

News 10 Sep, 2024

West appoints Bart Mertens as Chief Underwriting Officer

West is pleased to announce the appointment of Bart Mertens as Chief Underwriting Officer, effective early 2025.

Bart has over 30 years experience in the marine insurance industry and joins West from another International Group Club where he has worked for the last 14 years as part of their senior underwriting management team, with responsibility across several regions and product lines.

He has a Masters Degree in Law, Maritime Science and Business Law and started his career at a P&I correspondents in Antwerp as a claims executive. From there he joined the management board at a leading insurance broking house before moving to underwriting in 2010.



Tom Bowsher, Group CEO, West, commented:

“We are extremely pleased to announce that Bart Mertens will be taking on the role of CUO at West, following Simon Parrott’s retirement in 2025. Simon has made a significant contribution to our success during his time with West, and we are delighted that he will remain part of the Club’s management team to enable a seamless transition ahead of next summer.

For West to attract someone of Bart’s experience and calibre, further demonstrates the positive progress we continue to make as a Club, and I am very much looking forward to working closely with Bart in his new position as we continue to strengthen our service delivery across our global underwriting function.

With his extensive background in maritime insurance, Bart brings a broad knowledge and understanding of the market, ideally positioning him to contribute to the Club’s objectives, including our commitment to diversification.”

Bart Mertens, commented:

"As I look back with gratitude to the past 14 years, I am delighted to join West as the Club's new Chief Underwriting Officer and become part of their journey.

West has taken bold and positive steps in recent years, strengthening the Club's capital position, developing new and exciting product lines as well as growing their regional presence in key maritime hubs across the world including, more recently, the UAE.

This strategy aligns with my own, and I feel privileged to have this opportunity to contribute to the positive progress of the Club and look forward to joining the underwriting team and working with Tom and the rest of the West Management as we look to deliver on our business objectives."



Bart will start with West in January 2025 and will work closely with Simon Parrott during the next renewal cycle and into the 2025/26 Policy Year.

Simon's retirement plans were announced in April 2024, following which, West conducted a thorough search to identify his successor as CUO, to enable an effective and timely handover for this vital role at the Club. Simon will continue in his position until his formal retirement and will remain a Director of West during this period.