



MG+M Secures Defense Verdict for Sea Fox Boat Company in Federal Court

December 6, 2022

Miami-based Partner [Raúl Chacón](#), who is chair of MG+M The Law Firm's [Maritime Practice](#), New Orleans-based Partner [Meghan Senter](#) and Lake Charles, Louisiana-based Partner [David Frohn](#), successfully defended Sea Fox Boat Company in a maritime products liability case. At close, plaintiffs' counsel asked for an award of more than \$125 million, but the jury returned a verdict for the defense.

The two-week trial, which was held in federal court in Lake Charles, Louisiana, centered around a fuel water separator that allegedly leaked fuel into the boat's bilge, causing vapors that were ignited when one of the plaintiffs inadvertently created a spark while working on the boat's energized electrical system. Plaintiffs' counsel emphasized their clients' tragic injuries and suggested that their actions leading to the explosion were innocent. They also argued that the vessel and its component parts were defective in design and manufacture, while also lacking adequate warnings. They used most of the trial time allotted by the court, leaving the defense with key decisions on how to present their case.

The MG+M team worked together to develop a thoughtful case theme and plan for strategic delivery of the critical evidence that laid the foundation for a verdict for the defense. Raul's cross examination of the plaintiffs' leading expert, together with the presentation of the evidence, undermined the plaintiffs' theories of liability and allowed the defense's story to unfold. The evidence exposed that the plaintiffs likely created the fuel spill that resulted in the vapors that ignited. David's direct examination of the local investigators allowed for the introduction of their collected evidence that was used by Raul to show circumstantially how the plaintiffs were working in the boat's bilge where the vapors originated. The plaintiffs denied this, but the evidence was telling and supported by select witnesses. Meghan argued for the dismissal of punitive damages sought by the plaintiffs, which the court granted, followed by a dismissal of the plaintiffs' warnings claims. During the closing arguments, Meghan presented the evidence developed by the defense that demonstrated the deficiencies in the plaintiffs' claims, while revealing what the evidence ultimately showed.

"We were relentless in our pursuit, and that paid off in the end," said Raul. "I am proud of our team effort. Everyone contributed, and the result reflects that."