Taking on tomorrow, together: Episode 1

00:00:06.864 --> 00:00:14.144
<v SPEAKER_1>Hello, and welcome to this episode of Alongside, a special edition as part of the Taking On Tomorrow, Together series with NorthStandard.

00:00:14.284 --> 00:00:15.344
<v SPEAKER_1>I'm Kait Borsay.

00:00:16.944 --> 00:00:26.664
<v SPEAKER_1>On this episode, recorded just a few days before the P&I renewal date of the 20th of February, I'm joined by NorthStandard Managing Directors, Jeremy Grose and Paul Jennings.

00:00:27.004 --> 00:00:36.104
<v SPEAKER_1>We're going to reflect on the merger, review some of the achievements from NorthStandard's first year, including the renewal results, and look ahead to the next year and beyond.

00:00:36.604 --> 00:00:38.164
<v SPEAKER_1>Jeremy, Paul, welcome to you.

00:00:38.344 --> 00:00:38.764
<v SPEAKER_2>Hello.

00:00:39.044 --> 00:00:39.284
<v SPEAKER_3>Yeah.

00:00:39.304 --> 00:00:39.664
<v SPEAKER_3>Hi, Kait.

00:00:39.684 --> 00:00:40.224
<v SPEAKER_3>Nice to see you.

00:00:40.644 --> 00:00:44.424
<v SPEAKER_1>Let's start by looking at NorthStandard's first year of operation.

00:00:44.504 --> 00:00:46.704
<v SPEAKER_1>Just very simply, Paul, how did it go?

00:00:46.724 --> 00:00:50.244
<v SPEAKER_3>Well, Kait, it's been a really successful year.

00:00:50.944 --> 00:00:54.024
<v SPEAKER_3>Massively busy for everybody, myself included.

00:00:54.044 --> 00:00:58.584
<v SPEAKER_3>I think Jeremy would probably echo that as well, but actually really exciting.

00:00:59.044 --> 00:01:01.204
<v SPEAKER_3>And I think we've achieved a huge amount during the year.

00:01:01.784 --> 00:01:02.324
<v SPEAKER_1>Jeremy.

00:01:02.824 --> 00:01:09.004
<v SPEAKER_2>It's been a busy year, a lot going on, a huge amount of change, but I think we can say it's been a pretty good year.

00:01:09.524 --> 00:01:25.564
<v SPEAKER_2>And we've had some extraordinary moments along the journey of the last 12 months, I think, with the first of our board meetings in May with around about 60 ship owners sitting around the table and sharing views on matters related to the club.

00:01:25.584 --> 00:01:27.064
<v SPEAKER_2>And that was a great moment.

00:01:27.484 --> 00:01:32.984
<v SPEAKER_1>You've described 2023 as a Lamont year for NorthStandard and the P&I sector.

00:01:33.944 --> 00:01:35.764
<v SPEAKER_1>Why has it been working so well, Jeremy?

00:01:36.444 --> 00:01:59.784
<v SPEAKER_2>The reason it's worked so well, I think it's been because, mostly because people have put a huge amount of effort and work into it, but also because the two clubs were so compatible from the outset, both in terms of the style and culture of the organizations and the approach that they took as separate entities, but also the type of business.

00:01:59.924 --> 00:02:10.184
<v SPEAKER_2>So while we've got a significant amount of business, which is in the mutual traditional P&I business, both clubs are absolutely committed to diversification.

00:02:10.844 --> 00:02:15.364
<v SPEAKER_2>And our areas of diversification matched up very well as well.

00:02:15.364 --> 00:02:25.264
<v SPEAKER_2>So those have been a really positive element that we've been able to bring the business together on the mutual side, but also on the specialty side, no overlap.

00:02:25.904 --> 00:02:29.744
<v SPEAKER_2>And those areas of business have been extremely complimentary.

00:02:29.764 --> 00:02:42.304
<v SPEAKER_3>I think to look at why it's been such an outstanding year, I think you have to go back and look a bit at the rationale for coming together and the compatibility, I think, as described of the two clubs when we came together.

00:02:42.684 --> 00:02:49.404
<v SPEAKER_3>And we've got a really, really good blue water book of mutual members now across the club, nearly 20% of global shipping.

00:02:49.944 --> 00:02:57.204

<v SPEAKER_3>But equally, I think what is a real differentiator for us now is the quality and skills we've got within our specialty sectors.

