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North

Correspondents

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COVID-19, crew...and you guys!

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www.nepia.com

Correspondents

Welcome to our fifth Correspondents Newsletter.

Thanks, in no small part, to North's correspondents, North is the recipient of the 2020 SAFETY4SEA Technology Award.



In this edition we feature an article relating to the Award and thank correspondents for your regular updates which are included in MyGlobeView. North welcomes correspondents to register for MyNorth to gain the benefits of MyGlobeView. Access to MyNorth is outlined later in this edition.

In another article, correspondents share some of their working experiences in dealing with COVID-19 in their day-to-day operations.

We also include articles on Claims Budgeting and we feature Peter Rozum, one of North's longest serving correspondents, in our series The Correspondents Questionnaire.

The Correspondent Team takes this opportunity to wish you continued good health as we continue to face the COVID-19 pandemic.

Nick, Neil, Abbie and Adele.

Update your contact information



We remind correspondents to regularly check North's website to ensure that we are holding the correct contact details and to advise Nick Tonge: nick.tonge@nepia.com or Neil Watson: neil.watson@nepia.com of any changes, as we will no longer be sending an annual request for updates. Remember if this information is not correct then you may miss out on an instruction.



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HOW HAVE WE DONE?

Let us know what you think of the latest edition. Contact us at: nick.tonge@nepia.com or neil.watson@nepia.com

CONTRIBUTORS

Contributors: Nick Tonge, Neil Watson, and Abbie Rudd.

Photographs: Shutterstock

Thanks to: Peter Rozum from Shipowners Assurance, Eske Munk from SPICA, Deborah Spangler and Gabriel Oliveira from Williams Brothers, Zhang Junrong from Shanghai P&I Services Ltd and John Kure from Danish P&I.

INSIGHT ARTICLES AND BACK ISSUES

Current articles from the Correspondents Newsletter and back issues are available online at: www.nepia.com/latest/publications/newsletters

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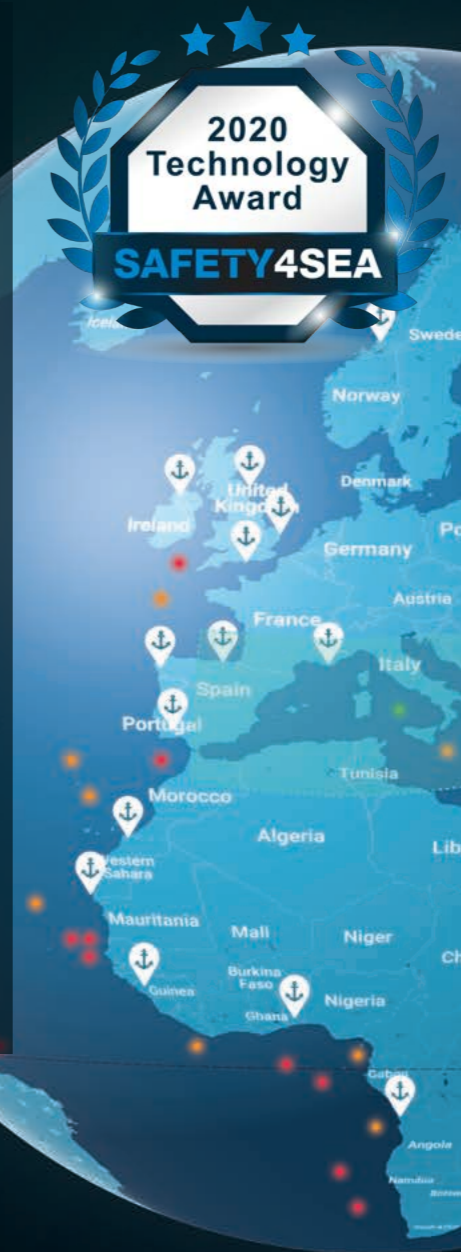
Built on MyGlobeView the unique Tracking Tool provides live updates on developments related to COVID-19, with data provided by you, our Correspondents as well as other international maritime and health organisations.

Accepting the honour at the recent ceremony, Colin Gillespie, North Director of Loss Prevention said that the award "isn't just for North. It's also for our technology partner Geollect - and for the Correspondents and organisations providing the data that has made this platform so successful."

