

MARITIME AND ADMIRALTY DEPARTMENT



GALLO VITUCCI KLAR
LLP

Maritime and Admiralty

Gallo Vitucci Klar's Maritime and Admiralty Department focuses on the defense of commercial and recreational vessel owners and insurers (international and inland waters), U.S. Merchant Marine License Holders, vessel pilots, investigation of claims (pre-litigation), property/vessel damage, insurance coverage disputes, personal injury defense, vessel damage claims adjustment, vessel salvage claims, and Limitation of Liability Act (LOLA) actions.

Our attorneys successfully navigate their clients through the lengthy process of investigation, hearings, arbitrations, mediation, litigation, claims adjustments, and the interpretation of both state and federal law.

Head of the Maritime and Admiralty Department, Commander Richard González



As head of GVK's Maritime and Admiralty Department, Lieutenant Commander Richard González provides a unique ethos of realistic, well-rounded legal advice to insurers and insureds alike in the successful defense of all admiralty matters.

Licensing Hearings: Revocation and Suspension

Our attorneys are highly experienced in defending U.S. Merchant Marine License Holders at U.S. Coast Guard investigations/hearings, and vessel pilots during investigations and hearings before State Maritime Pilot & Docking Commissions. These routine hearings, associated with marine casualties, can greatly impact the outcome of the future civil litigation. However, the main purpose of these defenses is to protect the mariner's license and livelihood.

Experienced Attorneys

The complex waters of recreational and commercial maritime casualties and their aftermath can be daunting for insurer and defense counsel alike. A labyrinth of complex issues, unique to maritime and admiralty matters should only be handled by an aficionado with years of intimate knowledge. Our attorneys are familiar with the intricacies of this complex field, and stand ready to provide you with the best guidance and advice possible, in order to protect your interests.



Photo Credit: U.S. Coast Guard, PA2 Mike Hvozda; Public Domain

Maritime Emergency Response Team (MERT)

GVK provides a 24/7 Maritime Emergency Response Team to investigate large vessel claims and catastrophic maritime casualties.

The initial investigation of maritime casualty is of paramount importance. Any initial misstep in the investigation phase can negatively impact the civil litigation and have serious consequences for the vessel insurers, its owners, and licensed mariners and pilots involved.

By utilizing GVK's 24/7 Maritime Emergency Response Team (MERT) following a vessel casualty, carriers and insureds can rest assured knowing that experienced GVK attorneys and investigators will be dispatched to the scene immediately.

MERT provides the following immediately

- Assistance with securing critical evidence
- Identification of key witnesses
- Obtaining necessary statements
- Preservation of onboard GPS data
- Timely photographs
- Accident reconstruction
- Lockdown or restriction of vessel

MERT's involvement on the scene, while the investigation by the U.S. Coast Guard is underway, is critical to the successful defense of the claim. We ensure that the official investigation is conducted in accordance with all applicable rules and regulations, and that our insured's/client's interests are well protected.

Commander Richard González: Former U.S. Coast Guard

Due to his unique talent combination as a marine investigator and an attorney, he was designated lead prosecutor and investigator for numerous U.S. Coast Guard licensing suspension and revocation actions against licensed mariners.

High-Profile Investigations

Commander González served as lead marine investigator for the U.S. Coast Guard in New York and New Jersey, where he handled multiple high-profile maritime accidents, casualties, and environmental pollution/crimes, including but not limited to vessel groundings and collisions, STELLAMARE (vessel overturned with multiple loss of life), and the crash of the Staten Island Ferry which resulted in multiple casualties and loss of life.

Notable Assignments

Some of Commander González notable assignments include experience in Marine Casualty Investigations and Enforcement, Pollution Incident Investigations, Energy and Facilities Regulations, Maritime Homeland Security, Waterways Management, Deck Watch Officer (underway/inport), and as a Maritime Law Enforcement Boarding Officer.



Photo Credit: U.S. Coast Guard, PA2 Mike Hvozda; Public Domain

Awards and Distinctions

Commander González is the recipient of multiple awards from the U.S. Coast Guard, including but not limited to:

- Commendation Medal (four)
- Achievement Medal
- Letter of Commendation Ribbon
- Presidential Unit Citation
- Good Conduct Medal
- National Defense Service Medal (two)
- Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal (Haiti)
- Global War on Terrorism Service Medal
- Humanitarian Service Medal (two)
- Cutterman Insignia and Marine Safety Environmental Protection Insignia

Prior Work Experience

Upon his retirement, from over 20 years of active duty military service, Commander González joined a boutique maritime firm in New York City, where he was instrumental in successfully handling multiple recreational and commercial admiralty legal matters, including vessel salvage claims, and numerous Super Storm Sandy vessel and marina damage claims.

Admissions – State Bars

- New York
- New Jersey
- Florida
- Minnesota
- District of Columbia

Admissions – Federal Courts

- U.S. District Court, Southern and Eastern Districts of New York
- U.S. District Court, District of New Jersey
- U.S. District Court, Southern, Northern and Middle Districts of Florida
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Eleventh Circuit
- U.S. Supreme Court
- Additional Court Admissions: U.S. Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces; U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit; U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims; U.S. Court of International Trade

Education

- University of Miami School of Law, J.D.
- Harvard University, M.L.A.
- Florida Atlantic University, M.P.A.
- U.S. Coast Guard, Officer Candidate School
- University of Minnesota, B.A.

Professional Affiliations

- Maritime Law Association of the United States
- Military Officers Association of America
- Veterans of Foreign Wars
- Military Order of Foreign Wars of the United States
- Florida Bar Association

Teaching Experience

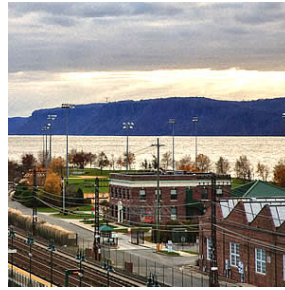
- Recreational boating safety in Ecuador, attended by locals as well as members of the Ecuadorian Coast Guard
- Training seminars for U.S. Coast Guard Marine Casualty Investigators in New York and Boston

Our Locations



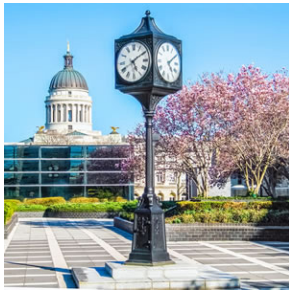
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