# Collision off East Yorkshire coast sparks conspiracy theories



A significant maritime incident unfolded on Monday off the East Yorkshire coast, involving a collision between the Portuguese-flagged cargo ship MV Solong and the 50,000-ton US military oil tanker MV Stena Immaculate. The crash, which resulted in a fire on both vessels, has sparked a wave of conspiracy theories propagated by Russian commentators, suggesting that the incident was staged by Britain to malign Russia.

The captain of the Solong, who has not been publicly identified, is a 59-year-old Russian national and has been taken into custody by Humberside police. He faces allegations of gross negligence manslaughter related to the collision. This event has resulted in severe damage, with millions of gallons of fuel released into the sea and smoke from the ensuing fire even visible from space. The consequences of the incident are profound, underscoring the perils of maritime navigation in densely trafficked waters.

Pro-Kremlin commentator Sergey Mardan has described the incident as suspicious, asserting that Britain has expertise in orchestrating sabotage. He claimed, "There are many interesting coincidences and details in this case," suggesting that the involvement of a Russian captain and the nature of the cargo on the tanker raise questions about the legitimacy of the incident. Mardan's remarks highlight a narrative emerging from certain quarters of the Russian media, which imply that Britain could have intentionally harmed an American ship to provoke tensions with Moscow.

Vladimir Kornilov, another Russian political commentator, echoed these sentiments, proposing that the arrest of the Russian captain, coinciding with diplomatic discussions between Russia and the United States, adds to the theory that the accident may have been orchestrated. He remarked, "How predictable everything is with the British," indicating a belief that London would seek to highlight a "Russian trace" in the incident.

British officials have dismissed these conspiracy theories as unfounded. Mark Francois, the Conservative shadow armed forces minister, described the notion that the UK staged the accident as "utterly ludicrous," criticising the depths of Russian propaganda. Shadow transport minister Jerome Mayhew also raised concerns about the circumstances surrounding the incident, noting that the captain's nationality could be pertinent to the investigation.

The collision occurred while the Solong was en route from Grangemouth in Scotland to Rotterdam in the Netherlands, and it reportedly struck the Stena Immaculate, which had originated from the Greek port of Agioi Theodoroi. In total, 36 crew members survived the collision, with one crew member from the Solong currently missing and presumed dead. Survivors described a harrowing escape, with some narrowly avoiding serious injury as they evacuated amidst flames. One crew member recounted the urgent need to follow emergency procedures: "If I hadn't had time to think, we wouldn't have survived."

Following the incident, salvage operations have commenced, with a tugboat holding the damaged Solong offshore in a safer position. The Maritime and Coastguard Agency has reported that while some flames are still visible, the extent and intensity of the fires have diminished. Virginia McVea, chief executive of the agency, affirmed that the priority lies in protecting both public safety and the environment during the ongoing response.

As the investigation into the circumstances of this incident continues, the collision highlights the complexities of global maritime operations and the potent narratives that can emerge in the wake of such disasters, particularly amid tense geopolitical relations.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2025_North_Sea_ship_collision> - This Wikipedia article provides detailed information about the collision between the MV Solong and MV Stena Immaculate, including the circumstances of the incident and the ongoing investigations.
* <https://www.the-independent.com/news/uk/home-news/north-sea-oil-tanker-cargo-collision-map-arrest-manslaughter-b2713419.html> - This article from The Independent offers insights into the collision, including the status of the vessels, the number of casualties, and the ongoing search and rescue operations.
* <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/cargo-ship-captain-arrested-over-collision-with-us-flagged-tanker/> - CBS News reports on the arrest of the Solong's captain and the investigation into the collision, highlighting concerns about potential negligence and environmental impact.
* <https://www.noahwire.com> - This source is mentioned as the original provider of the article, though it does not directly corroborate specific claims without further context.
* <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC10311201/> - Although not directly related to the maritime incident, this article discusses the use of digital evidence in criminal investigations, which might be relevant to the ongoing investigation into the collision.
* <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2024/04/22/2024-07496/guidance-for-federal-financial-assistance> - This document from the Federal Register provides general guidance on federal financial assistance and does not directly relate to the maritime incident but could be relevant in broader discussions of maritime regulations or investigations.