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## TRADEWINDS

# IUMI goes head to head with Paris MoU over ship safety

Marine insurers are building up to a clash with Europe's port-state-control (PSC) inspection system over access to information that might assist the battle against substandard shipping.

The International Union of Marine Insurance (IUMI) is stepping up a campaign to get access to ship risk profiles prepared by the Paris Memorandum of Understanding (Paris MoU).

The issue has been simmering since the IUMI conference in San Diego last year but the temperature is rising with the Paris MoU facing a formal request for the information to be added to the Equasis Internet database that helps identify substandard vessels.

The IUMI, representing a large proportion of the world's marine underwriters, wants both ship risk profiles and company profiles prepared by the Paris MoU to be freely available on the Equasis website.

Underwriters see the ship risk profiles and related company profiles as helpful in terms of assessing the quality of risk with potential business and ship-safety benefits.

But it looks as if the Paris MoU is not inclined to change its position that while substandard ships found during the course of PSC inspections will be detained and publicly named and shamed, it is not prepared to publish ship risk profiles.

"The ship risk profiles are used for inspection priority purposes and may not be a good tool to indicate the condition of the ship," Paris MoU secretary-general Richard Schiferli told TradeWinds.

New IUMI new secretary-general Lars Lange has written to Schiferli's deputy, Carien Droppers, a ship's officer-turned-civil servant noting that "this additional information could assist insurers in assessing the quality of the risks they are proposed to underwrite, giving them the opportunity to differentiate their underwriting approach and risk assessment. However, as the data is not released to Equasis it is consequently hardly available to marine underwriters".

Lange added: "While understanding that such additional information alone is not a sufficient indication of the condition of a ship, the information it provides will add transparency and be an important leverage to the risk assessment performed by underwriters."

The then chairman of IUMI's loss-prevention committee, Alessandro Morelli of Axa Corporate Solutions, warned that the Paris MoU was refusing to make ship risk profiles available at IUMI's conference in September and speculated that this stance

might be linked to the fact that the profiles would also contain sensitive information on the fitness of flag states. Morelli is now an IUMI vice-chairman.

Schiferli says the issue of making ship risk profiles public is ultimately one for the Paris MoU committee, composed of the 27 participating maritime authorities.

The current Paris MoU view is that all ship-inspection information is made public and can be used for commercial purposes but this does not extend to the ship risk profiles.

Meanwhile, IUMI president Ole Wikborg is to step down as chairman of the Nordic Association of Marine Insurers (Cefor) at the organisation's annual meeting later this month.

Svein Ringbakken, managing director of Den Norske Krigsforsikring for Skib (DNK), is to be elected the new chairman.

Ringbakken, who took the helm of DNK in 2010, had a 14-year career at Intertanko before moving into the war-risks insurance business.

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