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Admiralty & Maritime Law

The scope of experience and expertise of our admiralty attorneys covers the waterfront. Chamberlain Hrdlicka attorneys have achieved proven results in counseling and handling claims and litigation matters for offshore drilling and production companies, marine transportation companies, marine construction companies, dredging contractors, inland barge lines, towing companies, shipping companies, commercial diving contractors, commercial fishing companies, and their cargo, hull, P&I, and general liability underwriters.

We focus on the mission and we get to know our clients' business and operations. The Practice Group Leader of Chamberlain Hrdlicka's Admiralty Section, Daniel D. Pipitone, has more than a quarter-century of experience in coordinating, managing, and litigating admiralty claims in Texas and throughout the Gulf Coast. We have a team of admiralty attorneys who are experienced litigators with backgrounds and training that complement their practice areas. They routinely manage and litigate claims arising under the Jones Act and related statutory provisions, the Longshore and Harbor Workers' Compensation Act, the General Maritime Laws, and have extensive experience in the full range of an admiralty practice.

Our admiralty team represents clients before all state and federal courts, governmental regulatory bodies and tribunals such as the U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Department of Labor, and U.S. Department of Homeland Security (Customs and Border Protection), as well as in alternate dispute resolution proceedings. The attorneys in our admiralty section are experienced and prepared to respond to major marine casualties in emergencies.

Representative Matters

- Presented a case to the United States Supreme Court involving choice of law, venue and forum non conveniens issues, the resolution of which resulted in the dismissal of numerous personal injury and death claims collectively valued at approximately \$15 million and thereby permitting the regional commercial fishing client to remain viable.
- Successfully presented and argued a case to the Texas Supreme Court resulting in its adoption of the Search and Rescue Doctrine and the application of such doctrine in a manner so as to reverse and render judgment in favor of an international maritime client.
- Successfully presented and argued a case to the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit resulting in the adoption of the Primary Duty Doctrine Defense and the application of such doctrine in a manner so as to maintain a minimal judgment of approximately \$10,000.00 awarded by the District Court to the Plaintiffs in a matter involving a wrongful death claim.

Admiralty & Maritime Law, *Continued*

- The amicable resolution of a property damage claim on behalf of an admiralty client allowing for the recovery of \$6.7 million.
- Successfully presented and argued a case to the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit resulting in the correct interpretation of "other insurance" clauses and the application of such an interpretation in a manner extremely favorable to a high-profile domestic Underwriter.
- Represented a shipyard against claims of debilitating back and other injuries and achieved favorable settlements.
- Represented various offshore operators in contractual indemnification disputes.
- Successfully defended a salvage company in multi-party personal injury matter involving a tank vessel.
- Enforced and defended multiple claims for defense, indemnity, and additional assured coverage under oilfield Master Service Agreements.
- Successfully represented a harbor tug, in rem, and a vessel owner in multi-party litigation arising out of the grounding of a bulk ore carrier across the Neches River at Port Arthur.
- Successfully resolved multi-plaintiff claims against inland barge line in litigation arising out of a Naptha spill following a marine collision.
- Successfully represented a subsea engineering firm in allowing a company to utilize Panamanian-flagged vessel in a pipeline tie-in operation implicating U.S. Coastwise laws.
- Managed vessel arrests, seizures, and releases.
- Prosecuted actions for exoneration from or limitation of liability
- Administered actions to enforce mineral liens in behalf of oilfield service contractor.

