

SERVICES TO MEMBERS

- » Teamwork critical to successful claims handling
- » New kidnap and seizure policy for Britannia Members

One of the hallmarks of Britannia is the high level of service provided to its Members. Service applies to every aspect of the Association's business, but it is in the handling of claims that most owners and charterers seek help. A prompt response, combined with clear and timely advice, helps them to prevent or mitigate their potential losses.

Altogether, the Managers handle over 8,000 claims every year. As many claims as possible are handled in-house, as this is highly cost-effective for Members. The Managers employ about 50 claims handlers, many of whom are qualified lawyers. Grouped into teams dealing with geographical areas of Membership, they have spent years building up experience in the many types of claims encountered and in getting to know Members. Teamwork is crucial and the non-lawyers bring a wide variety of other skills, ranging from surveying to shipowning, working for Club correspondents and seafaring. Close interaction with risk management and underwriting staff, through regular meetings, ensures that everyone is aware of developments on the larger claims and those raising complex issues of liability and cover.

Where necessary, handlers can draw on the expertise of over 400 listed correspondents and numerous specialist advisers worldwide. In 2009, the International Group sponsored a two-day conference for Club correspondents in Amsterdam. The Managers provided a speaker and several representatives attended to meet correspondents and contribute to the discussions.

In August 2009, the Managers worked with Travelers Syndicate 5000 at Lloyd's to develop a new kidnap and seizure policy for Britannia Members. This policy is designed to dovetail, as closely as possible, with Britannia's P&I cover. The policy is supported by ASI Global, who are experienced responders, providing a professional crisis management team to guide the owner through the often traumatic period of negotiations. The policy has been very well received and attracts special scheme rates.

Forums

Nearly 80 delegates attended Britannia's Asian Forum in Korea and over 50 attended the European Forum in London. Talks on the Association's financial position, call decisions and claims trends were balanced by a look at the Rotterdam Rules and the Club's risk management programme in action.

Training

28 delegates attended the annual Britannia Training Week in September 2009. This year, a special workshop was introduced, allowing teams to consider numerous aspects of a highly complex collision claim. This proved to be a great success and will be repeated in future with a similar scenario. The other talks concentrated, as usual, on all aspects of the industry, from legal issues to claims handling questions and the principles of underwriting. The hard work undertaken during the day was complemented by a lively social programme in the evening, culminating in a dinner in rooms adjoining the reconstruction of Shakespeare's Globe Theatre.

