Christopher J. Wiernicki applauds US Coast Guard cybersecurity initiatives and discusses ABS’ industry-leading cybersafety program.

American Bureau of Shipping (ABS) Chairman, President and CEO Christopher J. Wiernicki addressed the Coast Guard Foundation at the 2016 Pacific Area Awards Dinner in San Francisco on 23 September, as a keynote speaker.

Expressing pride in the long, shared history between the US Coast Guard (USCG) and ABS, Wiernicki recognized USCG leadership in cybersecurity as a regulatory agency and described how cybersecurity has been expanded to a holistic safety approach at ABS.

‘In surveying our clients, ABS confirmed that cyber as a safety issue is among their top concerns,’ Wiernicki said. ‘That prompted our expansion of the ABS CyberSafety™ program, which is the industry’s first risk-based management program with actionable best practice approaches to four key cyber areas, including cybersecurity, automated systems safety, data integrity and software verification. With this extensive program we are defining the absolute value of safety.’

ABS helps organizations build and assess ship-to-shore cyber management capabilities by developing practical guidelines including Guidance Notes, Guides with optional notations, and Advisories to address the issue of cyber threats to ships and offshore assets as well as shore-based facilities. ‘ABS is continuously focused on the next generation of safety systems that extends well beyond the hardware,’ said Wiernicki.

He concluded with a commitment on the part of ABS to continue working with the USCG to help the maritime industry develop cyber resilience and to move cybersecurity and cybersafety forward, calling it a shared responsibility.

ABS understands the value in this collaboration, Wiernicki added. ‘When we work together to secure our systems – whether on land or at sea – the more secure future we will see, and the safer we will all be.’ The clear objective, he said, is a greater degree of safety.

About the Coast Guard Foundation
For 45 years, the Coast Guard Foundation has been committed to inspiring leadership, education and a proud legacy of service to our nation by supporting the men and women of the United States Coast Guard. The Foundation provides
college scholarships to enlisted members, their spouses and their children, scholarships and support for families of Coast Guard members lost in the line of duty, and support for morale programs, including funding recreation, exercise and family-oriented facilities. The Coast Guard Foundation is headquartered in Stonington, Connecticut, where it maintains a staff of 13, with regional offices in the New York City area and St. Petersburg, Florida. See also www.coastguardfoundation.org

About ABS
Founded in 1862, ABS is a leading international classification society devoted to promoting the security of life and property and preserving the natural environment through the development and verification of standards for the design, construction and operational maintenance of marine and offshore assets.