00:02:57.484 --> 00:03:14.064
<v SPEAKER_3>They really are a massively important differentiating part of NorthStandard going forward, not just in terms of the volume of business, but actually the very unique skill sets that we have in each of those specialty divisions, whether it's our offshore team or Hallamore teams, it really is different to a number of other clubs.

00:03:14.624 --> 00:03:21.664
<v SPEAKER_1>Have there been key milestones throughout the year for you, Jeremy, when you think about the transition and the businesses coming together?

00:03:21.684 --> 00:03:25.864
<v SPEAKER_2>I suppose there's two key milestones that I'd point out.

00:03:26.824 --> 00:03:33.064
<v SPEAKER_2>I think first of all, the board meeting that we had with our members board in May was a great event.

00:03:33.544 --> 00:03:48.304
<v SPEAKER_2>I think the next major milestone was the movement into our sectors, which we put in our new operating model, which came into play 1st of September, which set us up in preparedness for the renewal.

00:03:48.684 --> 00:03:51.204
<v SPEAKER_2>And we're in the process of doing the renewal now.

00:03:51.704 --> 00:03:53.564
<v SPEAKER_2>And it seems to be going pretty well.

00:03:54.044 --> 00:03:56.284
<v SPEAKER_3>I think those milestones I would agree with.

00:03:56.304 --> 00:03:58.304
<v SPEAKER_3>I think we got off to a great start as well, didn't we?

00:03:58.324 --> 00:04:09.304
<v SPEAKER_3>At the beginning of the year, on the 20th of February, 2023, Standard & Poor's, our credit rating agency, upgraded the new NorthStandard to a straight A stable.

00:04:09.744 --> 00:04:11.884
<v SPEAKER_3>And that was a super start to the year.

00:04:11.904 --> 00:04:17.084
<v SPEAKER_3>So not so much a milestone as really a great start to the rest of the year.

00:04:18.584 --> 00:04:24.904
<v SPEAKER_1>We're recording the podcast on the 14th of February, one week before the official mutual renewal.

00:04:25.224 --> 00:04:28.224
<v SPEAKER_1>How are the results looking for your first year of operation, Paul?

00:04:28.764 --> 00:04:31.144
<v SPEAKER_3>Well, I think, Kait, so far so good.

00:04:31.664 --> 00:04:38.584
<v SPEAKER_3>Of the combined business now, we've got roughly 80% of our business by premium renews at the 20th of February.

00:04:38.604 --> 00:04:43.604
<v SPEAKER_3>That includes our specialty business and as well as our traditional blue water business as well.

00:04:44.104 --> 00:04:49.024
<v SPEAKER_3>As we sit here today, we are significantly renewed, very, very small proportion still to go.

00:04:49.704 --> 00:04:53.084
<v SPEAKER_3>Overwhelming support in terms of retention of business from our members.

00:04:54.204 --> 00:04:56.124
<v SPEAKER_3>And also new business joining us as well.

00:04:56.164 --> 00:05:01.064
<v SPEAKER_3>So it's looking pretty good on from a technical point of view in terms of the financial position.

00:05:01.464 --> 00:05:06.244
<v SPEAKER_3>It looks as if we will be producing an underwriting result that is below 100%.

00:05:06.864 --> 00:05:13.504
<v SPEAKER_3>And I think us probably in common with a number of other insurers this year will actually benefit from some investment income as well.

00:05:14.244 --> 00:05:19.184
<v SPEAKER_1>The formation of NorthStandard, that was a big change for the sector.

00:05:19.444 --> 00:05:21.444
<v SPEAKER_1>How have the other P&I clubs reacted?

00:05:21.924 --> 00:05:25.004
<v SPEAKER_1>Is the sector as a whole going through reorganisation?

00:05:25.584 --> 00:05:26.704
<v SPEAKER_3>That's an interesting question.

00:05:26.904 --> 00:05:30.984
<v SPEAKER_3>I think we know anecdotally at the time we announced our coming together.

00:05:31.444 --> 00:05:39.044

<v SPEAKER_3>And this was kind of 11 months ahead of the formal legal merger happening, but we announced that we were beyond talks.

00:05:39.064 --> 00:05:40.764
<v SPEAKER_3>We were actually going to get together.

00:05:41.684 --> 00:05:45.324
<v SPEAKER_3>We know anecdotally around that time, a lot of our competitors started to talk.

00:05:45.724 --> 00:05:50.484
<v SPEAKER_3>Some people in the industry wondered whether us coming together would reduce choice.