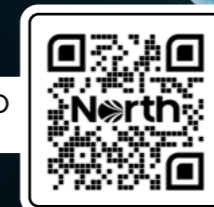
It's important to remember that COVID-19 is still a major problem for any vessel and their crew trading at the moment and your contributions are continuing to make a big difference to allow our Members to trade with confidence around the world.

Again, on behalf of all here at North, we would like to express our thanks to all those who have kept us updated regarding COVID-19, for the major contribution you have provided in the continued success of North. It's also worth remembering that the full version of MyGlobeView is also available free of charge to all of North's Correspondents who have registered on our website

By Neil Watson
Senior Executive (Claims)



FOR MORE INFO
SCAN HERE:



Correspondents access to MyNorth



When North redesigned the website, we acknowledged that our correspondents are a vital part of our success and ultimately without your continued assistance, we cannot offer the Members' the service they expect from us to trade with confidence anywhere in the world. As a result of this, we wanted to provide you with additional functionality on our website to assist you in this process.

Registration is free and open to any individual within your office, as MyNorth allows the user to create a bespoke view of the website, from creating your own address book of North contacts, to articles that are of specific interest to them. For instance, if you have someone who deals with crew claims exclusively, they may not want to see updates on oil pollution legislation and you can tailor the website to exclude pollution articles.

We have also very recently opened up access to our publications including the Loss Prevention Briefings which you can add to your own personal library of publications from the website. The Loss Prevention Briefings provide information on a whole host of topics, associated with not only management of the vessel and crew, but on many cargo and environmental issues which previously could only be viewed by Members and staff.

This is of course also not forgetting the full version of the award winning MyGlobeView. This is much different to the basic version available on the website to the causal viewer and is exclusively available free of charge to Members, Staff and Correspondents only. Again this allows individual users within your office to tailor their access to MyGlobeView to show information that is personally relevant and of interest to them. Further layers and functions are being made available on a regular basis, most recently the Route Risk Planner function.

By Neil Watson
Senior Executive (Claims)

The Correspondents' questionnaire

Continuing this theme from the previous edition, we approached one of our longest serving correspondents, Peter Rozum of Shipowners Assurance Management in Montreal, and posed a number of questions.

Q How long have you been a correspondent and how did you start in the industry?

A I started in the industry in August 1966 when I joined one of the largest shipping agencies in Montreal at that time, March Shipping Company, in the position of "Assistant Claims Manager". I had absolutely no previous experience at the time but was most eager to learn. Shortly over a year later, I was promoted to "Claims Manager" when the incumbent left the company to join a local liner service (Canadian Pacific).

While with March Shipping, I had the benefit of being able to work on a wide range of claims on behalf of numerous ship-owners/charterers and was able to gain considerable claims handling skills and experience. In February 1970, I was offered a comparable position with Shipowners Assurance Management and jumped at the opportunity. I eventually purchased Shipowners Assurance Management in 1985. I take great pride in being able to state that I / Shipowners Assurance Management has been a Commercial Correspondent for the North (and other P&I Clubs) for over 50 years.

Q What are your earliest/most memorable recollections of working with North?

A My first recollection of meeting people for North was when I first visited Newcastle in October/November 1972, following several weeks in London. Everyone I met were so friendly and knowledgeable about their particular area of expertise.

Q Can you mention one of the most interesting and/or challenging cases you have dealt with?

A After all these years and with so much "water under the bridge and decks" so to speak, it is difficult to recall any one most interesting/challenging case. Cases involving deserters, stowaways, oil pollution and dock damage would certainly rank amongst the most interesting.

Q What are the challenges you face locally in attending to the vessel's interests?

A Challenges faced locally in attending to vessel interests include: keeping abreast of ever-changing local laws; maintaining good relationships with terminal operators, defence and cargo attorneys, local port authorities and regulatory officials - many of whom are new to the field; dealing with the increasingly complicated myriad of different agents / third parties representing various ship owners/charterers; and finding qualified surveyors and other experts to deal with specific issues. The latter concern is increasingly worrisome as more and more experienced surveyors and marine related experts retire and the industry struggles to attract new talent.

