



BIOGRAPHY



Lieutenant Commander (LCDR) LARS T. OKMARK

LCDR Okmark currently serves as the Senior Staff Attorney in the Office of Maritime & International Law (CG-LMI), Prevention Law Division where he provides legal advice and counsel on marine inspections, investigations, facility management, waterways management, and applicable domestic and international law. He also serves as an investigating officer and legal counsel to the Mariner Credentialing Fraud Task Force. Prior to this assignment, LCDR Okmark earned his Journeyman Marine Inspector competency while assigned as a marine inspector and investigator at Sector Corpus Christi, where he conducted inspections and examinations on domestic and foreign vessels and also conducted marine casualty investigations and personnel investigations of licensed mariners. LCDR Okmark also served at as a staff attorney in CG-LMI, Response Law Division, advising field units on maritime law enforcement cases, counterterrorism operations, capabilities, and working with interagency partners for maritime law enforcement case dispositions. In his first assignment, LCDR Okmark served as an appellate prosecutor in the Office of Military Justice. LCDR Okmark also served as the military aide for the former Judge Advocate General of the Coast Guard, and current Vice Commandant, ADM Steven D. Poulin.



LCDR Okmark was born and raised in the suburbs of Chicago. In 2004, he enlisted in the United States Army as a Blackhawk helicopter crew chief and, in 2005, was accepted to assess for the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment (SOAR). During his tenure at SOAR, LCDR Okmark earned the rank of Staff Sergeant and served as shop supervisor, deploying multiple times in support of Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom. Following his honorable service in the Army, LCDR Okmark enlisted in the Navy Reserves as a Legalman First Class (LN1), serving as a paralegal for the Staff Judge Advocate at Fort McPherson, Georgia.

LCDR Okmark earned his bachelor's degree from Austin Peay State University and attended graduate school at Eastern Kentucky University. In May 2014, he graduated with honors from Northern Illinois University Law School where he served as a Notes and Comments Editor of Law Review. He also completed Joint Professional Military Education at the Naval War College and is earning a graduate degree from the Air War College. LCDR Okmark is currently authorized to practice law in Illinois.

LCDR Okmark has been awarded the Air Medal (2nd award), Coast Guard Commendation Medal (2nd award) with Operational Distinguishing Device, Navy & Marine Corps Commendation Medal, Army Commendation Medal (2nd award), Afghanistan Campaign Medal (one bronze service star), and the Iraqi Campaign Medal (four bronze service stars), among others.

LCDR Okmark is married and has three beautiful children. He enjoys watching all Chicago sports, with an emphasis on the five-time Stanley Cup champion Chicago Blackhawks.

“Fireside Chat” Recreational Vessels

**Maritime Law Association
Committee on Recreational Boating
May 4, 2023**



**LCDR Lars Okmark
Senior Attorney, Prevention Law Division
Office of Maritime and International Law
U.S. Coast Guard**



Aquatic Invasive Species

- States are attempting to collect an “aquatic invasive species” fee as a condition to receive a Certificate of Number (CON)
- 46 U.S.C. § 12307: regulates the authority to issue a CON to carry out intent of chapter
- 33 CFR § 174.31: permits States to condition issuance of CON
- Is there an alternative?





Delaware Flag of Convenience

Problem Statement

- ▶ Delaware's vessel numbering program and corporate registry have created a de facto "Flags of Convenience" system within the U.S.
- ▶ As currently administered, the program inhibits the Coast Guard's ability to fulfill our obligations under international conventions and treaties to which the U.S. is signatory.



State Numbering vs. Federal Documentation

STATE NUMBERING

- ▶ No proof of ownership and/or verification of vessel type/service
- ▶ Can be completed via mail/online
- ▶ State systems approved by Coast Guard
- ▶ All self-propelled vessels (unless federally documented)
- ▶ **Intended for use in the “State of Principal Operation”**
- ▶ Contains Reciprocity clause
- ▶ Invalid on the date a vessel is “documented or required to be documented”
- ▶ **Invalid 60 days after the day on which a vessel is no longer principally operated in the State** where the certificate was issued

DOCUMENTATION

- ▶ Vessels of at least 5 net tons wholly owned by a citizen(s) of the U.S. **are eligible**
- ▶ However, only **vessels greater than 5 net tons and engaged in trade must have a COD.** (46 U.S.C. § 12102(a))
- ▶ “Fisheries” and “Coastwise Trade” are only required endorsements (46 CFR § 67.7)
- ▶ Citizenship requirement
- ▶ Proof of Ownership (title) required

Example: PERLA DEL MARE



EUR€ 45,000.00 -
65,000.00/WK

RESERVE this Yacht Charter



The 2010 Gulet PERLA DEL MARE has a dedicated and professional crew of 7 and is based in Gocek, turkey year round offering an unforgettable cruising experience along the Aegean and Mediterranean coasts of Turkey.

