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T +44 (0)20 7440 6900

## Elizabeth Blackburn QC

Call: 1978  
QC: 1998

2008 - Bencher of the Middle Temple  
2009 - LOF Arbitrator

BA (Hons) - University of Manchester

elizabeth.blackburn@stonechambers.com  
mrseblackburn@aol.com



Elizabeth Blackburn QC has been in practice as a specialist shipping and maritime barrister at the Commercial and Admiralty Bar since 1980 and took silk in 1998. Her range of work covers arbitration, shipping and the international carriage of goods; international trade and associated finance; surety, guarantee and performance bond disputes; marine insurance; P&I Club issues; marine pollution; collision, salvage and towage disputes; shipbuilding, particularly superyacht construction, damage to marine/off shore installations, maritime limitation of liability, maritime International Law and Treaty Obligations; and maritime heritage and wreck law. She has particular expertise in large scale casualty work where there are related conflict of laws and jurisdictional issues, and complex expert issues relating to naval architecture, hydrography, geo-technology and meteorology.

She was part of the UK Delegation at the May 2003 IOPC Supplementary Fund Diplomatic Conference, and has been involved in the finalising and implementation of the Nairobi Wreck Removal Convention 2007. She is also the legal member of the Department of Culture's Advisory Committee on Historic Wreck Sites and has particular expertise in maritime heritage issues and the law of wreck.

Elizabeth Blackburn also has a significant practice as an ICC Arbitrator, specialising in commercial contracts, such as large scale supply contracts in the energy section, shipbuilding contracts and international trade disputes. She has been appointed as both Chairman and sole Arbitrator in a number of such disputes by the ICC International Court of Arbitration on the recommendation of the UK National Committee. She is also a LOF Salvage Arbitrator.

Elizabeth is a Member of the Executive Committee of the British Maritime Law Association and chairs the Pollution Law Sub Committee; a Member of the ICC UK Transport Committee; a member of the Commercial Bar Association; and a Supporting Member of the London Maritime Arbitrators' Association. Elizabeth Blackburn is a Bencher of the Middle Temple and is also actively involved in the London Shipping Law Centre and is the Chair of the Education Sub-Committee and a member of the Steering Committee.

She is consistently recommended as a leading shipping silk in both The Legal 500 and Chambers & Partners:

*Elizabeth Blackburn QC is considered to be the go-to silk for any pollution-related matter. She impresses peers with her "phenomenal work ethic" and "deep knowledge base." She is also highly respected for her expertise in salvage and collision cases. (Chambers & Partners 2012)*

*Elizabeth Blackburn QC is 'a heroine in the pollution cases sector', and is 'proactive and creative in her advice, always responds very quickly and is a delight to deal with'. (Legal 500 2011)*

*Elizabeth Blackburn QC is particularly strong on wet shipping where she has a reputation for excellence when handling technical salvage and collision matters. "Utterly dedicated and with a detailed knowledge of the law, she is everything a QC should be." (Chambers & Partners 2011)*



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*"An exceedingly experienced and accomplished admiralty practitioner," who is "a fantastic and very pleasant silk to work with." Blackburn once again demonstrated her "genuine knowledge of the operation and handling of ships" when undertaking the 'A Turtle' case, concerning the loss of a semi-submersible drilling platform in the South Atlantic. (Chambers & Partners 2010)*

*Beloved by solicitors for 'always having the facts at her fingertips,' she is also an expert on marine cultural heritage issues. (Chambers & Partners 2009)*

*Elizabeth Blackburn QC is a 'very good wet admiralty lawyer who understands how ships are handled', and is especially recommended for pollution and jurisdictional matters. (Legal 500 2009)*

#### Arbitration:

- International maritime and commercial arbitration
- Lloyds Form Salvage Arbitration
- ICC arbitration

#### International Trade & Finance:

- FOB/CIF sale contracts
- Documentary credits & associated finance.
- Surety, guarantee and performance bond disputes.

#### Insurance and Reinsurance:

- Disputes as to coverage and non-disclosure
- Construction of policies
- P&I Club issues

#### Shipping:

- Charterparty and bill of lading disputes, unseaworthiness claims; unsafe port disputes
- General Average
- Collision, Salvage, Towage disputes
- The Law of Wreck
- Shipbuilding and shiprepair disputes

#### Recent Cases of Importance:

*The \*\*\*\* (2010 and ongoing):* acting for the Purchaser of a multi-million euro superyacht in a major shipbuilding arbitration with disputes involving contractual interpretation; alleged costs over runs; time delays; and disputes relating to alleged modifications.

*The MSC CHITRA (2011):* advising the Owners of the MSC Chitra in this major maritime casualty in India.

