

Jonathan K. Waldron | Senior
Counsel
Maritime

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Jonathan Waldron is a member of our Maritime Emergency Response Team (“MERT”).

Jonathan Waldron is the former chair of Blank Rome’s Maritime practice group and concentrates his practice in maritime, international, and environmental law. Jon counsels clients, both domestically and internationally, and focuses on:

- Offshore wind farm permitting and compliance
- Coastwise trade including the Jones Act and U.S.-related citizenship issues
- Environmental maritime compliance and pollution response
- Vessel/facility operations and legislative and regulatory affairs
- U.S. vessel Build and Rebuild requirements
- Outer Continental Shelf (“OCS”) energy issues including OCS crewing exemptions and mariner visas
- Coast Guard and National Transportation Safety Board (“NTSB”) investigations
- Liquefied natural gas (“LNG”) licensing
- Customs compliance
- Fisheries industry compliance

Jon served in the U.S. Coast Guard for 20 years, attaining the rank of commander, and was senior counsel to the Marine Spill Response Corporation, where he provided on-scene legal advice at major spill events.

He is ranked by *Chambers USA* as a leading attorney for shipping regulatory matters, with *Chambers* sources stating that he has a “deep knowledge of maritime

and environmental laws” and is “iconic when it comes to D.C. regulatory matters.” *Chambers* has also noted that Jon is said to be the “top expert on the Jones Act” and is “known for his prominence in matters relating to the Coast Guard.” Sources say that he is “the ultimate professional,” “knowledgeable, wise, well known in the industry and a pleasure to work with,” and particularly appreciate that he is “very well connected within the Coast Guard.”

Outside The Firm

Jon is an active tennis player and traveler.

Select Engagements

- Represented leading companies in the global offshore oil and gas and offshore wind industries, including the International Marine Contractors Association (“IMCA”) and American Clean Power (“ACP”), to defeat major policy change proposed in Congress to expand the “Jones Act” nationality restrictions to offshore energy maintenance, construction, and repair activities.
- Represented Furie Operating Alaska (formerly Escopeta), a leading offshore oil and gas exploration and production company, in the largest Jones Act enforcement matter in CBP history. This high-profile case, spanning over five years, settled favorably in April 2017, with oil and gas company Furie paying a record fine, but saving millions in comparison to the original penalties assessed for regulatory violations after it transported a drilling rig from Texas to Alaska.
- Led the Representation of the Captain of the *M/V El Faro* in the Coast Guard and NTSB investigation of its sinking which was the worst U.S.-Flag shipping disaster in over 30 year.
- Coastwise trade-related advice including U.S. build/rebuild standards and exemptions/waivers, including the successful Congressional waiver of America's Finest to be able to use it in the fisheries and coastwise trade after too much foreign steel was used in its construction.
- Significant wind farm regulatory compliance for leading developers and contractors including with the Jones Act, citizenship, and vessel contracts.
- Marine contractors and general regulatory and legislative representation to facilitate cargo transportation and U.S. outer continental shelf oil and gas related operations, including crewing issues and general regulatory and environmental advice to facilitate compliance with U.S. laws.
- A chemical company, in general maritime/environmental regulatory and citizenship advice.
- General vessel and operational compliance advice.
- Fisheries industry compliance issues.
- Applicants to obtain deepwater port and shoreside LNG facility licenses.

Admissions

- District of Columbia
- Florida
- United States Court of International Trade

Memberships

- Maritime Law Association of the United States

Education

- U.S. Coast Guard Academy, BS
- University of Miami School of Law, JD, cum laude

Recognitions

- 2009–2024, Admiralty and Maritime Law in Washington, D.C., listed in *Best Lawyers of America*©
- 2016–2020, Washington, D.C., “Super Lawyer” in Transportation & Maritime, listed in *Super Lawyers*
- 2007–2024, Transportation: Shipping/Maritime: Regulatory Law – Band 1, listed in *Chambers USA*
- 2023–2024, Offshore Energy Law, listed in *Chambers USA*
- 2018–2024, listed in *The Legal 500 United States*
- 2019–2024, “Leading Lawyer,” listed in *The Legal 500’s Guide to Outstanding Lawyers Nationwide*
- 2019–2022, Global Leader in Shipping, listed in *Who’s Who Legal*
- 2018, listed in Capital Pro Bono Honor Roll
- 2017, Transportation MVP, listed by *Law360*
- 2016, “Lawyer of the Year” in Admiralty and Maritime Law, listed in *Best Lawyers of America*©
- Shipping and Maritime Law, listed in *Who’s Who Legal*
- *Who’s Who* Albert Nelson Marquis Lifetime Achievement Award

Professional Activities

Jon is a member of the Maritime Law Association and frequently speaks and writes on maritime issues, including liability analyses to operate ships in U.S. waters. Jon was selected to serve on the National Committee for the United Seamen’s Service (“USS”) 2023 Admiral of the Ocean Sea (“AOTOS”) Awards. The AOTOS Award is given in recognition of individuals and organizations who have shown outstanding support for American seafarers and the maritime industry of the United States.