Maintaining good relations with local port and regulatory authorities, defence and cargo attorneys, surveyors, experts, terminal operators, etc., is essential to being able to efficiently represent the Club and its members and is an area in which we have invested considerable efforts.

Q What prevailing shipping trends in your jurisdiction?

A Fewer liner services resulting in more cargoes being carried pursuant to vessel sharing agreements and an increased role played by freight forwarders, logistics companies and other third parties, all of which adds to the number of intermediaries involved in dealing with a given claim.

As in most jurisdictions, we too have noticed a general reduction in the number of general cargo claims and pollution related infractions. This reduction is no doubt the result of improved training of crews, advancements in technology, an increase in the number of in-house lawyers and Claims Executives capable of addressing claims internally, etc.

Q What are your top three tips for reducing/defending claims?

- A**
- 1 Having the member report an incident as soon as possible and provide all available information / documentation so as to enable us to make an early assessment to ascertain if surveyors or lawyers are required;
 - 2 Maintain a good working relationship with claimants in order to establish credibility and trust in an effort to avoid having a claim evolve into litigation. Having a good working relationship with claimants and local regulatory authorities will go a long way to creating a positive environment and increase the likelihood of reaching an amicable settlement of a claim or a regulatory offence. It will also

generate other benefits such as increasing the likelihood of a claimant agreeing to accept a Club LOU rather than proceed with an arrest of a vessel and demand the provision of more expensive forms of security such as a bail bond or cash; and

- 3 If our assessment determines that the member is likely liable, authorise us to move and resolve the claim promptly by presenting a formal reasonable offer of settlement. My experience has taught me that there is little to be gained in dragging matters out. Citing frivolous defences as a justification for extending nuisance value offers of settlement only risks poisoning the waters and frustrating the prospects of reaching an amicable resolution.

Q What are your passions outside of working as a correspondent?

A I was an avid golfer, until recently, when I lost interest due to the loss of several of the golfing friends with whom I had enjoyed playing with over 20 to 30 years. Due to age, I was forced to stop playing squash - something which I had also greatly enjoyed. At this stage of my life, my greatest passion is spending as much time as I can with my wife, our 3 sons and our grandchildren. I also enjoy walking, working on expanding my repertoire of jokes and have become a voracious reader.

Q How do you see the role of the Club Correspondent evolving over the coming years?

A How the role of the Club Correspondent will evolve over the coming years will depend in large part upon each Club's position in dealing with marine casualties. Clubs require a local Correspondent who is knowledgeable, well connected and capable of quickly marshalling the resources necessary to assist a member in dealing with a given claim or in otherwise responding to an incident. I have noticed a trend of late in which some Clubs or members, with or without the Club's knowledge, go directly to a local surveyor or deal with regulatory authorities on behalf of owners/charterers without first consulting us. Often, this results with the retention of someone whom we might not have necessarily recommended and risks conflicting out parties whom, in our mind, may be best placed to assist or, as regards direct contact with regulatory authorities, commits the member to more onerous obligations than may have been necessary had we had the opportunity to intervene.

Our expertise, familiarity with local market players, extensive list of contacts and ability to deal with incidents in real time are important components of our value-added services and the full benefits of same are compromised when we are only called in after the fact.

Q Do you have any useful tips for claims handlers at North?

A I have always found North's Claims Handlers, to be loyal, knowledgeable, reasonable and above all, most pleasant to deal with. It is obvious that the North has entrenched high standards for the efficient handling of claims and for the ongoing training of its claim's personnel.

Impleading upon members the importance of providing full disclosure of a given incident and ensuring the prompt conveyance of all claims related facts and documentation and following up with same to ensure that all requested facts and documentation is ultimately sent to the Club / us is perhaps the most useful tip I can think of at this time.

By Nick Tonge
Deputy Director (Correspondents)



Peter Rozum of Shipowners Assurance Management

COVID-19, crew... and you guys!

Well, no-one will forget 2020 in a hurry and we are certainly not out of the woods yet. As always in times of trouble, it is you, our Correspondents in the front line to whom we turn to for answers.

In order to write this article, we asked for the opinions and experiences of several of our correspondents with whom the writer had the luck to have on board during several difficult crew and stowaway related cases. Without who's help, great things in difficult situations could not have been achieved.

