Mike Schwarz, CEO of the International Institute of Marine Surveying (IIMS), was recently interviewed about the future of marine surveying. The interview, titled “Technologies are changing in the industry as never before and at a fast rate,” appeared in the March 2016 issue of Gibraltar Shipping. The full interview can be read on the IIMS website. In the interview, Mike discusses the key values of the IIMS, the role of the Institute in promoting the marine surveying profession, and the impact of new technologies on the industry.

Mike Schwarz: CEO of the International Institute of Marine Surveying

The IIMS is composed of over 1,000 members across 90 countries. How do members benefit from the Institute? What advice would you provide to a client seeking the services of a Marine Surveyor?

Mike Schwarz: The benefits of the Institute include:

- Recognising excellence in marine surveying
- Certification and re-certification
- Continuing Professional Development (CPD) courses
- Quarterly publication of the Institute’s magazine
- An annual membership identification card
- Access to the Institute’s logo for use on business cards and websites
- Member discounts on services such as web design and training
- Recognition and the ability to show letters after their name as a member of the Institute

For more than 15 years IIMS has provided distance learning, professional qualifications for surveyors in small craft and commercial ship marine surveying. The course material is extensive, current and of the highest quality.

Mike Schwarz: The buzz words last year wherever I went in the world were “surveyor standards and competency.” Technologies are changing in the industry, as never before and at a fast rate. Surveyors need to be abreast of these changes if they wish to remain relevant. IIMS insists that all members following a process of CPD as most similar professions do these days. CPD is the way they can develop and ensure their skills remain current.

Mike Schwarz: A memorable experience but not for the right reasons! So that I could better understand the role of a marine surveyor, I joined an experienced practitioner at Southampton Docks to oversee him at work. The job? Simple. To load 7 Sunseeker Yachts for onward transportation to the Med. I found the whole experience truly absorbing from the loading of one vessel off a low loader lorry to lifting one craft from the sea itself. But what made it memorable was the damage of an expensive yacht as it swung uncontrollably into a steel bulkhead! It was at that point that the surveyor went into action, recording what he had seen and at that moment I totally understood the role and importance of the surveyor.

Mike Schwarz: Your favourite ship?

Mike Schwarz: HMS Wellington. Sadly some have passed away and others now too old and frail. But I have reconnected with the first President, William MacDonald (Capt. Bill to his friends), who lost touch with IIMS a few years ago and was surprised to hear from me. We became instant friends! Very much one of the ‘founding fathers’ and a visionary, he told me about the struggle he and others went through to establish the Institute. He was astonished to see how the Institute has flourished.

Mike Schwarz: For me, some of my early memories of the Institute are the remarkable achievements of the first President, each time I see the Queen Mary 2 emerging into The Solent and that is my favourite ship.