*The NORDLAKE: INS VINDHYAGIRI (2011):* advising the Owners of the Nordlake in another major maritime casualty in India.

*The OLIVA [2011]:* advising the Owners in a major environmental casualty leading from a grounding in St Helena.

- Damage to marine/offshore installations
- Marine limitation of Liability
- EC Shipping Law

#### Marine Pollution:

- CLC and IOPC Fund Compensation and Supplementary Compensation Fund
- Bunker Liability
- Hazardous and Noxious Substances
- Intervention Convention 1969 and the 1973 Protocol

#### Conflict of Laws /Jurisdiction:

- International Law: United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea 1982

#### Maritime Heritage:

- European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (Valletta Convention, and the UNESCO Convention on Underwater Cultural Heritage 2001
- Protection of Wrecks Act 1973, Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979; and Protection of Military Remains Act 1986



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*The KAMINESAN: HYUNDAI NO 105: MAMITSA* (2004 to 2011): continuing to advise the owners of the VLCC KAMINESAN in this major tri-partite collision in the Singapore Strait with claims in excess of US\$100 million and associated ongoing limitation action in Singapore brought under the 1957 Limitation Convention. This was the largest casualty worldwide in 2004 and there are presently 6 ongoing actions in Singapore.

\*\*\* v \*\*\* (2011): chairing ICC arbitration arising out of the supply of an off-gas treatment plant in one of the Baltic States.

*The ROCKNES* (2009 to 2011): complicated salvage case dealing with the valuation of a rock dumping vessel and the assignment of an Article 13 award to a SCOPIC insurer.

*The \*\*\** (2010): advising in relation to various insurance and contractual issues arising out of a collision with an offshore FPSO Vessel leading to substantial losses of production.

*Micoperi 30* (2008): substantial Commercial Court dispute relating to the pulling over of an offshore structure during installation in the Turkish Akcakoca Fields, acting for the owners and operators of the field. Expert evidence was wide ranging, including offshore engineering and construction issues, the safe working practices of the offshore industry and the insurances available in the market to cover offshore construction projects and well drilling;

*Superyacht dispute* (2008): advising builders on and preparing for a mediation relating to delay, change of specification and alleged breach of confidentiality issues in Superyacht dispute during Spring 2008.

*A Turtle* (2008) EWHC 3034; [2009] 1 Lloyd's Rep 177: acting for Tugowners in this key decision on "knock for knock" clauses.

*The Sea Angel; Tasman Spirit* [2007] 2 Lloyd's Rep 517 (2003 to 2007): alleged frustration of time charterparty arising out of the salvage of this large scale pollution casualty in Pakistan, acting for the successful owners of the SEA ANGEL at first instance and in the Court of Appeal.

*The Cristoforo Colombo* (2004 to 2007): acting for shipowners in this major grounding casualty in the Sakhalin area of Russia. Complex expert issues relating to naval architecture, hydrography, meteorology and geo-technology.

*Greenco BV v J&E Hall Limited, Jackstone Froster Limited* (2005/7): substantial Commercial Court claim for breach of contract and/or negligence concerning amongst other things the design and supply of aluminium freezer plates. Numerous points arising for consideration and advice in relation to expert issues of plate susceptibility to corrosion, corrosion inhibitors, design and integrity of marine freezer systems, weld procedures and general causation.

*The Tricolor and Kariba* (2003): major maritime casualty and wreck removal in English Channel, involving jurisdictional and worldwide limitation issues, acting for Owners of KARIBA, claims in excess of US\$100 million.

*Princesca Oceanica v Merrion Insurance* (2003): Commercial Court trial concerning a series of performance bonds and reinsurance cut through endorsements; worldwide freezing orders leading to committal and sequestration of directors' assets.

*The Palvia* (2003): advising on potential claims for breach of Article 10EC via European Commission in relation to national state breaches of recent EC Directives and Regulations on maritime safety within the EC.

*The Ievoli Sun* : (2000 to 2003): total loss of chemical carrier in the English Channel, carrying bunkers, hazardous and noxious substances. Acting for Shipowners.

*The Gudermes and the St Jacques II*: [2003] 1 Lloyd's Rep 203: collision and limitation action involving laden tanker in English Channel in April 2001. First case in which a claim to limit under the 1976 Limitation Convention was allowed to proceed to trial.

*The Nakhodka* (1997 to 2002): total loss of laden tanker, leading to major maritime disaster in Japan, acting for shipowners. Claim by the IOPC Fund in excess of £189 million; involved litigation in both Japan and UK. Along with the PRESTIGE and ERIKA (in which Elizabeth has also advised), the NAKHODKA is one of the largest oil pollution cases ever dealt with by the IOPC Fund. Also raised issues on the international law of the Sea, treaty obligations, carriage of goods and marine insurance.