00:05:51.204 --> 00:05:55.044
<v SPEAKER_3>We were taking two companies with unique propositions and bringing them into one.

00:05:55.464 --> 00:06:02.164
<v SPEAKER_3>I think that's largely, almost completely dissipated, I think, as far as commentators in the industry are concerned.

00:06:02.624 --> 00:06:04.184
<v SPEAKER_3>As far as other clubs, I don't know.

00:06:04.204 --> 00:06:07.824
<v SPEAKER_3>It's not easy to bring two clubs together on the basis of a merger of equals.

00:06:08.424 --> 00:06:11.324
<v SPEAKER_3>It's more challenging and there's got to be an alignment of interests.

00:06:11.704 --> 00:06:16.864
<v SPEAKER_3>And I think for both Jeremy and I, you've got to be prepared to put egos out of the room whilst we do this and bring them together.

00:06:17.364 --> 00:06:18.144
<v SPEAKER_3>So it's not easy.

00:06:18.484 --> 00:06:21.964
<v SPEAKER_3>I would be surprised in the future if there isn't some more amalgamation.

00:06:22.764 --> 00:06:23.844
<v SPEAKER_1>What about ship owners?

00:06:24.064 --> 00:06:25.344
<v SPEAKER_1>How have they reacted?

00:06:25.364 --> 00:06:28.084
<v SPEAKER_1>Has the merger met their expectations?

00:06:28.584 --> 00:06:43.444

<v SPEAKER_2>I think that's been a really important part of the response that we've had, has been the way in which ship owners have appreciated and expressed their appreciation for what they've received from NorthStandard as a new organisation.

00:06:44.124 --> 00:06:58.664
<v SPEAKER_2>And I think the demonstrable evidence of that is in the extent to which members have supported us with new ships as they've acquired them and continue to grow entries with the club, which has been a really fantastic level of support and very gratifying.

00:06:59.244 --> 00:07:00.124
<v SPEAKER_1>What about brokers?

00:07:00.424 --> 00:07:13.524
<v SPEAKER_3>Yes, I think at the time, the announcement of the merger, I think brokers probably, perhaps they were looking at what impact it would have on them, potentially reducing two strong organisations where they could place business into one.

00:07:13.824 --> 00:07:14.904
<v SPEAKER_3>And what would that mean for them?

00:07:15.344 --> 00:07:30.544
<v SPEAKER_3>But actually, I think as we've explained the position to them, as we've been discussing what it means, what the benefits of the merger are, I think virtually all of the brokers now are on side with the rationale and what we've created at NorthStandard.

00:07:30.744 --> 00:07:38.324
<v SPEAKER_3>And most of our business, whether it's through our specialty lines, through our sector, Bluewater business, comes through brokers.

00:07:38.664 --> 00:07:41.684
<v SPEAKER_3>So it's very important to us that brokers are on side.

00:07:42.324 --> 00:07:50.184
<v SPEAKER_1>Let's focus on both of you and the challenges that you have both had to overcome, your joint managing directors.

00:07:50.664 --> 00:07:57.544
<v SPEAKER_1>I'm intrigued as to how that works, but let's start with you, Jeremy, on your own challenges.

00:07:58.564 --> 00:07:59.844
<v SPEAKER_2>Yes, my own challenges.

00:07:59.864 --> 00:08:07.744
<v SPEAKER_2>I think resilience has been a question for us or a challenge for us over the course of the last year because it's been so much to do.

00:08:08.064 --> 00:08:16.384
<v SPEAKER_2>Describing it as a challenge is probably the wrong way to put the work that we have put into building our relationship of working together.

00:08:16.404 --> 00:08:37.764
<v SPEAKER_2>I mean, that's been a work that has involved quite a lot of effort, not because we're particularly difficult people, of course, but having two people running a business, we need to be able to work very, very closely together, understand how we individually make decisions and then how we can make them together and trusting each other very well.

00:08:37.784 --> 00:08:39.124
<v SPEAKER_2>And we've had a lot of support on that.

00:08:39.304 --> 00:08:45.344
<v SPEAKER_2>I mean, we knew that that was going to be an issue that we needed to make work really well.

00:08:46.024 --> 00:08:49.944
<v SPEAKER_2>And we engaged with a coach early on.

00:08:50.364 --> 00:08:56.084
<v SPEAKER_2>He's a chap who does a lot of work with sports people and building teams and things.

