



Press Release

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WaterFront launches a new approach to global ship agency

Sharaf Shipping Agency and Ben Line Agencies join forces to offer global services through WaterFront Maritime Services

Leading Middle East and Asian port agencies Sharaf Shipping Agency and Ben Line Agencies have today (7 February 2017) announced the launch of a new global agency company for the wet and dry bulk shipping and commodity markets. Waterfront Maritime Services, which goes live on 1 April 2017, is based on 299 propriety offices across 49 countries, supported with a network of vetted third-party agents worldwide. The move allows Sharaf and Ben Line to offer the same high level of service around the world to clients trading globally.

Announcing the launch in London, Waterfront Maritime Services Chief Executive Officer Terry Gidlow said:

“This is a bold move by two of the industry’s most respected regional port agencies and will set a new standard in port agency. Built on solid financial, technical and historical foundations, we are offering a tailored, holistic approach to global supply chains that will set us apart from the competition.”

He added:

“Clients have been calling out for a port agency that can provide the best of both worlds: an agency that has real in-depth regional expertise but a single global approach. Waterfront is a 21st century solution that gives the best local expertise possible through a single hub. By combining the unrivalled regional know-how of Sharaf and Ben Line we can provide ship operators, managers and traders with the most efficient service possible. We can ensure the safe and efficient handling of ships, cargoes and crews through trusted regional connections and deliver the same verifiable high standards in all ports.”

WaterFront Maritime Services is equally owned by Sharaf Shipping Agency and Ben Line Agencies, but will operate as a wholly independent corporate and commercial entity. The WaterFront Board of Directors includes Duncan Ramsay and Kristian Vandermeer, Managing Director and Regional Director, respectively, of Ben Line Agencies and Kapil Celly and Salah Sharaf, both Executive Directors of Sharaf Group. WaterFront is led by Terry Gidlow, who has previously held senior positions with Inchcape Shipping Services, LBH Group and Chemoil Energy.

The company will be headquartered in Dubai with commercial offices in Singapore and Miami as well as operational hubs in Jakarta and the United Arab Emirates.

Duncan Ramsay, Chairman of WaterFront and Managing Director Ben Line Agencies, commented:

“Ben Line has been providing shipping services across Asia for more than 150 years. We know this business and region well, and we understand the challenges that our customers face in an increasingly complex and competitive global market. WaterFront leverages our strengths and capabilities as a business with Sharaf Shipping Agency, which shares the same commitment to quality, integrity and transparency that we do; providing our customers with global access and solutions that help them to compete.”

Kapil Celly, Executive Director of Sharaf Group and Director of WaterFront, added:

“Sharaf is the commanding presence for ship agency services across the Middle East and Africa, as well as the Indian Subcontinent. But our customer base is global and requires global expertise. WaterFront is the means for ensuring that we can extend our quality services for our customers worldwide, and also provides our customers with peace of mind that their cargoes and vessels are being expertly handled by a highly competent agent, wherever they are.”

The company will focus its services on ship owners and operators, charterers, managers and traders involved in the movement of coal, grains, iron ore, minor bulks and project cargo as well as crude oil, clean and dirty products, chemicals and gas.

By specialising in particular commodity trades and offering solutions tailored for each individual customer, WaterFront will provide end-to-end control over the shipping supply chain through a single point of contact. WaterFront’s regional and global agency hubs work concurrently to monitor all activities and performance in real-time to ensure that every task is accounted for, every procedure followed, paperwork provided and accounts disbursed.

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