

Classification Summaries And Third Party Liability

Legal Alert
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Classification Societies play an important role in connection with constructing, operating and insuring vessels. While classification certificates issued by a Classification Society for a particular vessel provide validation to the vessel's owner that the vessel meets certain technical standards of construction and operation, such certificates are not intended to be guarantees to the world that the vessel is seaworthy or fit for a particular purpose.

The article prepared by Foster Garvey attorney [Steve Block](#) provides a helpful reminder of this limitation and discusses whether a third party, who has been injured by a vessel, can recover its costs from a Classification Society based on the theory that the Classification Society acted negligently or worse, with reckless disregard, in surveying the vessel for the vessel owner. Click [here](#) to read the article.

You may also find the article, "No Class Act: a Bad Survey Lands a Classification Society in Hot Water," to be particularly helpful. It serves as a reminder about communicating with the Classification Society when planning to rely upon the Classification Society's survey in deciding whether or not to purchase a particular vessel.

If you have any questions regarding Classification Societies or any other maritime related issues, please contact Ed Harley (ed.harley@foster.com | 206.447.4688), Chair of [Foster Garvey's Yacht, Ships & Submersibles](#) group.

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