

# Ammoco caediz



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On the morning of the 16 March 1978, the oil tanker Amoco Cadiz owned by Amoco Transport Co. suffered a technical failure of the steering system off the coast of Finistere in Brittany, France. The tanker was transporting 227, 000 tonnes of crude oil from the Persian Gulf to Rotterdam (Netherlands) when the ship began to drift towards the coastline in a heavy storm. (Tides, 2008). The reason for the steering gear failure was seen to be because of the stormy weather conditions that the ship was facing.

At 9: 15 the Captain Pasquale Bandari hoisted the international signal for " Not Under Command. " But he did not request assistance until 11: 20, when his engineer determined that the damage was irreparable. Two unsuccessful towing attempts the first a towrope, thrown at 1: 30 am, this broke three hours later. Despite all the efforts made by the crews of both ships, the Amoco Cadiz started drifting to shore where touching the bottom ripped open the hull and storage tanks before stopping on the Portsall Rocks on the Breton coast. (cedre, 2008)The crew of the tanker was rescued by helicopter, but the ship broke in two releasing 230, 000 tons of crude oil. This spread through the English Channel. The oil spill polluted approximately 300 kilometres of coastline, destroying fisheries, oysters and seaweed beds and also 76 beaches in the Breton community. (Lenntech, 2006) This was seen as the worst oil disaster the world had seen at that time. After the steering had failed the captain had made some unwise decisions that were made under pressure. It took 1 hour 45 minutes before the tug boat was called for.

It also took 1 hour 30 minutes to negotiate a towing contract this did not help with the language problems with both parties. The second tow for the ship was very badly coordinated. All of these examples led to the ship

splitting in half and losing all of the oil. (Kristiansen, 2005) Having a single propeller and also a single rudder the Amoco Cadiz was at risk of the steering gear failing. This became a reality when it happened and the crew could do nothing to repair it. The fact was that the crew were ill prepared for the steering gear to fail.

If they were more prepared or had two propellers this tragedy might not have happened. (Kristiansen, 2005) BIB <http://www.cedre.fr/en/spill/amoco/amoco.php> <http://www.lenntech.com/environmental-disasters.htm#1>. \_Bhopal: \_the\_Union\_Carbide\_gas\_leak [http://www.kozacky.com/site/files/789/74616/284382/393597/matter\\_oil\\_spill\\_by.pdf](http://www.kozacky.com/site/files/789/74616/284382/393597/matter_oil_spill_by.pdf) <http://www.itopf.com/information-services/data-and-statistics/case-histories/alist.html> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amoco\\_Cadiz](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amoco_Cadiz) [http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/march/24/newsid\\_2531000/2531211.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/march/24/newsid_2531000/2531211.stm)