

## MARITIME

An increasingly complex set of state, federal and international laws and regulations govern the maritime industry. These complexities pose challenges and present opportunities for our maritime clients.

Sheppard Mullin's maritime attorneys have the experience and know-how to handle virtually every maritime legal issue. We know finance and corporate matters as well as international agreements, arbitration and litigation. The firm also draws on a wide range of other capabilities in serving its maritime clients including antitrust counseling and litigation, environmental compliance and litigation, criminal defense and government-contract counseling and litigation.

We represent clients in all major sectors of the maritime industry, including vessel owners and operators, shipyards, large corporations that own, operate and lease out maritime assets, and domestic and foreign asset-based finance companies. From blue-water ocean shipping to inland tug and barge operations to the offshore oil industry, we advise clients on all legal aspects of their affairs.

Our understanding of the complex issues affecting the maritime industry extends beyond what we've gleaned from working as legal counsel to clients. We have experience on the business side of the maritime industry. One of our maritime attorneys, Gregory Mendenhall, was vice president and director at United States Lines, Inc., where he had significant responsibility for both legal and business matters. Additionally, Charles Donovan teaches maritime law as a member of the adjunct faculty at the University of Southern California Law School.

### **Maritime Business and Finance**

We have handled a wide variety of maritime business transactions including acquisitions, contracts, financing and tax matters, charters, and equipment lease agreements. We have represented maritime clients and provided advice on: maritime loan and sale leaseback transactions; domestic and foreign ship construction contracts; Title XI guaranteed ship financing transactions; and domestic, foreign and joint-venture vessel ownership and vessel operating agreements and structures. We have extensive experience negotiating international agreements. Our lawyers have held positions of leadership in the American Bar Association, International Bar Association, the Union Internationale des Avocats and the Maritime Law Association of the United States.

### **Legislation and Regulation**

Sheppard Mullin attorneys represent maritime clients before the U.S. Congress and federal agencies such as the U.S. Coast Guard, the Federal Maritime Commission, the Maritime Administration, the Department of Transportation, and other agencies whose decisions affect the maritime industry. We have obtained numerous regulatory approvals for our clients, filed comments in rulemaking proceedings, and obtained statutory changes to the domestic vessel financing statutes and documentation/manning requirements of the U.S. Coast Guard. We have also represented clients in obtaining annual appropriations for the maritime cargo preference programs under the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture and the Agency for International Development. Our attorneys have helped draft maritime legislation currently in force.

### **Litigation**

We handle maritime litigation and arbitration of all types, all over the globe. We have prepared, prosecuted and defended claims under Navy, Coast Guard, and private ship construction contracts. We also have defended False Claims Act claims brought against major ship construction companies. We act for clients in both business and casualty-related disputes. We take on matters involving Jones Act negligence and seaworthiness involving personal injury to employees, collision with other vessels, charter disputes, personal injury, stranding/wreck removal, oil spills -- essentially every type of operational difficulty which an owner can experience. We have extensive experience in complex contentious business matters pending simultaneously in several different countries and involving legal issues

arising under the laws of more than one nation.