



Often the expert who resolves the underlying confusion in marine cases, Greg Davis formed DMCA LLC in order to provide litigation support in challenging legal disputes. From determining the cause of a boat sinking, to valuating loss during marina operations, Greg shares a snippet of his knowledge on the sector he has spent 44 years specializing in.

“The regulations in the USA have not kept up with current technology, i.e. fuel injection of gasoline engines and fuel system design. Several current projects involving explosions in recreational craft have their cause rooted within this issue.”

Contact

Gregory T. Davis,
Principal Consultant
Davis Marine Consulting
Associates, LLC
T: 630-235-7881
W: www.dmcacall.com

ENGINEERING LAW

Marine Engineering: What Needs to Change?

When an accident occurs, in order for you to appropriately analyze the circumstances, what reports and actions need to be taken?

The most important action in USA occurrences is to preserve the evidence. This will reduce potential exposure to successful spoliation allegations, and allows for analyses resulting in well-founded opinion/s.

From your perspective, do any regulations need to change, or should there be better awareness on particular issues, which would help challenges you and clients may face in your field?

Regulation of recreational boats in the USA is minimal in comparison to the EU Recreational Craft Directive. The regulations in the USA have not kept up with current technology, i.e. fuel injection of gasoline engines and fuel system design. Several current projects involving explosions in recreational craft have their cause rooted within this issue.

In the US, voluntary standards of the American Boat and Yacht Council are utilized in the recreational boat manufacturing industry as a component of certification. It is important that the investigator is up to date on the ever-changing standards and is knowledgeable on the proper application of them.

In the US, passenger (excess of 12 people) carrying vessels are regulated and inspected by the US Coast Guard. The regulations of these vessels are more comprehensive than recreational boats. However, there remains a significant engineering-based criterion of 'best practices' that are not clearly defined. The investigator of incidents must be aware of the processes utilized in order to properly analyze the date in support of the opinion/s expressed.

How has the marine engineering progressed over the years? How has this impacted the cases you see in court?

The realm of boating investigations was largely subjective. The evolution of engineering data collection and analysis techniques such as Faro scanning and animations, allow the investigator to bring complex matters into a visual format readily understood by the non-technical person.

The importance of sharing knowledge along these lines is recognized by technical societies, such as The Society of Naval Architects and Marine Engineers (SNAME) via their technical panels Marine Forensics 1, vessels and Marine Forensics 10, small boats of which I am chair. **LM**

About Greg Davis

Mr Davis is a Principal at Davis Marine Consulting Associates, LLC as of July 2018. Previously he was a Senior Managing Consultant at Engineering Systems, Inc. (ESI), as well as the Director of the Marine Practice Group. He is the founder and President of Davis and Company Ltd., the nation's leading marine survey and loss investigation firm. He is an internationally recognized expert in marine forensics and marine survey. Mr Davis is a Fire and Explosion Investigator certified by the National Association of Fire Investigators, and a Marine Surveyor certified by the National Association of Marine Surveyors, Inc. He participated as a guest to the NFPA 921 Fire and Explosion committee to assist in the authorship of the then new marine chapter.

Mr Davis has authored numerous articles on marine accidents and surveying that have been published in leading trade journals and at professional symposia. He speaks frequently at boating and marine industry conferences and has been called upon to provide expert testimony at legal proceedings in state and federal courts.