

IMLI *e-News*

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REFLECTIONS OF THE VICE-CHAIRMAN OF THE IMLI GOVERNING BOARD ON THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF IMLI

At the Commemorative Seminar to celebrate IMLI's 30th Anniversary held at the IMO Headquarters in London on 25 June 2019, Mr. Jim Harrison (Vice-Chairman, IMLI Governing Board and Chairman, IMLI Financial and Human Resources Committee) delivered an address entitled "*Reflections of the Vice Chairman of the IMLI Board of Governors on the 30th Anniversary of IMLI*".



Mr. Jim Harrison (Vice-Chairman, IMLI Governing Board and Chairman, IMLI Financial and Human Resources Committee) delivering his address

Mr. Harrison in his reflections on the 30th Anniversary of IMLI noted his close association with IMLI over the last three decades and the opportunity to see at first-hand how IMLI has grown and matured into a first-rate educational institution with an enviable academic reputation worldwide. In his speech, he asserted his pride for the very long, very rewarding and ongoing working relationship between Lloyd's Register, the Lloyd's Register Foundation, IMLI and himself. He informed the audience that it gives him particular satisfaction that Lloyd's Register, and more recently the Lloyd's Register Foundation, have seen fit to finance three IMLI student scholarships per year for the last 20 years.

He recognized IMLI as a world renowned centre of legal learning and excellence which, with its positive impact on the dissemination and the consistent implementation of maritime law throughout the world, has been a fantastic achievement over the last thirty years. In his view, IMLI's ethos of teaching maritime law in a comparative way is remarkable. In his words, this is testament to the very hard work and commitment put in by IMLI's Director, David Attard, and all his colleagues.

Mr. Harrison expressed his heartfelt wishes for a long and successful continuation of IMLI in providing ambitious students throughout the world with an opportunity to conduct their international maritime law studies in a welcoming haven in Malta.

The Address of Mr. Harrison is reproduced hereunder:

Reflections of the Vice Chairman of the IMLI Board of Governors on the 30th anniversary of IMLI

My first reflection on this 30th anniversary celebration of IMLI is that I wish it had been founded ten years earlier when I embarked on my own international maritime law studies in my home city of Manchester in the north of England. At that time I was the only student in my year of over 100 law students who chose to study an aspect of international maritime law – namely oil pollution from ships. (In fact this is my thesis from that time.) I remember that in my law library I only had access to two textbooks on the subject I chose to study – and my law faculty had difficulty in finding a suitable tutor to supervise my research. I recall it being a rather lonely research experience with very limited opportunities to discuss my chosen subject with fellow students or academics.

Nevertheless, I found international maritime law fascinating and it encouraged me to work in the shipping industry which I have now done for over thirty five years, including working as the Legal Director of Lloyd's Register and more recently acting as an Ambassador of the Lloyd's Register Foundation.

In view of my own legal studies and career choice I was delighted when, in 1992, Lloyd's Register agreed to donate some of its personal computers to IMLI which led to the establishment of the Lloyd's Register Computer Room at IMLI. That was the start of a very long, very rewarding and ongoing working relationship between Lloyd's Register, the Lloyd's Register Foundation, IMLI and myself.

In 1999, on becoming Legal Director at Lloyd's Register, I also became a Governor at IMLI and subsequently I became the Vice Chairman of the Board of Governors. In 2007 I was appointed Chairman of IMLI's Finance & Personnel Subcommittee which I am still pleased to chair.

It has given me particular satisfaction that Lloyd's Register, and more recently the Lloyd's Register Foundation, have seen fit to finance three IMLI student scholarships per year for the last 20 years.

In visiting IMLI over the last 20 years to lecture, to attend some of the graduation ceremonies and to participate in Governors meetings, I have had the opportunity to see at first-hand how IMLI has grown and matured into a first-rate educational institution with an enviable academic reputation worldwide.

I am always impressed with the enthusiasm and cheerfulness of the students and staff at IMLI and the intellectual rigour with which they undertake their studies and research. For me, as an international maritime and commercial lawyer, it is fascinating to see how IMLI inculcates within its students a mutual understanding and respect for different legal systems and cultures. Its ethos of teaching maritime law in a comparative way is remarkable. As Chairman of IMLI's Finance & Personnel Subcommittee for the past twelve years it has been very encouraging for me to see IMLI's financial strength and stability improve year on year. This is testament to the very hard work and commitment put in by IMLI's Director, David Attard, and all his colleagues. Their dedication to the IMLI cause is formidable. I have been pleased to be involved in the establishment and maintenance of the IMLI Staff Allegiance Scheme and plans for the creation of the proposed new state-of-the-art lecture theatre and videoconferencing facilities.

IMLI is now a world renowned centre of legal learning and excellence. Its positive impact on the dissemination and the consistent implementation of maritime law throughout the world has been a fantastic achievement over the last thirty years. Long may it continue. I am very proud of my close association with IMLI over the last three decades and I count myself as very fortunate to be able to maintain my involvement.

Finally, I am very pleased to note that, since the founding of IMLI thirty years ago, ambitious students of international maritime law no longer have to steer a solitary course through the shallows of their domestic law libraries. They now have a very safe and welcoming haven at IMLI in Malta.

Thank you.

Jim Harrison

25 June 2019

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