

NORTH P&I CLUB DIRECTORS APPOINT NEW CHAIRMAN

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Directors of the 'A' rated 150 million GT North P&I Club have appointed Pratap Shirke of Australian ship management group ASP as their new chairman. He succeeds Albert Engelsman of Dutch shipping group Wagenborg, who has completed a successful four-year term of office.

Shirke has served as a director since 1994 - initially with the Newcastle P&I Club which merged with North in 1998 - and was elected North's vice-chairman in May 2007. He was also chairman of the Club's investment committee for 13 years. He became chairman on 19 October 2011 at the Club's board meeting in Newcastle upon Tyne, UK.

Commenting on his appointment Shirke said, 'I look forward to continuing the excellent progress North has made under the stewardship of my predecessor Albert Engelsman. During his term of office the Club has grown from 72 million to 150 million GT total entered tonnage and boosted free reserves by 65% Despite uncertain times ahead for all P&I Clubs, I will ensure we continue to build further on North's three strategic pillars of membership quality, financial strength and service excellence.'

Shirke brings a wealth of international commercial and maritime expertise to his new role at the Club. He is a director of ASP Ship Management Group based in Melbourne, Australia which - through its decentralised fleet-management offices in the UK, Finland, India, Singapore, the Philippines and Australia - manages around 85 vessels worldwide including tankers, ro-ro vessels, bulk carriers, self-unloading bulk carriers and ferries. He is also a UK director of PanOceanic Bulk Carriers (UK) Ltd, which owns several chemical and bulk carriers via a holding company.

Shirke is assisted in his new role by Lars B. Christensen, who succeeds him as vice-chairman. Christensen joined North's board in 2006 and is senior vice-president and head of the tanker department at Danish shipping company D/S Norden A/S. Based in Copenhagen and with offices in Singapore, China, USA, Brazil and India, Norden operates around 250 dry cargo and tanker vessels worldwide and has a newbuilding programme of over 30 ships.

North's joint managing directors Paul Jennings and Alan Wilson welcomed the new appointments. 'We are fortunate to have such an eminent, experienced and enthusiastic team of member directors and look forward to supporting Pratap and Lars in their new roles over the coming years,' says Jennings.

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