00:08:56.344 --> 00:08:58.684
<v SPEAKER_2>And that's been really, really helpful to us.

00:08:59.384 --> 00:09:01.524
<v SPEAKER_3>For me, it wasn't totally new.

00:09:01.544 --> 00:09:14.004
<v SPEAKER_3>I kind of worked in an environment previously where there were two of us running it, albeit the roles were slightly more defined in the sense that the person I was working with at the time, my colleague, was far more on the finance side of the business.

00:09:14.544 --> 00:09:18.564
<v SPEAKER_3>So with Jeremy, it's been a case of, I think, getting to know each other.

00:09:18.864 --> 00:09:28.984
<v SPEAKER_3>The most important thing that we've learned probably from working with the coach is more about ourselves and in particular when to say, I'm not comfortable with this, let's talk about it, etc.

00:09:29.024 --> 00:09:34.784
<v SPEAKER_3>And we're based in different locations most of the time, although we have spent a huge amount of time together.

00:09:35.084 --> 00:09:41.064
<v SPEAKER_3>As Jeremy said, I think it was something we recognized that could be a challenge, and I think we've tackled it well.

00:09:44.124 --> 00:09:50.244
<v SPEAKER_1>Well, as NorthStandard steps into its second year of operation, the global turmoil continues.

00:09:50.444 --> 00:09:54.964

<v SPEAKER_1>We've got the wars in Gaza and Ukraine and disruption in the Red Sea.

00:09:55.504 --> 00:10:07.704
<v SPEAKER_1>Your ship owner members will also continue, of course, to tackle the challenges of inflation, the effects of the climate crisis, energy security, tough decarbonisation regulations and goals as well.

00:10:08.664 --> 00:10:15.404
<v SPEAKER_1>How's NorthStandard adapted to the global events, first of all, Jeremy?

00:10:16.044 --> 00:10:17.064
<v SPEAKER_2>There's been a lot going on.

00:10:17.464 --> 00:10:19.244
<v SPEAKER_2>We've adapted to it in different ways.

00:10:20.304 --> 00:10:31.164
<v SPEAKER_2>Our role is to provide support, advice and service, as well as obviously claims support when situations go out of control.

00:10:31.844 --> 00:10:45.644
<v SPEAKER_2>But I think that as an organisation, we've been able to put into play a larger bench of talent and knowledge than we would have otherwise been able to do individually.

00:10:46.164 --> 00:10:55.184
<v SPEAKER_2>And that's been really important to be able to do in where there are new challenges, new challenges particularly around geopolitics.

00:10:55.784 --> 00:10:59.584
<v SPEAKER_2>And we've got some amazing people that do some fantastic work on that.

00:11:00.144 --> 00:11:06.144
<v SPEAKER_3>Our role, we're very clear on defining what the role of the club is and its wider sense.

00:11:06.504 --> 00:11:09.104
<v SPEAKER_3>And I think also very important in making sure that we're still relevant.

00:11:09.624 --> 00:11:16.444
<v SPEAKER_3>We're relevant to what a ship owner needs now, what our members need now as opposed to 150 years ago, or even 20 years ago or 10 years ago.

00:11:16.464 --> 00:11:20.684
<v SPEAKER_3>It's moving so quickly, I think, in that geopolitical space in particular.

00:11:21.024 --> 00:11:22.704
<v SPEAKER_3>So we have to define that.

00:11:23.124 --> 00:11:24.264
<v SPEAKER_3>And it is one of support.

00:11:24.684 --> 00:11:26.584

<v SPEAKER_3>We can't make the law.

00:11:26.784 --> 00:11:28.124
<v SPEAKER_3>We're there to support and to help.

00:11:28.484 --> 00:11:32.764
<v SPEAKER_3>And I think the same is true on the climate, on decarbonisation.

00:11:33.164 --> 00:11:35.204
<v SPEAKER_3>Shipping is on a decarbonisation journey.

00:11:35.944 --> 00:11:36.824
<v SPEAKER_3>And shipping wants it.

00:11:37.364 --> 00:11:40.464
<v SPEAKER_3>And I think often there's press that shipping doesn't want it and is resistant.

00:11:40.684 --> 00:11:41.444
<v SPEAKER_3>That's not the case.

00:11:41.804 --> 00:11:47.724
<v SPEAKER_3>Shipping wants it with a pace that it can deal with and with the support, with the infrastructure that allows shipping to continue to deliver.

