

# Bow Wave

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## Book Review

Legal Issues in Bunkering: An Introduction to the Law Relating to the Sale and Use of Marine Fuels by Trevor Harrison, Petrosport Publishers, July 2011, £75/90 Euros/\$125, ISBN 978-0-9548097-6-8

Llewellyn Bankes-Hughes, the publisher of this excellent volume, and many others which display a certain aspiration, interrupted your editor's August dreaming on the Isle of Wight by sending in this oddly enjoyable work by Trevor Harrison, an industry legal man who has lately been in the news by taking over the top job in the industry association IBIA.

There are few books on this subject in particular and in general the only work we can recall was by Chris Fisher and published in the mid 1980s. We happy non-specialists should expect to be amazed at the changing world of modern bunkers and reassured by the timeless habits of the maritime world. On page 42 in the helpful chapter on Charterparty relationships, we find the following passage confirming our expectations:-

*Raising Standards:*

*6.12 Some charterparty forms still in use include phrases such as:*

*\_ capable of steaming about \_\_\_\_ knots in good weather and smooth water on a consumption of about \_\_\_\_ tons best Welsh coal, or about \_\_\_\_ tons oil-fuel...*

*The trusted and familiar often lingers. Standard form charterparties are invariably supplemented with a raft of additional clauses covering a wide range of issues not covered adequately in the basic document. Additional provisions relevant to bunkering of varying length and complexity can be found in addition to the BIMCO clauses referred to above. Although the position is improving, it is surprising how often poor or inadequate bunkering provisions are to be found in charterparties; sometimes, incredibly, there is nothing more than the basic requirement to supply 'oil-fuel'.*

This in a world when the basic sludgy stuff can be made up of 30 different refining products, all the bottom of the energy barrel, for your typical bottom feeding marine propulsion unit.

We liked the sections dealing with quality and quantity disputes, case reviews, arrests and limitations of liability. For those who have a way to go understanding the notions of sulphur content, chrome fines or clean fuels, the author has done the spadework to aid comprehension. The author, presenting a fairly intractable stem of information, has an adroit way with words, using a polite term where a less skilled author would have resorted to a low hanging sardonic term to describe some practise verging on the amoral in an industry sometimes a little short on straight dealings.

The publisher reckons this is one of the company's better offerings in recent times. He is probably right. It is the sort of book an aspiring P&I Club, trade body or classification society ought to have brought out to help their clients or members, but haven't owing to the disciplines of cost accounting and the dictates of lean management. We wish Mr Harrison and the publishers well with this book and recommend it to our Readers as a worthwhile primer for the legion who should know more and for the cadre of executives whose grip on the subject has over time slackened somewhat owing to pressure of work.

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