Unfortunately it is not possible to write of all the cases in detail here, however, there are common themes throughout the cases which had to be addressed and overcome.

When the pandemic first took hold, the issue in providing appropriate and timely care to Members crew became problematic. While ports did not close, movements between the ports and within countries were heavily restricted.

Eske Munk, SPICA, Vietnam "...surveyors were quick to respond to domestic travel restrictions by posting surveyors at specific ports to ensure their availability to attend onboard as and when needed.

The Government's efforts to contain the virus saw the introduction of a blanket ban on foreigners entering Vietnam on 22 March 2020. With normal crew changes impossible even disembarking ill seafarers proved difficult. One practical issue was transferring seafarers between hospitals due to restrictions on movement of patients. Instead, we worked with agents to ensure that a specialist doctor were booked to travel from a top tier hospital to the local public hospital to perform treatment required.

The ban on entry also meant that authorities initially did not allow repatriation of deceased seafarers even where the death was not related to Covid19. In these cases repatriation could take place in other countries thanks to coordination within the Spica Group.

Getting crew off vessels in order to provide appropriate care, required some ingenuity on correspondents' part in order to "get around" local lockdown laws and persuade the port authorities, police and immigration of the limits and meanings behind various government directives. Sometimes bending those rules for the good of the crew, by comparison some authorities were more sympathetic, Brazil for example never ceased allowing crew to be hospitalised.

The next challenge was accessing information once the crew were hospitalised. Correspondents were no longer able to visit. A good rapport between the provider and correspondent representative was required.

Correspondents worldwide had to come up with two, three or more changing plans in order to affect a repatriation, some repatriations were even completed by asking crew to cycle or travel in cargo trucks over boarders in order to catch flights, requiring co-operation on all sides.

Deborah Spangler and Gabriel Oliveira - Williams Brothers, Brazil "A non Covid-19 case of serious crew illness, which required the assistance of an escort for the trip back to the crew's home country also led to some unforeseen problems. None of the foreign medical escorts contracted by Clubs in previous cases was able to travel to Brazil due to the new immigration rules as the government shutdown entry of foreign travelers and none of the doctors and nurses in Brazil was available to travel due to their heavy schedules locally. Fortunately a medical escort was not required. A non-medical escort was secured and we began dealing with the Embassy to obtain the necessary clearance for the escort to travel simply "in transit" for the full trip (a total of 6 flights). When the crewmember and escort arrived in São Paulo for the

international flight, the airline would not accept the document issued by the Embassy and the two men had to be placed in a hotel for 3 days while we, and the Embassy, liaised with the Department of Foreign Affairs of the seaman's home country to obtain a total of 4 new documents for the escort to be authorized to travel and spend 4 hours in transit in the airport after delivering the crewmember to the correspondents there."

Now more than ever shows us all how important the contacts and reputations built up over the years have come into use when it comes to dealing with officials and gaining their trust.

Zhang Junrong - Shanghai P&I Services Ltd "I have handled over crew 10 death repatriations over the years and have a good relationship with many ambassadors, and they understood that the I would try to help their countries' crews and am very happy to assist us. The foreign consulate's involvement in death repatriation is very important and necessity since diplomatic notice must be exchanged with Chinese governments. I have repatriated a deceased Korean crew ... within one week by obtaining the very early involvement of Korean Consulate."

These comments from our Correspondents all show an overwhelming dedication to provide whatever is needed in a situation, regardless of how insurmountable that situation may at first feel. I will leave you with some words from our correspondent in Denmark which I think summarise the comradery and resolve of you all reading here.

John Kure - Danish P&I "We cooperate on a daily basis through our offices in Belgium, the Netherlands and Denmark. It makes it possible to monitor and safeguard crucial

ports and waterways throughout the area...The current environment has proven that Correspondents are not just the local eyes and ears for the Club and their Members - we are simply an extension to the team."

Knowledge and network sharing have become crucial during this pandemic, and we have made it one of our key targets to assist stranded seafarers, wherever they are. This means entering into strategic partnerships with other service providers such as private air transport companies with who's help we have been able to assist ... seamen to be repatriated, even though it might not be in our backyard.