00:11:48.024 --> 00:11:54.064
<v SPEAKER_3>And our role is to help to support that, to help to support our members, our ship owners through that journey.

00:11:55.144 --> 00:12:14.364
<v SPEAKER_3>So rather, it's not just a case of dealing with the claims when they arise or the casualties or the problems that may arise from day to day operations of shipping, but it's helping our members to deal with regulations that come along and sometimes being conduit between them and regulators or governments to explain the needs of the shipping industry.

00:12:14.984 --> 00:12:20.224
<v SPEAKER_1>Let's go into some of the changes within NorthStandard in more detail.

00:12:20.724 --> 00:12:24.944
<v SPEAKER_1>Firstly, let's talk about the geographical footprint of the company.

00:12:24.964 --> 00:12:31.184
<v SPEAKER_1>There are new offices opened or soon to be opened in South Korea, Singapore and Japan.

00:12:31.744 --> 00:12:36.104
<v SPEAKER_1>Paul, tell us more about why this is important for your members and customers.

00:12:36.744 --> 00:12:39.304
<v SPEAKER_3>The office on the horizon is in Korea.

00:12:39.544 --> 00:12:47.524

<v SPEAKER_3>It's part of our Asia Pacific footprint, which is a very important part of the combined club of NorthStandard.

00:12:48.204 --> 00:12:51.844
<v SPEAKER_3>Over 30% of our business is within the Asia Pacific region.

00:12:52.924 --> 00:12:59.904
<v SPEAKER_3>One of the early successes, I think, we found was actually the two offices in Singapore coming together under one roof.

00:12:59.924 --> 00:13:05.724
<v SPEAKER_3>It was partly fortuitous because the lease on one building expired and we had to put people together quite quickly.

00:13:05.744 --> 00:13:08.084
<v SPEAKER_3>But it was a real catalyst for that team.

00:13:08.104 --> 00:13:12.804
<v SPEAKER_3>It's our largest team of people outside of the UK is situated in Singapore, nearly 60 people.

00:13:13.704 --> 00:13:19.904
<v SPEAKER_3>And they came together really quickly and it then really became a footprint, I think, for our other offices.

00:13:20.804 --> 00:13:24.284
<v SPEAKER_3>Delivery of service locally is really important as well.

00:13:24.664 --> 00:13:29.344
<v SPEAKER_3>The majority of our people sit within the UK in our two offices in London and Newcastle.

00:13:29.364 --> 00:13:36.264
<v SPEAKER_3>But increasingly, we want a local presence where we can actually work with our members and our customers in the local areas.

00:13:37.064 --> 00:13:39.664
<v SPEAKER_1>What else is new, Jeremy, or coming very soon?

00:13:40.204 --> 00:13:47.904
<v SPEAKER_2>I think two of the initiatives that we've actually already put into place are external affairs activities and North Standard Academy.

00:13:49.184 --> 00:14:02.404
<v SPEAKER_2>On external affairs, we recognize that there's so much more interest and so much more involvement from policy makers in the world of shipping and financial services as it affects shipping.

00:14:03.264 --> 00:14:14.964
<v SPEAKER_2>And so we wanted to be able to advocate well on behalf of our members, and we are looking to build relationships with policy makers and so on.

00:14:15.144 --> 00:14:16.504
<v SPEAKER_2>So that's a really important part.

00:14:17.664 --> 00:14:19.484
<v SPEAKER_2>The other thing is North Standard Academy.

00:14:19.624 --> 00:14:30.024
<v SPEAKER_2>We recognized when we started out that there were quite a lot of activities being done by both North and Standard on training both internally and externally.

00:14:30.524 --> 00:14:55.464
<v SPEAKER_2>But there was a great opportunity there to harness all of that activity and maybe make something more of it, working with our members, working with our people, and perhaps making connections into academic institutions and so on so that we can provide something more for our members in terms of the delivery of knowledge and capabilities that we can give to them.

00:14:55.944 --> 00:15:00.324
<v SPEAKER_1>There's also a bigger financial focus on corporate social responsibility, Paul.

00:15:00.344 --> 00:15:02.224
<v SPEAKER_1>Is this a key area for members?

00:15:02.824 --> 00:15:03.664
<v SPEAKER_3>It's very important.

00:15:04.084 --> 00:15:17.884
<v SPEAKER_3>We've been very fortunate to have the support of our ship owner members and our directors in creating a space and funding a space within the organisation, within the new club, to focus on CSR type activities.

