

BIMCO'S EUROPEAN UNION LIAISON OFFICER LECTURES AT IMLI

Sir Robert Coleman, European Union Liaison officer of the Baltic and International Maritime Council, the world's largest organisation representing shipping interests, recently delivered a series of lectures within IMLI's 13th Annual Short Course on EU Maritime Law. Sir Robert gave an overview of the EU Maritime Transport Policy with a special focus on maritime safety and marine pollution control, competition and the external dimension of the EU Maritime Transport Policy.



*Sir Robert Coleman,
lecturing at IMLI's 13th Annual EU Maritime Law Course, April 2008*

In an interview on the occasion of his visit to IMLI, Sir Robert explained that the aim of the lectures was primarily for the participants to understand why the EU is involved in making maritime law and policy and how it does so. Also, bearing in mind that most of the Course participants were from the countries outside the EU, the purpose was to familiarise them with how the above mentioned EU involvement may affect them in the future. In Sir Robert's words,

the initial effort, which is indeed always demanding both for him as a lecturer and for the participants, is to pass the threshold of acquiring a basic understanding of the subjects as there is a lot to take in before the topics can become interesting. Once this threshold is passed the participants begin to realise the implications for their possible future roles and become involved in discussions. That is when the sessions become particularly lively.

Sir Robert noted that this is his third year as a visiting lecturer at IMLI and his experience is always that the students here are a demanding audience, ready to make an effort and engage in the discussions. Over the past three years the EU Maritime Law Course has grown in the number of lectures and lecturers, therefore by the time he began to lecture this year the participants had already had some exposure to a number of relevant issues.

Finally, asked about the aspects of the EU Maritime Policy which in his opinion should be highlighted in the current year, Sir Robert noted that the current priorities of the EU in the field are firstly the entry into force of the new competition regime, where the Commission's competition jurisdiction from this year will be directly exercised in respect of both tramp and liner shipping; secondly continued development of the maritime safety programme and the maturing of the European Maritime Safety Agency and finally resolving the open questions of relations between the EU and the international framework, primarily the IMO.

Sir Robert Coleman was educated at Devonport High School for Boys, Oxford University (MA, Jurisprudence) and the University of Chicago Law School (JD). He is a Barrister at Law of the Inner Temple. Having taught law at the University of Birmingham Law Faculty, he practiced at the London civil bar before joining the European Commission in 1974 working primarily on various aspects of the completion of the internal market until 1991 when he became Director General for Transport. In 1999 he assumed responsibility for the Directorate General for Health and Consumer Protection where he continued until 2003. Senior Practitioner Fellow at the Institute of Governance of the Queen's University of Belfast during the academic year 2003 to 2004, he is now teaching as a visiting professor at the University of Plymouth and also at the World Maritime University, Malmö, Sweden and the Institute of Maritime Law in Malta. He also gives periodic training sessions at the European Commission and the European Maritime Safety Agency. In 2006, he was appointed European Union Liaison officer of the Baltic and International Maritime Conference. In 2008, he became a member of the administrative board of the European Maritime Safety Agency in Lisbon.

In 2005, he was appointed a knight commander of the Order of Saint Michael and Saint George for service to the European Commission.

He has published in a variety of learned journals on European Union affairs and is a frequent public speaker on the same subject.

** If you do not want to receive IMLI e-News in future, please return this message to the above address with request to DELETE in the subject field.*