

RICHARD SADLER DCL

Mr Vice-Chancellor,

Have you ever had a problem with your scantlings? I understand they can be most difficult on occasion. When allowed to go unchecked, the consequences can be quite disastrous, with major ramifications for all involved. Now, if they do cause concern, you should call Mr Richard Sadler, who is quite expert in these matters.

In shipbuilding, “the scantling” refers to the collective dimensions of the various parts, particularly the framing and structural supports of a ship. Mr Sadler had “the scantling length” etched on his mind between 1976 and 1979 whilst as an undergraduate studying Naval Architecture here at Newcastle University. He is a proud Alumnus, and his Newcastle education has stood him in good stead.

Immediately after completing his degree, Mr Sadler joined the Lloyd’s Register Group – a career involving several roles in several countries, and culminating in his appointment as Chief Executive Officer in July 2007. As many of you will know, the Lloyd’s Register Group is the marine classification society. Historically known as “Lloyd’s Register of Shipping”, the aim of the organisation is not the maritime equivalent of train-spotting: rather, Lloyd’s Register is a genuinely independent

risk management organisation, handling the classification of major industrial facilities. And its work is no longer confined to the deep, with the 20th century seeing expansion into rail transport, and the energy industries.

Given recent interest in the media, it is important that I clarify the relationship between the Lloyd's Register Group and a similar-named high-street organisation currently struggling in the troubled banking market. If we look back in history, both organisations began life in the 1760s in the same London establishment. But were they intermingled from the start, founded by the same forward-thinking Georgian industrial magnate? A man who had foresight and driving ambition? Well, Mr Vice-Chancellor, this does turn out to be the case – but not in the way you might at first imagine.

Both Lloyd's Register of Ships and Lloyd's bank owe their name to Mr Edward Lloyd, who ran a famous and successful London coffee house. So, both organisations actually began over a cup of coffee – and, although totally distinct from the start, both took their name from this famous drinking venue. I just wonder if those 18th century meetings would have been quite so productive, had they been drinking mocha, Americano or decaffeinated..... smothered in whipped cream, injected with vanilla essence, and sprinkled with chocolate powder? This might well have been a distraction and, as a result, we would not be here today.

Within a few years, the first “Lloyd’s Register of Ships” was published in 1764. This was largely to guide underwriters and merchants about the vessels they insured and chartered. Since then, Lloyd’s Register has become one of the City’s great institutions, occupying a fine Edwardian Palazzo designed by Thomas Colcutt on the corner of Fenchurch Street, and more recently overflowing into the famous steel and glass tower building designed by Richard Rogers - architecture inspired by technology spanning the generations following the industrial revolution.

So what about the classification rules? Have they influenced each one of us in this congregation today? Well, our University has a proud track record of excellence in Marine Engineering. The standards first established by Lloyd’s Register have subsequently been put into practice by Marine Engineers educated in Newcastle who ensure the highest safety standards are maintained throughout the world. You can check this out whenever you board a sea-faring vessel, be it in South Shields or Singapore, Newcastle or Nassau, Wallsend or Waikiki (..... whichever you prefer). Look on the dock-side of the hull and you will see a horizontal line bisecting a circle, flanked by the letters “L...R”, standing for “Lloyd’s Register”. This is the load line, and it is checked and certified by the Lloyd’s team on an annual basis, ensuring that the ship carries no more than the permitted cargo, and thus remains sea-worthy.

But that is not all, Mr Vice-Chancellor. I am sure that, whilst you were a student, you were frequently classified as “A1”. In this respect, you are rather like the Queen Mary, or perhaps the Cutty Sark – because this classification grade was first used in the 1775-1776 edition of Lloyd’s Register of Ships. In this volume, the ship’s hull was given a letter grade, and the masts and rigging were given a numerical grade. You will be pleased to know that, even in 18th century shipping circles, “A1” also meant “of the highest calibre”. Attributes clearly shared with yourself.

Given that, ultimately, this classification depends on the structural integrity and “seaworthiness” of an ocean-going vessel, it is perhaps surprising (not to say remarkable) that Mr Richard Sadler is the very first Naval Architect to be handed the helm at Lloyd’s Register in its 249 year history. Since joining Lloyds immediately after completing his degree, Richard worked in marine, industrial and offshore sectors before moving overseas for 12 years. In this way, he gathered a unique portfolio of experience, covering technical and financial aspects in several sectors of the global economy.

Central to his success is passion and commitment to a vision, based on a solid foundation of Naval Architecture acquired at Newcastle University. A Naval Architect is considered by many to be the “general practitioner” of the marine technology

business, and his appointment as Chief Executive Officer recognises the importance of cost-effective technical solutions to the challenges facing the worldwide marine industry. This is crucial at present, as the industry reduces its environmental impact through improved fuel efficiency, enhancing structural integrity and reliability, whilst plotting a course through troubled financial waters. With a chartered engineer at the tiller, Lloyd's Register will remain the vanguard of the fleet.

But Richard's attributes extend beyond the boardroom. He is a man of great energy – and particularly for outdoor pursuits, be it marathon running, sailing, windsurfing, mountaineering or camping. His infectious enthusiasm extends to his ongoing support for the School of Marine Science and Technology in our University. He regularly visits the school, giving informal advice to staff and students, and he encourages collaborative research between the institutions. He is an ambassador for our University throughout the world, supporting many Newcastle Alumni.

Therefore, in recognition of his major contribution to the international marine industry, Mr Vice-Chancellor, I now ask that you bestow upon him the degree of Doctor of Civil Law, *honoris causa*.

Citation by Professor Patrick Chinnery