

“Are we claims specialist meeting the challenge of the XXIst century?”

Summary of the points that will be raised.

- (1) Let us try to briefly scan the panorama of seaborne trade.**
 - (1.1) First and foremost, what immediately stands out is the relentless pursuit of cost cutting generated by fierce international competition which produces the iron rule of “*just in time*” deliveries. Consequences thereof.**
 - (1.2) What next stands out is the concentration of high values and risks. Consequences thereof.**
 - (1.3) The complex web of transport and commercial contracts that leads to a large number of parties being involved in a single voyage.**
 - (1.4) The leading role played in seaborne trade by cargo interests whilst traditional shipowners are progressively giving way to investors and to ship operators.**
 - (1.5) The growing impact of ecological factors, of reducing oil and gas reserves and of security requirements.**

- (2) How do we claims specialist respond to the challenge? Today’s world of seaborne trade governed by the “*just in time*” rule requires “*just in time*” solutions and therefore services capable of helping all parties to readily resolve the consequences of casualties.**

We need a new generation of claims specialists, independent, experienced and imaginative enough to be entrusted with very challenging jobs.

We need a ready made scenario on which the parties can fall back.

We need to promote comprehensive “Casualty Resolution Agreements”.

Last but not least, we need to maintain the centuries old rule of solidarity that has prevailed at sea and which is not outdated. The suggestion that the loss should lay where it falls simply is a grave misapprehension of the consequences.

Conclusion:

The time has come for us to realistically reassess some situations that arise in today's seaborne trade and to provide adequate responses. "Just in time" responses through efficient casualty and loss management.

It has been said that the most reliable advice in the world is the advice given by someone who is on board a ship in peril. This recognition came some 500 years ago from Leonardo da Vinci. Food for thought...

Note: Each point is to be put in a nutshell with examples provided where appropriate. The paper is not to exceed 20 minutes.

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Odessa, 29th/30th May 2008.