

Francesca Caterina Santoro

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Over fifteen years in the maritime and insurance industry in London, Athens and Rome, as well as humanitarian aid transportation, and GAFTA supply contracts.

My experience includes

- Disputes involving several stakeholders – Owners, Charterers, traders, suppliers, brokers and insurers.
- In depth understanding of commercial, operational and practical realities, especially in problematic jurisdictions
- A firm grounding in the main P&I and FD insurance policies and related covered claims , as well as the relevant legal framework.

Professional Profile

- ❖ English-qualified solicitor (2009- to present day)
- ❖ LLB Law and Italian Law, University College London (2:1), 2005
- ❖ LMAA Supporting Member accepting appointments
- ❖ CEDR accredited Mediator 2019
- ❖ Panel Member of the UN's Appeals Tribunal, hearing and adjudicating several employment appeals (2023-2025)
- ❖ MA in Conflict Prevention and Dispute Resolution with distinction (2017), including arbitration and alternative dispute resolution theory, mediation, international dispute resolution processes, University of Westminster
- ❖ Bilingual Italian speaker; fluent in Spanish

Professional Expertise

Maritime

- ❖ NNCRs, waybills, bills of lading and Charterparty disputes.
- ❖ Laytime and demurrage, speed and performance
- ❖ Small vessels, river-going vessels, towage, cabotage
- ❖ Humanitarian aid transportation and maritime disputes within a public institutional context
- ❖ Sanctions
- ❖ Problematic jurisdictions in conflict zones, climatic disasters, humanitarian crisis.
- ❖ Food transportation e.g. bagged cargos, bulk grains, operational and commercial experience working for the World Food Programme, a UN Agency.
- ❖ P&I, FD&D war risk, business interruption, K&R.

- ❖ Laytime and demurrage
- ❖ Small vessels, inland waterways, towage
- ❖ In depth knowledge of the Mediterranean and Latin American markets.

Contracts

- ❖ BIMCO Charterparties- voyage and time charters
- ❖ Slot Charters, bare boat, pooling agreements
- ❖ Warehouse contracts
- ❖ Stevedore contracts
- ❖ NVCC and freight forwarders
- ❖ Supplytime, Towcon, offshore
- ❖ Local cabotage agreements
- ❖ GAFTA supply contracts
- ❖ Silo Contracts
- ❖ Bunkering contracts

Insurance

- ❖ P&I and FD & D
- ❖ War Risk
- ❖ Inter-model
- ❖ Stevedore
- ❖ K&R
- ❖ H&M
- ❖ Cargo insurance
- ❖ Political Risk / On land War Risk
- ❖ Aviation

Alternative Dispute Resolution and Litigation

- ❖ Mediation between several international parities – maritime and non -maritime
- ❖ LMAA
- ❖ UNCITRAL
- ❖ ICC
- ❖ Court proceedings in several jurisdictions

Career

UN World Food Programme (WFP) 2019-2025

Supervised a marine claims team handling charterparty, cargo claims and supplier claims under English and international law. Advised on laytime/demurrage, NNCR and bills of lading disputes, insurance contracts, and commercial recoveries. Collaborated with shipping and procurement teams to manage operational and legal risks, emergencies and developed contractual strategies. Conducted root cause analysis and drafted reports on maritime losses and risk trends.

The Standard Club, Senior Claims Handler Jun 2016 – Sep 2019, London

Handled claims relating to inland waterways and cabotage, particularly in the European and Turkish markets, involving P&I, and FD&D disputes. Provided legal advice across jurisdictions. Acted in LMAA and ad hoc arbitrations and negotiated high value claims for several Members.

British Marine (QBE Insurance Group), Claims Handler, Sep 2011 – Jun 2016

Managed P&I and FD&D claims for the Italian and South American markets, providing coverage advice and negotiating claims, security and vessel arrest. Drafted submissions for the LMAA small claims procedure, coordinated cross-border settlements, and handled insurance fraud investigations. Key player in resolving high-value, politically sensitive shipping disputes (e.g., Nigeria, EU jurisdictions).

TT Club, Claims Handler, Dec 2010 – Aug 2011

Provided legal support and claims handling services for logistics providers, terminal operators, and charterers, freight forwarders and NVOCCs. Reviewed contracts, advised on business interruption claims and technical reports for disputes involving multimodal transport.

West of England P&I Club, Claims Handler, Sep 2009 – Nov 2010

Focused on Latin American shipping and insurance markets, as an FD &D and P&I claims handler. Developed strategies to mitigate Brazilian customs claims worth over \$1M. Advised on litigation/arbitration strategy and contract risks as well as crew claims and cruise vessel passenger claims.

**Hill Dickinson LLP (London & Piraeus) Solicitor, Shipping Litigation & Arbitration
Sep 2007 – Sep 2009**

Managed LMAA arbitrations including drafting pleadings, preparing bundles, and running hearings. Interviewed witnesses, handled ship finance and S&P transactions. Firsthand experience in large-scale international maritime disputes.