Being a correspondent is more than a job it is a lifestyle and it is in these times of need, with closing boarders and stranded crew that we earn our places in the Maritime industry. So while the situation is indeed far from desirable, it is our time to prove our adaptability, passion and professionalism."

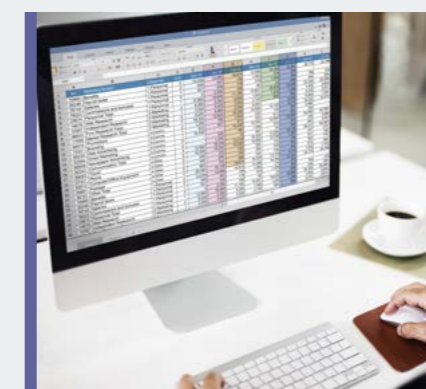
Pandiman our correspondents in Manila also had to spend some unexpected time in the office as a result of travel restrictions caused by the lockdown in the Philippines staff slept in the office to ensure that service was not interrupted! In the recent round of lock downs they also rented accommodation in the south of the country to accommodate a number of their in-house surveyors to ensure that they could continue to provide the service to our Members.

If you have encountered any challenging situations which you think would be of interest or assistance to other correspondents around the world, we would love to hear from you and include this future Newsletters.

By Abbie Rudd
Senior Executive (Claims)

Budgeting a claim and invoicing

I was once asked by my children when they were young what I did for a living as a P&I claims handler. After a bit of thought the best way to sum this up for them was to say I was a professional guesser. This is very much the case at the commencement of the file in that I look at the information before me and my experience in similar claims and I try to guess how much this is going to cost and what the best course of action would be.



For the Club and our Members, it is important to try and get this right as soon as possible so that the Club can allocate the necessary free reserves to deal with any eventual liability. If this is too high it could unnecessarily effect a Members' record and mean they are over charged for their cover next year or similarly if it is too low, they may not be charged enough and if a Club gets this wrong often enough, this could lead to supplementary calls being made.

Obviously, there is a lot more to this than guessing and "estimating" is probably the correct term to use, but you can see the need for the Club to understand the estimated costs and potential liability in a claim as soon as possible. You as our correspondent are a vital partner in this process, as you will have your own experience in similar past claims to rely on. Providing guidance in this respect is of great assistance to an adjuster, not just on the possible outcome of the claim, but also the costs which could be reasonably anticipated in bringing a claim to a conclusion, as this may be the first time that they or the Member may have dealt with a claim in your jurisdiction.

Whilst the initial estimate is important, it is also then necessary to ensure that throughout the life of a claim the budget is reviewed as often as possible, as we

appreciate that there are always twists and turns in any claim. We of course do not expect an exact figure, but if there are likely to be unexpected or additional unbudgeted costs, these should be notified to the Club as soon as possible.

With a lot of Members also having fee deductibles included in their policy, it is very important for their own budgeting for the vessel's fixture that they know their potential expenditure on a case.

It is therefore vital that invoices as presented to the Club as quickly as possible and not to wait until the claim has become time bared. It may be that there is a question over the invoice and if this happened 12 months ago, there is going to be little chance to investigate this. Similarly if we receive an invoice long after the incident has taken place which fell within the applicable fee deductible, this could lead to an embarrassing situation for us, especially for our Charterer Members who may have closed their file on a voyage and are not anticipating any further costs.

The latest 2017 IG guidelines for Correspondents say, "Procedures for the submission of final invoices will vary from Club to Club. A final invoice, clearly marked as such and including any outstanding service providers' costs, should be submitted as soon as a case has been concluded or when the involvement of the correspondent is no longer required, normally within three months unless the Club specifies otherwise."

With this in mind, we would appreciate it if correspondents could ensure that any incurred fees are invoiced as soon as possible and submitted to the Club for our consideration and also that any claim budget is reviewed on a regular basis. We can factor these into the entire claim budget and ensure that any invoices are processed as soon as possible.

By Neil Watson
Senior Executive (Claims)

GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation)

The General Data Protection regulation (GDPR) came into force on the 25th May 2018. North Group has provided guidance on the GDPR on its website and you are encouraged to re-visit the publications issued as necessary.


www.nepia.com/privacy-policy/


However, if you are unsure of your rights or obligations under GDPR, you should seek independent legal advice.


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