

# MARITIME PRACTICE

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*Aina Blankson has grown to become a leading global law firm renowned for professionalism and excellence in service delivery. We are consistently regarded as one of the foremost Nigerian law firms in the areas of arbitration, dispute resolution, litigation, corporate commercial law, oil & gas, transaction advisory amongst others.*

**T**he Maritime Practice Team of Aina Blankson represents clients engaged in domestic and international shipping and offshore drilling, transport, and production activities. We act as principal counsel for inland barge lines; towboat companies; ocean-going shipping lines; terminal operators; stevedores; major oil and gas exploration, production, transmission, and service companies; offshore construction companies; builders of inland and ocean vessels; offshore platforms; barges, rigs, and pipelines; and hull, cargo, P&I, and general liability insurers. Because our clients' issues may arise at any time, members of our group are always on call.

Our diverse experience with all aspects of the maritime industry enables us to represent clients in transactional matters and related business operations issues, as well as in regulatory or government relations issues and in complex, multi-district litigation, arbitration, and mediation, as described below.

## MARINE CONTRACTS

**W**ith respect to marine contracts, we have extensive experience in the negotiation and drafting of charter parties, contracts of affreightment, transportation agreements, terminal tariffs, berth applications, letters of credit, shipyard construction and repair contracts, naval architect contracts, and international sales contracts.

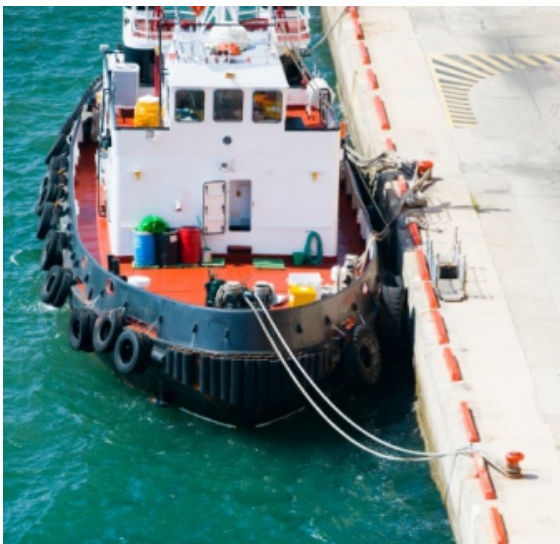


## MARITIME FINANCE

*"We are constantly in search of creative solutions for our diverse range of clients thus positioning us as the law firm of note in Africa."*

**I**n the maritime finance area, we are frequently called on to counsel clients in complex ocean and inland domestic and international vessel acquisitions, financings, and flagging of vessels. We are very experienced in maritime lien enforcement, foreclosures, ship seizures, and maritime bankruptcies. In addition, we have handled billions of dollars in financing and refinancing for maritime industry clients.

## VESSEL REGISTRATION



**T**here can be no maritime business for vessel owners (through vessels) without first ensuring that all registrations/permits with relevant regulatory authorities have been adequately catered for.

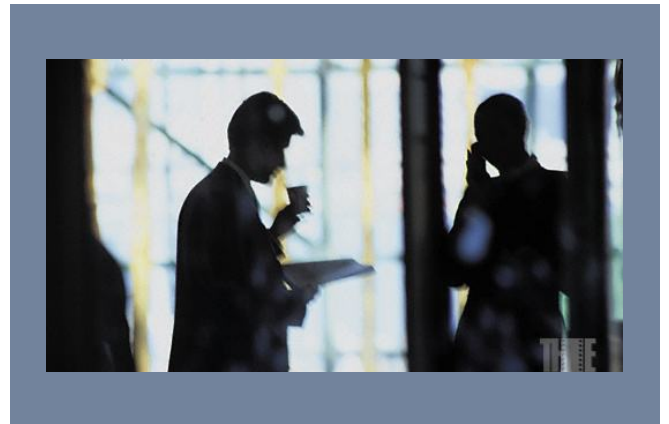
There is therefore need for proper guidance for prospective vessel owners on the import of every document required for registration; from condition survey report to tonnage measurement certificate as approved by the minister, etc.

At Aina Blankson, we have a team of experts that can help make these registration processes seamless; providing you with necessary advice and timeline breakdown for the entire registration process from start to finish.

## PROTECTION & INDEMNITY (P&I) INSURANCE

**W**e understand how essential it is to provide a cover for third party liability incurred by a vessel. Our expert can properly guide you on what documents are needed for protection and indemnity coverage during ship registration.

Our maritime team can be trusted to handle the legal drafting for all relevant documentations and to also offer bespoke legal advice best suited to each client's need with respect to P&I insurance.



## DUE DILIGENCE & PPP ADVISORY



*"We are known for our ability to provide support from project initiation to execution and throughout the lifespan of a project, anticipating pitfalls and regional nuances to ensure a project's success."*

It is highly recommended that stakeholders in the maritime industry carry out thorough investigations before embarking on business in order to prevent avoidable losses. These investigations should cover a broad scope of areas, e.g. regulation and litigation searches on vendors, contracts of employment, supply and procurement, licenses over vessels and properties, qualifications for legitimate operations, survey status of vessels, etc.

Our team of experts can assist stakeholders throughout the entire transaction timeframe. We provide strategic advice on market structure and trends, business planning, benchmarking, restructuring, traffic and demand modelling, tariff modelling, and developing a "go-to market" strategy. By combining financial, technical, and operational expertise, we assist with the commercial decision-making process while minimizing investment risk.

With respect to PPP Advisory, in many ports across the world, the public sector acts mainly as planner, facilitator, and regulator, while the private sector acts as service provider, operator, and developer. Our experts are experienced in assisting clients with applying for funding for a wide variety of port projects. This includes investment by contractors, equity investment from strategic investors, sovereign funds and insurance companies, subsidies from governments and operating revenues and bank loans from financial institutions.



## VESSEL ARREST

With vessel arrests, there are several grounds on which a vessel can be arrested to secure a claim. It is important for stakeholders to note that where the objective of an individual or corporate body is to secure a non-maritime claim, a vessel cannot be arrested. Only the government or port authorities can exercise the power to detain a vessel where it fails to adhere to relevant regulations and this falls outside the scope of what vessel arrest implies in admiralty law.

To ensure success in dealing with vessel arrest issues, our experts are well versed with the necessary procedures as well as documents required to properly handle this area of maritime practice. We are also well equipped to properly advise stakeholders on specific measures to take for the prevention of vessel arrests. It is our job to help stakeholders foresee potential claims that may be brought against the vessel or the owner.

## DISPUTE RESOLUTION



In the maritime industry, disputes are bound to arise and conflicts between parties usually arise from some form of contract e.g. contract for services, misrepresentations associated with maritime contracts and breaches of these contracts, etc. Disputes may also arise from losses as a result of marine accidents, marine-based negligence, etc. These matters may sometime be simple to resolve through agreeable discussions or may be complex in nature; cutting across several subject matters and/or across different jurisdictions. Our team is experienced enough to analyse how best to handle these disputes and which dispute mechanism option is best suited for each issue and we have a strong track record in protecting our client's interests.

## TRANSACTION & REGULATION

We provide the full spectrum of transactional services required by clients in the maritime industry. We have expertise in:

- Capital raising
- Private equity transactions in the maritime industry
- Sales, mergers and acquisitions of shipping companies
- Charterparties
- Shipbuilding contracts
- Restructuring
- Sale and purchase of vessels, etc.

We equally provide expert advice on the regulations that govern the maritime industry both from a domestic and international perspective to help you understand the import of these regulations on maritime business.



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