



COMPLEX ENVIRONMENTS

We are widely regarded as the leading law firm globally that responds to incidents in complex environments on behalf of special risks, K&R, property, war and liability insurers and their assureds.

We have acted for ship-owners, hull and machinery, kidnap and ransom and war insurers in helping to resolve over 120 Somali and West African hijacking and kidnapping cases in the past few years. This accounts for around 75% of all major commercial vessel hijackings by Somali pirates.

Recent work

- Acting to release property, vessels, cargo, personnel and crew seized/detained by hostile and/or politically motivated authorities, including allegations of smuggling, improper licence, customs violations, interference with sovereign rights and resources, weapons and drug offences.
- Acting and advising in relation to land based kidnappings/extortions in Afghanistan, the Middle East, Nigeria, North Africa, the Philippines, Somalia, South America and elsewhere.
- Working to recover detained persons, vessels, cash, artworks, antiquities, treasure and other property.
- Advising in relation to rebel and hostile forces taking action against property, vessels, ports and terminals.
- Policy coverage advice including “weapons of war”, political motivation, exercise of oppressive and excessive power, and other policy issues.

- Addressing various governments, law enforcement agencies, and governmental and non-governmental organisations on the industry’s response to incidents in complex environments, including the United Nations, World Bank, IMO and UK PM David Cameron’s “Piracy Task Force”.
- Advising on vessel “deemed” constructive total loss claims after prolonged detentions and the defences of “ordinary judicial process”, failure to pay fines/penalties and infringement of regulations.

What our clients say about us

“HFW IS NOTABLE FOR ITS DEPTH OF EXPERIENCE IN PIRACY ISSUES.”

CHAMBERS, SHIPPING (UK) 2019

“IN ANOTHER HIGHLIGHT ILLUSTRATING THE BREADTH OF ITS MARITIME EXPERTISE, THE PIRACY TEAM SECURED THE RELEASE OF 26 HOSTAGES HELD IN SOMALIA IN 2016.”

LEGAL 500, SHIPPING (LONDON) 2018

HFW’S WORK WAS EXPRESSLY COMMENDED BY THE UNITED NATIONS IN SECURING THE RELEASE OF THE 26 HOSTAGES FROM THE VESSEL ‘NAHAM 3’.

UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION [2383 (2017)]

