

Lloyd's List

Toney and Slater take charge at WatchStander

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- by [Rajesh Joshi](#)

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Finance expert drafted in to attract investors to anti-piracy system

A MANAGEMENT reorganisation at WatchStander, the company that has introduced a proprietary anti-piracy and counter-measure system, sees shipping entrepreneur Robert Toney become chairman and Paul Slater the chief operating officer.

According to WatchStander, the changes aim to attract investors to the company. First International chairman Mr Slater is tasked with this responsibility.

Mr Slater said he would also introduce WatchStander to shipowners, especially owners with fleets, for them to consider installing the system.

Lloyd's List reported extensively last autumn on WatchStander, a fully automated anti-piracy system intended for use on commercial ships, which uses high-grade artificial intelligence to identify threats and deploys progressively more robust, but entirely non-lethal, counter-measures after a threat is confirmed.

Mr Toney, principal of Toney Capital Holdings, held a 51% equity interest at the time. Lloyd's List understands that this now has increased to about 85%.

TCH controls half a dozen other companies, including the nation's biggest ship repossession firm National Liquidators and ship arrest and custody specialist National Maritime Services. Other units are involved in yacht financing and repair.

Mr Toney refused to divulge the amount invested in WatchStander, or the amount of fresh investment sought. However, he welcomed the arrival of Mr Slater, saying he would play a "strong part" in further developing the investor base.

"Paul is a global financial adviser and highly experienced in presenting to both commercial and financial audiences, and has extensive experience in public relations and media communications," Mr Toney said.

Other principals still involved in WatchStander include David Rigsby, a former non-lethal perimeter security expert with the US military, and retired US Navy Admiral Mark Fitzgerald, a decorated veteran with hands-on anti-piracy experience.

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