00:15:18.304 --> 00:15:19.284
<v SPEAKER_3>But what do I mean by that?

00:15:19.304 --> 00:15:39.384
<v SPEAKER_3>I mean, from supporting maritime based charities to supporting charities and organisations in our local areas, we're conscious of, to an extent, the difference, economic differences between the north and south of the country and the difference we can make, I think, as a successful business in supporting those communities.

00:15:40.024 --> 00:15:54.184
<v SPEAKER_3>And as a mutual organisation, so a non-profit making organisation, which I guess is a difference as well, the ability to then be able to contribute to the community and to society that we operate within is an important feature.

00:15:54.604 --> 00:15:58.644
<v SPEAKER_2>That's important from a point of view of also building teams as well, isn't it?

00:15:58.824 --> 00:16:18.444

<v SPEAKER_2>I mean, the CSR activities are not just about the work that we can offer or what we can offer to the external communities, but it's also how we can get something back as an organization and that can build a culture, build a sense of belonging within NorthStandard.

00:16:18.464 --> 00:16:20.524
<v SPEAKER_2>And that's important as we bring the two companies together.

00:16:20.924 --> 00:16:26.964
<v SPEAKER_1>We've obviously been talking about different ways the companies changed as a result of the merger and the benefits of that.

00:16:27.384 --> 00:16:29.324
<v SPEAKER_1>What else have you been looking at?

00:16:29.844 --> 00:16:36.004
<v SPEAKER_3>Something that we're working on now, we were working individually, is what sustainability means to NorthStandard.

00:16:37.264 --> 00:16:40.184
<v SPEAKER_3>And in the wider sense of sustainability for the business.

00:16:40.824 --> 00:16:46.724
<v SPEAKER_3>That's creating and maintaining sustainable business so we can continue to look after our members and customers.

00:16:47.064 --> 00:16:52.364
<v SPEAKER_3>But also really importantly, that we've got a sustainable business that all of our people want to be part of.

00:16:52.784 --> 00:16:53.944
<v SPEAKER_3>New people want to join it.

00:16:54.104 --> 00:16:56.124
<v SPEAKER_3>That's a really, really important focus for us.

00:16:56.144 --> 00:17:01.504
<v SPEAKER_3>And we're looking at that at the moment to define it specifically what that will mean for NorthStandard.

00:17:01.524 --> 00:17:02.964
<v SPEAKER_3>We don't just want to take something off the shelf.

00:17:03.384 --> 00:17:05.084
<v SPEAKER_3>We want to create something that's special for us.

00:17:07.624 --> 00:17:09.484
<v SPEAKER_1>Let's look ahead then, shall we?

00:17:09.504 --> 00:17:15.804
<v SPEAKER_1>We've touched on the global situation and some of the specific changes the companies made as part of the merger.

00:17:16.284 --> 00:17:21.564
<v SPEAKER_1>The companies described creating the most modern and viable club in the international group.

00:17:22.504 --> 00:17:23.864
<v SPEAKER_1>What does this mean, Jeremy?

00:17:23.884 --> 00:17:24.984
<v SPEAKER_1>How are you going to achieve it?

00:17:25.744 --> 00:17:26.764
<v SPEAKER_2>Modern and viable.

00:17:26.764 --> 00:17:35.504
<v SPEAKER_2>I think that means that we need to make sure that we've got a response to whatever the new challenge is that comes over the horizon.

00:17:36.304 --> 00:17:44.644
<v SPEAKER_2>And over the course of the last couple of years, we've seen some extraordinary changes and some extraordinary challenges, and I think there will be very many more.

00:17:45.804 --> 00:18:11.844
<v SPEAKER_2>We need to be able to adapt, and I think we've demonstrated that we can change and adapt, but we've got to be able to meet the new challenges that when they arise, perhaps by learning new skills, deploying resources in the right way when we need to, being able to learn the different ways in which technology or changing environment impacts our members, and then we'll be able to be able to support them.

00:18:12.664 --> 00:18:18.944
<v SPEAKER_1>The company also says, Paul, the shipping industry will need to adjust to new norms.

00:18:19.244 --> 00:18:21.164
<v SPEAKER_1>It's been a while since I've used that phrase.

00:18:22.084 --> 00:18:23.024
<v SPEAKER_1>What do you mean by that?

00:18:24.864 --> 00:18:28.704
<v SPEAKER_3>The two I would identify, I think, is the geopolitical situation.

