#### **Environmental Insurance Coverage And Related Matters**

#### American Association of Port Authorities Port Administration and Legal Issues Seminar April 8, 2015

Mark Nadler, P.E The Nadler Law Group, PLLC Seattle, Washington

# **Environmental Liability and CGL Insurance**

- "Owner or operator" status under CERCLA
- Joint and several, strict liability for historical pollution
- Phase 1 and Phase 2 Environmental Site Assessments
- Ports' CGL policies are assets
- CGL insurance policies will pay for the insured's legal liability arising from damage to the property of others
- Many port districts and local governments were historically insured under CGL liability insurance policies



- Comprehensive General Liability (CGL) policies
- Insureds paid premiums and relied on coverage
- Pollution Exclusion added in 1986

Release triggers policies until contamination is remediated in continuous trigger states



## **Insurance Claim Basics**

- Identify an insurable interest
  - Third party property damage liability
    - Groundwater, sediments, neighboring property
- Locate your insurance policies
  - Lost policy regulations are valuable tool
  - Can use cancelled checks, correspondence, insurance reports, binders, declaration from broker
- Should consider tenants and co-PLPs insurance--can take an assignment

# **Port Group Insurance Programs**

- Northwest Marine Terminal Association
  - Could not get limits in domestic market
  - Could not get individual coverage in London
  - Grouped together to place in London
  - One policy issued to group, certificates issued to each member port
- Other associations
  - California
  - Gulf states

# What Ports Bought

40 0 2 7 WARSH SEATTLE CLAIMS 46:40 FAX 206 613 FORM of London Anderwriters. No: The Insti Companies Combined Policy. Whereas the Assund named in the Schedule been has presided to pay fortherith a Premium at the ale to Us. the Assurers. Rate specified in the Sche 11.51 1.1 đ٢ Rain me the Companies hereby agree to insure against he or Kabila in the manner hereinaber provided. it's Press, easts Som knobs Ft that we the Assurers do horaby hi such CONCANY for shealf only and not one for another and in respect only of the day properties of each Company, to pay to the Amured or the Assored's Executors or Administrators, all such lost, damage or Kability as been provided that the Ass shifty so the musin during the stated period, not exceeding is all the sum intered, as properly apportioned to the z to the persontages or proportions of the sum insered, subscribed against our names respectively. If the Assured shall make any claim knowing the same to be false or fraudul this Policy shall become void and all slaim thursander shall be forficied. 11 112 المتحر ف Start Aller ) he weeks a . . In builtess whereas we the said Assurers have subscribed our manes and sums hereingther appears, and the Manager and Secretary of The Institute of London Underwritett hours his man on behalf of each of na. 9.194 15.04 POL 100360 AON 00108

# What **Ports** Received

| Certificate of  | Insurance   |  |  |
|---|---|--|--|
| EFFECTE   | D WITH JSL № 1021   |  |  |
| Anderwriters at   | Lloyds, London  |  |  |
| BY  | · .   |  |  |
| TOTO S. LANG  | e Champan   |  |  |
| FRED. S. JAMES & CO., INC., OF WASHINGTON   |   |  |  |
| 1800 PARK PLACE, SEATTLE  | e, WA. 98101 - (206) 623-5900   |  |  |
|   | i   |  |  |
|   |   |  |  |
|   |   |  |  |
| THIS IS TO CERTIFY that the undersigned have p<br>Juderwriters at Lloyd's, London, (hereinafter called th<br>Jondon, England. | rocured insurance as hereinafter specified from certain<br>he "Underwriters"), through our Lloyd's Brokers in |  |  |
| Pursuant to such authorization the Underwriters d   | o hereby hind themselves, each for his own part and   |  |  |
| ot one for another, for the percentage shown hereunder  | <ol> <li>Be s encyclup fan en en</li></ol>                                   |  |  |
|   |   |  |  |
| n favor of PORT OF LONGVIEW   |   |  |  |
| n favor of PORT OF LONGVIEW   | Assured. 29 10 10 10 10 10 10 10 10 10 10 10 10 10  |  |  |

| In favor of | PORT OF LONGVIEW  | ssured. **   | s2 ,                 |
|-------------|---|--|----------------------|
| address;    | P. O. BOX 1258<br>LONGVIEW, WASHINGTON 98632                        | ssured. Point of the second country of the s | \$<br>\$<br>\$       |
|             | nt of FOURTEEN MILLION FIVE HUNDRED TH<br>DOLLARS (\$14,500,000.00) | % Federal Tax*<br>2 % State Tax<br>HOUSAND 1/2 % Stamping Fee  | \$<br>\$<br>\$<br>\$ |
|             |   | Certificate Fee  | \$                   |
| Hereon *    | % of the amount and premium stated herein.                          | TOTAL  | \$                   |

Beginning at 12:01 A.M. on the 31st day of DECEMBER 1977

\*Payable on Portion Applicable

and ending at 12:01 A.M. on the 31st day of DECEMBER 1978

standard time at the place of location of risks insured and in accordance with the terms and conditions of the form(s) attached.

POL 011008 This Certificate shall not be valid unless signed by Fred S. James & Co., Inc., of Washington Dated at Seattle, Washington 10th day of 1078 RSHAL JAMES & ED. ISC , this

# Making an Insurance Claim

- This is as much about making a record as it is about giving notice
- Give notice to all carriers as early as possible
  - Duty to defend is not triggered until notice is given
  - Late notice can bar coverage and/or recovery of attorney fees under certain circumstances
  - Urge co-PLPs to also give notice as early as possible
- Provide the insurer with requested information
  - Obligation to cooperate with insurer's investigation
  - Making the record

# Making an Insurance Claim Cont'd.

- Don't take no for an answer
  - Most insurance carriers will resist environmental claims
  - Many claims adjusters are located in northeastern states that are not plaintiff friendly
  - Consult your coverage counsel
- If you must litigate to establish coverage,
  - You can seek attorney fees and costs in many states
  - Consider making a presentation with your consultants and lawyer

# Making an Insurance Claim Cont'd.

- The time is now for historical policy claims
- Law is becoming tougher on insureds in some states
- Evidence and witnesses are getting harder to find
- Some domestic insurers going out of business
- London Companies using English solvent and insolvent schemes of arrangement
- Lloyd's/Equitas/NICO Reinsurance and Resolute
  - Resolute strategy: Delay claims as long as possible without triggering a coverage suit until claims no longer viable
  - Possible Scheme for Equitas?

# **Useful strategies**

- Notice early Defense benefits, eliminates a significant defense
- These claims have a shelf life (changing law, aging evidence and English Schemes and US Bankruptcy)
- OIC cutoff dates looming ahead
- Can lose these opportunities if not use them

## **Important Points to Remember**

- Historical CGL insurance policies are assets today
- Don't take no for an answer when seeking coverage for environmental claims
- Coverage may be available even if the insured's nexus to the property does not arise until after the insured's policy expires
- Many of the insurers who wrote the historical insurance policies are still around and paying claims. It is worth it to pursue legitimate claims
- Don't forget about your tenants' or other co-PLPs' insurance coverage

# The Nadler Law Group

The Nadler Law Group, PLLC Pacific Building 720 Third Avenue, Suite 1400 Seattle, Washington 98104 206-621-1433