

Maritime

ATTORNEYS

- Henry O. Freese-Souffront
(Chair)
- Gustavo A. Gelpí

The maritime industry has long been an anchor of the Puerto Rico economy, with San Juan being one of the busiest ports in the Caribbean in terms of both passenger and cargo facilities.

We provide a comprehensive array of maritime legal services to a diverse group of clients that includes protection and indemnity (P&I) clubs, marine underwriters, multinational transportation companies, cruise lines, marine financing entities, and related maritime companies.

Our exemplary track record in handling major loss cases is the result of extensive experience coupled with a deep understanding of the maritime industry. Our Maritime Law team has represented clients successfully in connection with all types of domestic and international casualties, from simple groundings to the most complex collisions. Clients turn to us for sound, practical advice on from the initial stages of a casualty through to its ultimate conclusion.

Prompt advice from our seasoned maritime attorneys - several whom are Proctors in Maritime Law - can make all the difference in the immediate aftermath of a serious maritime collision or casualty. Our team is prepared to visit casualty scenes and conduct on board investigations – even on short notice -- to develop and preserve crucial evidence, knowing that the initial investigation can profoundly impact the outcome of the case. In the wake of maritime disasters, we also represent ship owners and crewmembers facing investigations by the United States Coast Guard and other law enforcement agencies.

Established leaders in maritime law, we have assisted clients in maritime matters in the Dominican Republic, and other areas of the Caribbean, including the United States Virgin Islands. To further assist our clients, we maintain close working relationships with a number of Western Hemisphere and Caribbean law firms in the field. We also actively participate in several maritime professional organizations.

What We Do

The McConnell Valdés Maritime Law team has significant experience in:

- Cargo loss claims resulting from isolated incidences of theft, handling damage, or mechanical breakdown.
- Major cargo loss claims resulting from major casualties, such as collisions, groundings, sinkings, fires, explosions, and heavy weather.
- Complex collisions involving general average, salvage and limitation of liability issues.
- Conducting on board investigations in the aftermath of collisions and casualties.
- Interviewing crewmembers and witnesses to maritime casualties.
- Representing vessel owners and crewmembers in investigations by the United States Coast Guard and other law enforcement agencies.