

## Why your company should be a member of the VDC

The task of the association is to secure the interests of their members and of the charter guests on the national and international charter market, in case of quality, service, and legal themes. Especially in case of the legal themes, it is important to know, that the VDC is a member of DBSV - the German association of Boat- and Shipbuilder. This membership is important for the association, because the VDC branch office is a neutral mediator, but the connection with the DBSV allows it to get legal assistance in Germany, for the members and also for the clients. In the past it was only allowed to German companies, to be a member in the VDC. But as the charter market is changing and growing really fast, there will be new laws and new regulations and as the clients want to have more security, it is important for the association to give and to get support to and from internationals, too. So it was naturally for the VDC to change his status about the memberships for international charter companies. This is why, since 2014 international companies were welcome to become a „passive“ member of the association. It is called passive member, because international companies have a different status as the German companies. Internationals have the same rights, they have the same responsibility and of course the same benefit, but the difference is, that they are not allowed to vote.

So what is the advantage for international companies to be a member of this association? The reason is really simple: all the services, which already described, will be valid for internationals, too. Also the legal services from DBSV. This means, if internationals have a problem with a german partner or a german client, and a mediation through the VDC was, or is not possible, they are allowed to get one advice from a german lawyer for free. This is an really interesting offer, because an advice from a lawyer can be expensive, but sometimes one advice can help to clarify a situation and if it is free, it will be a great solution.

Also an important thing in legal themes is - especially in Croatia - the theme about the licenses. Every year, we have new regulations about valid or invalid licenses. Here the VDC is in contact with the ministry and official authorities to find solutions, which makes it easier for companies and clients to handle new situations. Of course, this is not only valid for Croatia - the association is also in contact with such institutes in Germany and other countries as well.

But the most important thing, which justifies a membership in the VDC is the new charter seal, which was developed by Boris Quiotek from EIS -European Insurances and Service GmbH in 2015. The financial security is a big thing for the business between the clients and charter companies/agencies, because there were a lot of negative examples in the past, as companies got bankrupt and the clients money were lost. The spectacular example must be the story about Blu Balu, which is more than 10 years ago right now, but still in the heads. Also well known, is the the situation with Ecker Yachting and the youngest example is a german agency, which got bankrupt in August 2015. These are only three examples, but these are the the best ones to explain, why clients feeling insecure and why they were asking for financial security service for their worldwide charters. This is the fact, why Mr. Quiotek create a new charter seal for the VDC, which allows all members of the association to represent a new high level standard of financial security for the clients payment. This product is completely different from the old charter seal or from the other financial security services, which already know from the past.

The product is exclusive for VDC-members and partners. Two memberships and one partner membership are given for charter companies and agencies. For German companies, who want to be a member in the VDC, the „active“ membership is obligated. Internationals are free to choose between two possibilities. They can be a „passive“ member, to benefit from all the services and marketing as already described or they can be a "seal partner" without any benefit or marketing. But one thing joins all three member- and partnerships: they all allowed to get the charter seal.

Important to know is, the seal is not only important for the business with the clients, it also important for the cooperation with the member agencies. If a VDC member recognizes that a charter partner is a „passive“ member or a "seal partner" of the association and having the charter seal, too, he will choose him for more bookings, of course. It is also interesting for the agent if he can explain to the client, that the partner he recommended for a charter, is also a certified member or partner of the VDC and he will also ensure that the payment is secured. It is really quite clear: the charter seal is an fantastic sales argument!