

Charity first for IUMI Conference

17th September 2013



Delegates at this year's IUMI Annual Conference held in London have the chance to raise money for a maritime charity aimed at benefiting those impacted by piracy.



It comes as one of charity's directors hit out at shipowners who have abandoned seafarers to their fate.

During the conference there will be a number of initiatives aimed at raising funds and awareness of the Maritime Piracy Humanitarian Response Programme (MPHRP). The charity helps seafarers and the families of seafarers which have been taken hostage by piracy gangs across the world. It aims to provide both financial and emotional support to families during the period when the seafarer is held and will repatriate and support the seafarer and their family in the aftermath of their release.

Neil Smith of conference co-hosts the LMA said the charity was chosen as it is a cause close to the marine insurance industry's heart.

"We wanted an international charity and one which supports the maritime industry. We will be looking at a number of fundraising initiatives during the conference and we hope this will be a theme that will be carried on in future events."

MPHRP Programme Director: Roy Paul said: "We are extremely grateful to IUMI for their support. The marine insurance industry plays a role when vessels are captured but they serve their client which is the insured. If the owner abandons the crew or has not taken out the right insurance cover then the insurers' hands are tied.

"While there are a majority of owners who look to take care of their crew there are those who simply abandon them to their fate. At present there are 52 seafarers who are in

captivity and their owners have simply walked away and there are no ongoing negotiations for their release."

Money raised at the IUMI conference will be donated to a dedicated fund which will provide educational and medical support for the families of those seafarers who are held or have been held captive.

The conference will also look to its green credentials with the delegate bags for this year made out of recycled material and steps taken to reduce the conference's carbon footprint.