

Mr David L I Roberts
H.M. Senior Coroner
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By post & by email:
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Dear Sir

Re: Janet Richardson (deceased) – Inquest 14/15 October 2013

Thank you for your letter dated 16 October 2013 enclosing regulation 28 letter addressed to this firm's client, Cruise and Maritime Services International Limited, trading as Cruise and Maritime Voyages ("CMV"). We have been instructed on their behalf to respond to your regulation 28 letter.

CMV note that your concern is that the deceased fell into the sea during a rescue medical evacuation and that in your opinion action should be taken to prevent future deaths, that CMV has the power to take such action and that the action you suggest is to review procedures, practices risk assessment and equipment relating to ship to ship medical evacuations with a view to minimising the risk of patients suffering injury.

CMV have reviewed in conjunction with their Counsel, **Dr Anthony Howard**, the evidence provided at the inquest and cannot identify any criticisms having been raised by yourself in either your judgement or summary of CMV. Indeed, CMV note that it was concluded that the hatch used in the rescue was entirely reasonable, that the method of evacuation in terms of preference compared to air evacuation was equal given the advantages/disadvantages of the respective methods and in relation to the issue as to whether the vessels should have been tied together, the evidence of **Mr Fogarty** was accepted that the suction effect by both vessels travelling together at 7 knots was an acceptable practice and one they deploy.

CMV strongly believe and are of the opinion that it was made clear at the inquest that the Norwegian Rescue Service were in control of the rescue operation. This is the normal situation when a rescue operation is taking place anywhere in the world. Different rescue services have different procedures depending upon the circumstances in which the rescue occurs, the size of the rescue vessel and the conditions. It is not appropriate for a cruise ship, or indeed any other vessel that has requested assistance from the rescue service, to dictate to the rescue service the procedures that should be adopted by the rescue service whilst carrying out the rescue operation. This could lead to delay, confusion, injury and even loss of life. Therefore, the procedure adopted by CMV in relation to this transfer of a passenger to a rescue vessel and in relation to all other transfers of passengers to rescue vessels, is to follow the procedures set out by the appropriate rescue service.

We understand that since this accident the Norwegian Rescue Service have changed their procedures in order to prevent this accident from reoccurring and so if in future if there is a need for a passenger from a CMV vessel to be transferred to a Norwegian Rescue Service's vessel, we will follow the new procedures adopted by the Norwegian Rescue Service.

Yours faithfully

Hill Dickinson LLP
