

Transport & Insurance: Ever Relevant, Ever Needed

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We are once again pleased to share with you, Al Tamimi & Company's annual [Transport](#) & [Insurance](#) special issue of the Law Update.

The topics of [Transport](#) & [Insurance](#) have always been relevant to everyone, and even more so in the year 2020. Now more than ever, transportation by sea and air has acted as the lungs for a besieged world enabling both consumers and parties in commercial transactions to receive their essential and desired goods thereby keeping the world at least relatively moving. Insurance, which initially arose out of uncertainties and risk from the use of transport by sea, continues to be relevant to this day, where uncertainties continue to prevail. Actually, who amongst us has not received a query about force majeure?! Today, we continue to be actively engaged with clients in order to address their issues which arise directly and indirectly from COVID-19's spread and the measures employed by various authorities to mitigate such effects.

Aside from COVID-19, the shipping industry has been in the spotlight in 2020 for various reasons. Firstly, tragic explosion of Beirut Port had its history traced to a ship arrest and consequently raised the issues of dangerous cargo and their storage. Secondly, the people of Mauritius witnessed the unfortunate oil spill when a vessel ran aground on a coral reef, which reminded the world that ship pollution continues to threaten our environment. Thirdly, a livestock carrier (with 43 crew and almost 6,000 cattle) was lost at sea when it crossed paths with a typhoon thereby underscoring that risk in marine voyages remains real, and why insurance came into existence millennia ago via the maritime industry. This also underscores the importance of legal counsel for anyone navigating difficulties and challenges in the marine industry.

Although COVID-19 continues to be an issue, there are still reasons to remain upbeat in 2020. We are heartened to see shipping industry players' continuous endeavours to evolve, notably DP World, which not only joined blockchain platform TradeLens, but also partnered with DGWorld, to equip Jebel Ali Port with a fleet of autonomous vehicles in its operations. This is a reflection of the Middle East's desire to offer first class services and to be ever-relevant in a key global industry, which makes us proud to be a service provider in this region. On the legal front, as you can read in this Law Update's issue, changes have emerged in insurance and trade customs, changes that have been made in the interests of policy holders as well as commercial entities. Further, the United Arab Emirates' decision to normalise ties with Israel is expected to usher in a new phase in trade and transport relations in the Middle East, something we eagerly anticipate.

Turning to this year's Transport & Insurance issue, we have prepared articles concerning maritime, insurance, and customs laws from the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait – which we trust you will find helpful and interesting. This is in addition to many other transport and insurance focused articles which we publish throughout the year with reference to industry developments and our clients' interests. Our future publications will also focus on the developments and changes to the aviation industry post COVID-19; and will endeavour to demystify the new operational and legal landscape of travel by air. We encourage you keep a look out for them.

We hope you will find this issue to be a pleasure to read, and we look forward to ending 2020 on a high note together with you.