

# IMLI *e*-News

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## ***Fairplay* Senior Correspondent for the Americas lectures at IMLI**

Mr. William Hughes Watson, senior Correspondent for the Americas and Bureau Chief in the Washington, DC, USA office for *Fairplay* (the international weekly magazine dedicated to the shipping and maritime industry and published continually since 1883) recently lectured at IMLI. He focused on how to establish media relationships and how to deal with the media in cases when (maritime) lawyers are called upon to serve as a spokespersons for their clients.



*Mr. William Hughes Watson lecturing at IMLI.*

Mr. Watson has more than 20 years of experience as a journalist. He is an active member of the National Press Club, the Inter American Press Association, the Society of Professional Journalist, the US Naval Institute and is a past president of the Associated Press in Connecticut. He has also lectured in communication and journalism at the University of Hartford and at American University.

*Mr. Watson, what were the most important points of your lecture at IMLI ?*

The most important point is that openness, candor and availability to the press are important in managing any “event.” Whether the attorneys become sources themselves – or counsel other spokespersons – those individuals must be proactive in their relationships with the news media in order for their clients to have any hope of winning their case in the “court of public opinion.”

*Which are the most important rules for a (maritime) lawyer when acting as a spokesperson ?*

Always be fully truthful and don’t be shy about revealing information that is already in the public record. The more accurate the information imparted to the media, the more accurate the story will be.

Good relations with the media are critical. Building a relationship based on trust instills credibility that makes the task much easier when major newsworthy issues arise.

*What are your general impressions about IMLI, students, premises, Malta ?*

I was very impressed with the Institute, its staff and the other lecturers I met. The students were bright, articulate and offered stimulating questions. I believe that their education – together with the relationships built during their stay on Malta – will serve them well as maritime attorneys. As for Malta, I was enchanted with the island. Rich in history with a diverse lineage, the island and its people are simply charming. I look forward to returning to see and learn more of the island nation.

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