00:18:29.324 --> 00:18:46.384
<v SPEAKER_3>I think governments decided probably 10, 15 years ago, but the focus is very clear now, that the global trade is a clear way of enforcing political aims and political objectives by suppressing or controlling, putting sanctions on global trade.

00:18:46.404 --> 00:18:47.164
<v SPEAKER_3>That's here to stay.

00:18:47.204 --> 00:18:48.504
<v SPEAKER_3>That isn't going to change.

00:18:48.964 --> 00:18:54.284
<v SPEAKER_3>And we've seen that very, very clearly in terms of what's been going on with Russia and Ukraine.

00:18:54.284 --> 00:18:57.964
<v SPEAKER_3>And still we see that with Iran and Venezuela and others.

00:18:57.984 --> 00:19:01.764
<v SPEAKER_3>So that's a new norm that we all have to adapt to, that shipowners have to adapt to.

00:19:02.344 --> 00:19:08.164
<v SPEAKER_3>I think the other changing environment is the decarbonisation, the whole climate debate.

00:19:08.864 --> 00:19:09.944
<v SPEAKER_3>It is happening.

00:19:10.724 --> 00:19:15.044
<v SPEAKER_3>There are some really fast adapters of that or adopters of that within shipping.

00:19:16.164 --> 00:19:17.884
<v SPEAKER_3>And we can see that moving at a pace.

00:19:18.624 --> 00:19:22.844
<v SPEAKER_3>And I think that's a norm that all shipowners will have to deal with going forward.

00:19:23.804 --> 00:19:35.804
<v SPEAKER_1>If I was to ask you to get your crystal ball out, Jeremy, and look five years into the future, have a go at describing what NorthStandard might look like.

00:19:35.824 --> 00:19:38.564
<v SPEAKER_1>What big changes do you think you will have seen?

00:19:38.584 --> 00:19:43.824
<v SPEAKER_2>I think the shipping market that we serve would have changed quite a lot.

00:19:44.304 --> 00:19:48.184
<v SPEAKER_2>And therefore, we will have had to adapt as well.

00:19:48.924 --> 00:19:56.484
<v SPEAKER_2>We'll have people with different skills, probably a lot more knowledge on areas that we're just beginning to build up knowledge now.

00:19:56.504 --> 00:20:02.484
<v SPEAKER_2>I think we really should expect to see our business much bigger.

00:20:02.504 --> 00:20:06.984
<v SPEAKER_3>Yeah, I think, I think that clearly I'd like us to be hitting our business plan.

00:20:07.524 --> 00:20:11.244

<v SPEAKER_3>Our five-year business plan is out there now, which would show significant growth.

00:20:11.984 --> 00:20:17.644
<v SPEAKER_3>And particularly in a really, really important area, the specialty area, which we think is a huge differentiator for us.

00:20:17.664 --> 00:20:19.304
<v SPEAKER_3>I'd like to think we could achieve that.

00:20:19.744 --> 00:20:23.364
<v SPEAKER_3>But it would be really great if we are just talking about NorthStandard.

00:20:23.384 --> 00:20:25.284
<v SPEAKER_3>No more mentions of merger and acceptance.

00:20:25.304 --> 00:20:28.664
<v SPEAKER_3>The merger was the right thing to do and has been successful.

00:20:28.884 --> 00:20:31.564
<v SPEAKER_1>Well, that seems like a fitting point to end on.

00:20:31.584 --> 00:20:33.924
<v SPEAKER_1>Thank you both for your time and your insight.

00:20:34.264 --> 00:20:38.564
<v SPEAKER_1>That's all for this episode of the Taking On Tomorrow, Together podcast series.

00:20:38.564 --> 00:20:42.624
<v SPEAKER_1>My guests have been NorthStandard Managing Directors, Jeremy Grose and Paul Jennings.

00:20:43.024 --> 00:20:55.664
<v SPEAKER_1>You can find more episodes of Alongside on your podcast player, plus our recent episodes of Future Thinking, looking at some of the big geopolitical issues for 2024 and how they're impacting or will impact the shipping industry.

00:20:56.004 --> 00:20:56.904
<v SPEAKER_1>I'm Kait Borsay.

00:20:56.944 --> 00:20:57.724
<v SPEAKER_1>Thanks for listening.

00:20:57.744 --> 00:20:58.244
<v SPEAKER_1>Thank you.