



What is Marine Law? – Interview with Linda Jacques, LA Marine Partner

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This month's blog is an interview with Linda Jacques, Partner and Head of Marine

Linda, can you explain what Marine law is and what are the most exciting aspects?

"The most exciting part of Marine Law is dealing with international disputes. These involve you arresting ships and bank accounts in jurisdictions like America and Switzerland and it's very exciting.

It really gets the adrenalin pumping. When you arrest a ship in a different country, perhaps South Africa, there's an Admiralty Marshal that goes on board the ship and would make the arrest. There's a massive race against time to get the security you need on the ship especially if the ship itself needs to load or discharge and

everyone is under a lot of time pressure, it's fantastic."

When I think of marine law there are a few things that enter my mind, one of them being cargo ships. When a case involving a cargo ship happens it's usually because they are arresting a ship to get security for a claim usually against cargo damage or damage to a vessel. You're dealing with lots of international elements; it's a very diverse law to be in.

Is Marine law confined to the UK?

"There are no boundaries to Marine law, everything is multi-jurisdictional, even the clients. This means working outside of the 9-5 working day. Working in an industry that is so diverse you are often faced with different cultures and the laws of different countries or you may be working with clients in different time zones. We are always very accessible to our clients usually by email or telephone and working in multi-jurisdictions isn't usually a problem; however, in some countries, they will grant the power of attorney to an additional person which means for a short period of time that person can make decisions on the behalf of the lawyer."

Powers of Attorney are very rarely given in the UK, usually, we see powers of attorney given in cases where someone is critically ill and needs to grant a relative power to make life decisions on their behalf. When you're dealing with a non-medical case it's very rarely granted over here due to the fact we have quite a sophisticated legal system, however, in other cultures, it can be given because their legal system isn't as advanced and there may be issues regarding trust.

When you're dealing with a dispute does it usually end up in court?

"Marine law tends to deal with businesses and usually avoids the courtroom which is great for its clients as they use arbitration, a form of negotiation, to resolve matters quickly, efficiently and cost-effectively which are private and confidential. This means they are kept out of the press!

Other aspects of Marine law that the team deal with are superyachts that may have been involved in collisions or where a death at sea has occurred and a ship-owner or the owners of a marine business requires defending. These can be high profile and can attract a lot of press attention and end up in the courtroom."

Marine law is a niche area of the law, the UK offers a range of shipping services to international clients in the insurance, banking and legal markets and is probably one of the best known countries for providing those services in the world. Our Lawyers at Lester Aldridge are very passionate about the work they do and know their field inside out and we are keen to ensure the UK market keeps their position in providing shipping services to the world. Being a Marine Lawyer providing services internationally requires dedication, passion and resilience as sometimes you're called up at 2am in the morning to visit a ship to collect evidence or on Christmas day to look at a contract for a client.

For advice and assistance in relation to any aspect of Marine Law which covers, cargo and trading, superyachts,

finances, personal injury on board, shipping contracts please contact [Linda Jacques, Partner, and Head of Marine](#), or another member of LA's Marine Team.