



ATTORNEYS
AT LAW

William A. Graffam Of Counsel

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Mr. Graffam has over 40 years of experience litigating and counseling clients in diverse areas of law. He concentrates his practice in all areas of maritime law with a strong concentration in oil pollution, environmental damages, personal injury and collision litigation. Mr. Graffam has assisted vessel owners and underwriters in resolving disputes throughout all of Central and South America, Dominican Republic and various other islands in the Caribbean.

Since starting the practice of law in 1977, Mr. Graffam has also developed extensive experience in general civil and commercial litigation, complex multidistrict litigation, insurance defense, products liability, environmental litigation, Civil RICO claims, antitrust and copyright litigation. His experience includes a wide range of cases in bench trials, jury trials and appeals, as well as arbitrations and mediations.

His practice further includes experience in labor and employment law areas, such as: negotiation of various collective bargaining agreements, injunctions before the District Court for the District of Puerto Rico, as well as employment jury trials.

Mr. Graffam greatly enjoys providing support to non-profit organizations such as St. Jude Research Children's Hospital and Puerto Rico Down Syndrome Foundation, amongst others. Mr. Graffam is an avid recreational fisherman and Paso Fino horse rider.

Professional Associations & Certifications

Mr. Graffam is a professor of Admiralty and Maritime Law, having taught at the Interamerican University of Puerto Rico Law School from 1983 to 1985, and at the University of Puerto Rico Law School from 1985 to 1996.

Mr. Graffam has been a member of the Instituto Iberoamericano de Derecho Marítimo (IIDM) since 1982, and served as President of the IIDM from 2012-2014. The IIDM is an international maritime organization of all the 24 Iberoamerican Countries. Its primary purpose is to promote the development of uniformity in Maritime Law internationally and to serve as a consulting organization to all international organizations on this matter.



Practice Areas

- Admiralty, Maritime, and Transportation
- Civil and Commercial Litigation
- Construction
- Labor and Employment

Education

University of Puerto Rico Law School

San Juan, PR
1977, JD
Magna Cum Laude

Elmira College

Elmira, NY
1974, BS in Business Administration
Cum Laude

Bar Admissions

- Puerto Rico Bar, 1977
- United States District Court for the District of Puerto Rico, 1978
- United States Court of Appeals for the First Circuit, 1978
- United States Claims Court, 1982
- United States Court of International Trade, 1982
- United States Supreme Court, 1985
- United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit, 1990

Mr. Graffam has participated as a speaker in numerous international seminars on various aspects of Maritime Law, and has written extensively on said subject.

Solution to Maritime Conflicts; The Anglo-Saxon Perspective July 2016 at Maritime Law Conference in Paraguay.

The International Comparative Legal Guide to: Shipping Law 2014 2nd Edition.

Maritime Security, Port Protection, Ports of Refuge and Maritime Arbitration, on November 7, 2006 at Instituto Iberoamericano de Derecho Marítimo in Santo Domingo, República Dominicana.

International Law, Maritime Commerce and Maritime Arbitration, on August 25, 2006 at Instituto Iberoamericano de Derecho Marítimo in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

La Historia y Desarrollo de los Seguros de los P&Is Particularidades de las Garantías de los P&Is como Mecanismo de Aseguramiento y Pago de Reclamaciones Marítimas, on February 8, 1999 at Instituto Iberoamericano de Derecho Marítimo in San José, Costa Rica.

Applicable Environmental and Maritime Laws, on February 26, 1998 at First Environmental & Maritime Law Conference in San Juan, Puerto Rico.
Conflictos en la Acción como Mecanismo de Aseguramiento y Pago de Reclamaciones Marítimas: La Alternativa de las Cartas de Garantía de los Clubes de P&I, on October 19, 1997 at Instituto Iberoamericano de Derecho Marítimo in Cartagena de Indias, Colombia.

Convenciones Internacionales en Materia de Conocimiento de Embarques, on November 29, 1996 at Instituto Iberoamericano de Derecho Marítimo in Santo Domingo, República Dominicana.

From OPA to the Morris J. Berman, on February 9, 1996 at Tulane Seminar in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Handling of Passenger Claims in the Caribbean, on March 26, 1995 at UK Club Operators Conference in San Francisco, California.

U.S. OPA 90 Act, on October 17, 1994 at Britannia P&I Seminar in Minneapolis.

Representative Cases

Commonwealth of Puerto Rico v. The S.S. ZOE COLOCOTRONI

628 F.2d 652 (1st Cir. 1980)

Leading case on measure of damages for environmental claims.

EAC Timberlane v. Pisces Ltd.

580 F. Supp. 99 (USDC-PR 1983); 745 F.2d 715 (1st Cir.1984)

Full exoneration from the explosion and total loss of the M/V EVA MARIA.

In re Puerto Rican Cabotage Antitrust Litigation

815 F.Supp.2d 448 (D.P.R. 2011)

Multi-district antitrust litigation involving US Flag carriers in the United States/Puerto Rico trade.

Ocaso, S.A. Compañía de Seguros y Reaseguros v. Puerto Rico Maritime Shipping Authority

915 F.Supp.1244 (D.P.R. 1996)

Insurance Interest and Voiding of Policy.

Puerto Rico Ports Authority v. M/V MANHATTAN PRINCE et. al.

897 F.2d 1 (1st Cir. 1990)

Allision incident fault allocation case.