

WFW ADVISES ZEABORN ON ACQUISITION OF E.R. SCHIFFAHRT GROUP

8 FEBRUARY 2018 • PRESS



Watson Farley & Williams (“WFW”) has advised Bremen-based ZEABORN Group (“ZEABORN”) on its acquisition of E.R. Schiffahrt, from its parent E.R. Group, which is owned by Mr Erck Rickmers.

E.R. Schiffahrt is a dedicated ship management company with offices in Hamburg, Singapore, Hong Kong, Cyprus and the Philippines. Ship broker Harper Petersen, a subsidiary of E.R. Group, was also acquired by ZEABORN as part of this transaction.

ZEABORN is a global shipping company providing services along the entire value added chain of a modern shipping business, from financing, through commercial and technical management to cargo brokerage of its own and chartered vessels. ZEABORN’s main shareholder is the Bremen-based entrepreneur Kurt Zech, who also heads up Zech Group GmbH.

ZEABORN’s acquisition of E.R. Schiffahrt follows on from those of Rickmers Linie in February 2017 and Rickmers Shipmanagement in September 2017, on both of which WFW also advised them. This further acquisition clearly demonstrates ZEABORN’s ambitious expansion plans, as well as the trend towards ever greater consolidation in the global shipping markets.

The approval of this transaction by the German competition authorities remains pending.

The WFW Hamburg team advising ZEABORN was led by maritime Partner Dr Christian Finnern, supported by Partners Dr Björn-Axel Dißars (corporate), Gerrit Bartsch (tax) and Dr Andreas Wiegrefe (employment). They were assisted by Senior Associates Torge Rademacher (corporate) and Jörg Walzer (tax), and Associates Thomas Rieck, Florian Leonhard, Christian Schindler, Dr Matthias Annweiler (all corporate) and Nora Fleischhauer (employment).

Christian comments: “We are delighted to have advised ZEABORN on this further benchmark transaction. It demonstrates the cross-practice expertise offered by our dynamically growing Maritime Service Group to assist on all aspects of complex transactions such as this, and proves our standing as ‘go-to’ law firm for the maritime industry”.

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