

# Commentators unaware of true nature of Brussels' IG probe

From Peter Spendlove

SIR, I read with interest your article International Group back in Brussels' spotlight, Lloyd's List, September 14, concerning the recently announced investigation by the European Commission (DG Competition) into aspects of the arrangements and operation of the International Group of P&I Clubs.

The article quoted the views of a number of identified and unidentified lawyers and a public affairs consultant, which speculate on whether or not there may be shortcomings on the part of the International Group in relation to its engagement with the commission.

With due respect to the authors of the views quoted, they have not been privy to, and from their comments are clearly, and unsurprisingly, not aware of the nature of this investigation. Nor it seems are they aware of the

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International Group's regular engagements with the European Commission and European Parliament both prior and subsequent to the expiry of the commission's 1999 decision confirming the compatibility of the International Group's arrangements with EU competition

law. The International Group's engagement with the commission concerns matters relating not only to competition but also to the unique role which the International Group Club system plays in ensuring prompt and effective compensation to public and private interests adversely affected by maritime incidents in Europe and worldwide.

The International Group is confident of the full support of its shipowner members and of states around the world that rely on the unparalleled limits and extent of cover which the International Group system delivers on a not for profit basis.

The International Group will continue to work with the commission as it carries out its current review. ■  
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