

1985, August 24

Port of Mogadishu, Somalia

<u>Chemicals involved in accident</u>			
	Class		Class
Acetone	3	Methyl ethyl ketone	3
Butyl acetate	3	Toluene	3
Dipentene	3	Xylene	3
Ethyl acetate	3	Hydrogen peroxide	5
Hexane	3	Organochlorine pesticides	6
Hydrazine	3	Sodium pentachlorophenate	6
Isobutyl alcohol	3	Tetra ethyl lead	6
Isopropyl alcohol	3	Trichloroethylene	6
Methyl isobutyl ketone	3	Nitric acid	8

**Summary:** On August 24, 1985, the Panamanian registered container ship **Ariadne** grounded about 100 m off the port of Mogadishu in Somalia. The ship carried a cargo of 600 containers of which some 100 contained **hazardous chemicals** of various types. The Somali government requested help and five countries sent teams of experts in areas like salvage, fire fighting, spill response, chemistry, and environmental assessment. A temporary fire aboard the ship forced a limited evacuation of the port area because of smoke and chemical fumes. For the population it was considered that fire or explosion in the wreck were the primary risks. Therefore efforts were made to refloat the ship. However, this caused the ship to break and a portion of the deck to collapse. Subsequently the ship broke up and the ship's cargo and bulk oil was released. Some 250 drums were **washed ashore** where they were taken care of during the following six weeks. The rest of the bunker oil was pumped out and most of the cargo was removed and taken care of. Four months later the front piece of the wreck was towed some 35 n.m. out to sea where it was scuttled. Finally, after nine months, the last pieces of the wreck were removed by a salvage tug and a large floating crane. It is not clear in detail what happened with the most dangerous chemicals. It is known that some of the tetra ethyl lead, sodium pentachlorophenate, and trichloroethylene was never recovered.

**Cause of Accident:** Grounding due to broken towing equipment.

**Comments on Response:** The operational response to this accident is a good example of the need for outside help within third world countries. Because many ships pass through these countries, it is necessary to have a way to find quick assistance when an accident of this kind takes place. In this specific event the response from foreign countries was both fast and successful and the operation can be considered to have been handled in an efficient way. It is unacceptable however that all hazardous chemicals were not recovered, especially as the stealing of drums floating ashore was not stopped fast enough.

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**Source of Information:** 1) Report on the Ariadne incident from the 1986 Hazardous Material Spills Conference, EPA, USA. 2) Mission report on Ariadne Incident, IMO. (Abstracted July 2001 by Edvard Molitor, Swedish Coast Guard HQ)