Yacht Charter Specifications

Type/Year:	SABA Yacht/2010	Beam:	9.00m (29' 6")
Refit:		Crew:	7
L.O.A.:	42.2m (138.5')	Max Speed:	14 knots
Charter Guest:	12	Engines:	Volvo 550 HP X 2
Cabins:	6	More Yacht Info:	Superyachts From 2010 2010 Charter Yachts
Cruise Speed:	11 knots		

Detention of SY PERLA DEL MARE

REPORT OF INSPECTION IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PARIS MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING ON PORT STATE CONTROL *)

Reporting Authority:

- Inspection Office Rhodes
- PI. Eleftherias Mandraki - GR-851 00 Rhodes
- Phone: +30 22410 22 203 - Fax: +30 22410 27 365
- E-mail: rodos@hcg.gr - Website:

copy to: - master
- head office
- PSCO

if ship is detained, copy to:
- flag state

SHIP DETAINED

SHIP PARTICULARS

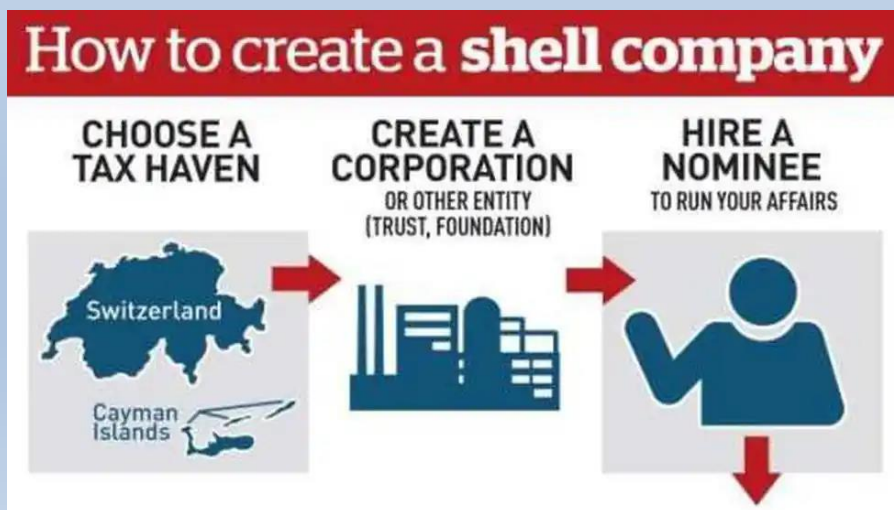
1 Name of ship:	PERLA DEL MARE	2 Flag of ship:	United States	3 Type of Ship:	Commercial yacht
4 Call sign:	WDH5141	5 IMO number:	P150028	6 MMSI Number:	367624920
7 Date keel laid / major conversion commenced:	01/01/2010	8 Deadweight (where applicable):		10 Main Engine (KW):	820
9 Gross tonnage	271	11 Old tonnage		12 Emission Abat. Method:	

Appeal to Greek PSC authority denied 02/04/2015



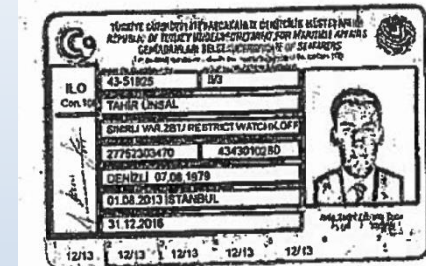
A System of Shell Companies

- 70+ companies/yachts of immediate concern; several more likely exist
- Anecdotal evidence that none of the vessels have ever been to U.S. and that the “shell” companies/vessels are “owned” by foreign nationals.
- The system makes it nearly impossible to identify an owner or “RP”



Shell Companies Illustrated

Registration Detail	
FRN:	0017294802
Registration Date:	01/04/2008 09:00:00 AM
Last Updated:	06/19/2008 10:12:52 AM
Business Name:	Corporations & Companies, Inc.
Business Type:	Private Sector, Corporation
Contact Organization:	
Contact Position:	Assistant Vice-Pres.
Contact Name:	Ms Christina Snow
Contact Address:	910 Foulk Road Suite 201 Wilmington, DE 19803 United States
Contact Email:	info@corpco.com
ContactPhone:	(302) 652-4800
ContactFax:	(302) 652-6760



Hull Number	201007186844
Vessel Name	PERLA DEL MARE
Make	SABA
Year Built	2010
Previous Registration	DL0382AC
Previous Owner	HALF YACHTING LIMITED
Previous Owner State	DL
Hull Material	Wood
Propulsion Type	
Primary Operation	Commercial Passenger

43	WDH4294	Sourson Yachting Inc.	0017294802	SA	Active	04/17/2024
44	WDH4726	Bering Yachting Limited	0017294802	SA	Active	05/13/2024
45	WDH4811	Autumn Yachting Limited	0017294802	SA	Active	05/16/2024
46	WDH5140	Yapi Kredi Finansal Kiralama A.O.	0017294802	SA	Active	06/03/2024
47	WDH5141	Half Yachting Limited	0017294802	SA	Active	06/03/2024
48	WDH5231	Moonlight Yachting Limited	0017294802	SA	Active	06/06/2024
49	WDH5232	ARGENT WALK LLC	0017294802	SA	Active	06/06/2024
50	WDH5259	TENKER YACHTING LTD.	0017294802	SA	Active	06/07/2024
51	WDH5336	Bering Yachting Limited	0017294802	SA	Active	06/12/2024
52	WDH5363	SUNWORLD YACHTING LIMITED	0017294802	SA	Active	06/13/2024





Moving Forward

- Goals:
 - Protect federal interests as it relates to “vessels of the United States” operating overseas
 - Hold “bad actors” accountable
 - Ensure the integrity of the vessel state numbering program





Automatic Identification System

- Purpose: Broadcasts vessel location, identity, course and speed information—used for ATON, collision avoidance, SAR, security, etc.
- IMO requirements: 74 SOLAS (20) V/19.2.4
 - All vessels of 300 GT and above engaged on international voyages and all passenger ships
- Regulatory requirements: 33 CFR § 164.46(b)(i)
 - A self-propelled vessel of 65 feet or more in length, engaged in commercial service.



**“Fireside Chat”
Recreational Vessels**



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