurance- Part XIII Marine Insurance”, Carswell 1995

“Boating Law of Canada (2nd Edition)”, Aerospark Press, 2004

“Transportation: Carriage of Goods” Halsbury’s Laws of Canada, 2011 to 2024

“Railway Law” Halsbury’s Laws of Canada, 2011 to 2024

“Maritime Law” Halsbury’s Laws of Canada, 2012 to 2020 (and new reissue)

“Transportation Law”, Aerospark Press, 1991-Present

Co-Author of “The Law of Freight Forwarding and Freight Brokering in Common Law Jurisdictions”, Aerospark Press, 2022

Blogs

When “Final” Means Final: The High Price of an Unappealable Error in Arbitration in a Road Reconstruction Contract

1 October 2026

Ontario Court of Appeal Holds Ransomware Endorsement Applies to All Losses

1 October 2026

MASS Code Takes Effect July 1, 2026

2 July 2026



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Canada Introduces Bill C-35: The Ban on Importing Goods Made with Forced Labour Act

2 July 2026

Riparian Rights and Waterfront Access on the Pitt River

9 April 2026

Federal Court of Appeal Upholds WestJet Employee Termination Over Vaccine Policy

9 April 2026

CN Failure to Meet Service Obligations under the Canada Transportation Act Results in Multimillion Damages for Lost Profits and Vessel Demurrage

2 January 2026

Proposed New Requirements for Lithium-Ion Batteries in Consumer Products

2 January 2026

Geographical Deviation Does Not Defeat the One Year Time Bar in the Hague-Visby Rules

2 June 2025

Truck Trailer Liability: A Cautionary Tale – Nuclear and Thermonuclear Verdicts

2 June 2025

Competition in the Transportation Industry and Recent Amendments to the Competition Act

20 November 2024

Mandatory Survey for Manufacturers, Importers and Users of PFAS

23 September 2024

Purchasing a Private Vessel: What You Should Know

16 September 2024

Transportation Broker Liability in the U.S.A. – Avoiding Nuclear Verdicts

26 August 2024

Federal Court of Appeal Upholds Canadian Transportation Agency Decision to Allow CN to Construct Railway Line in the Town of Milton – Halton (Regional Municipality) v. Canada (Transportation Agency), 2024 FCA 122 (CanLII)

23 August 2024

Letters of Credit and Fraud Exception

23 May 2024

CARM: The Digital Initiative for Importing Goods into Canada

31 January 2024



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Federal Court of Appeal Permits a Novel Climate Change Action Against the Government of Canada to Proceed (La Rose v. Canada)

3 January 2024

Owner's risk expanded by Supreme Court of Canada

4 December 2023

Forced or Compulsory Labour Laws in Canada

6 September 2023

Bill C-47 Increases Limits of Liability for Marine Accidents

6 September 2023

News

Rui Fernandes quoted in Today's Trucking

5 January 2023

Fernandes Hearn LLP Joins Gardiner Roberts LLP

10 November 2022

Memberships and recognition

Board memberships

- Canadian Maritime Law Association (Current President)
 - Advocates' Society
 - Canadian Board of Marine Underwriters
 - Association of Average Adjusters of the United States and Canada (Past President, Canada)
 - Association of Maritime Arbitrators of Canada
 - Canadian Transport Lawyers Association (Past President)
 - Marine Club (Past President)
 - Transportation Lawyers Association
 - The Grunt Club
 - CIIFFA (Current Director and Legal Affairs Officer)
 - The Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport
 - Passenger & Commercial Vessel Association
 - ADR Institute of Ontario
 - Toronto Commercial Arbitration Society
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Recognition



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- Included in The Legal 500 Canada – leading Individual 2018
- Listed in Lexpert as a leading practitioner and most frequently recommended lawyer in Transportation (Rail & Road) and Shipping and Maritime Law, as well as Commercial Insurance
- Doyles Guide – Leading Transport Lawyers – Canada: Preeminent
- Consistently recognized by:
 - Best Lawyers in Canada (Maritime Law) 2006-2026
 - Best Lawyers in Canada (Transportation Law) 2006-2026
 - Best Lawyers in Canada (Aviation Law) 2026
 - Lexology (Thought Leaders: Transport, 2025)
 - Lexology (Global Elite Thought Leader, 2025)
 - Chambers and Partners (Transportation: Shipping – Nationwide -Canada, Transportation: Rail & Road – Nationwide – Canada)
 - Listed in Martindale-Hubbell with a peer review rating of AV Preeminent



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