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| <b>Martina</b> |
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## **Maritime Chemical Accident**

2000, March 28

Öresund, West of Kullen, Sweden

**Hydrochloric acid** (Class 8) in ship cargo tanks;  
watery liquid, irritating vapor, corrosive  
IDLH 50 ppm (USA)

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**Summary:** In the morning of March 28, 2000, the chemical tanker **Martina** collided with the cargo ship Werder Bremen in Northern Öresund. The **collision** caused Martina to break in half and the stern part **sank** immediately. The rest of the ship, with a cargo of 600 tonnes of 30% **hydrochloric acid**, sank after a few hours. The weather was hard, with strong winds and heavy snowfall. Two out of seven crew members were saved from the water. Unsuccessful attempts were made to contact possible survivors inside the bow part of the ship before it sank. Due to the weather it was impossible to reach the ship during the first two days. On March 30 both parts of the ship were localized with the help of **remotely operated vehicles**. The cargo seemed to be intact and there was no immediate risk for oil leakage from the bunker tank. A salvage company was hired to remove the cargo and the bunker oil. As the hydrochloric acid is not a marine pollutant and not harmful in low concentrations it was decided that a **monitored release** of the cargo was preferred. However, the ship's bunker oil was considered as a threat to the marine environment and should therefore be pumped up. The operations were done on May 20-23, 2000, and were reported to have been successful. The released hydrochloric acid caused no environmental damage.

**Cause of Accident:** A collision in hard weather which broke the ship in half.

**Comments on Response:** The hard weather made it difficult to locate the ship immediately after the accident. The weather also prevented diving in the area. Therefore ROV:s (remotely operated vehicles) were used to locate the sunken ship. The bunker oil was successfully pumped up and the hydrochloric acid could be safely released into the seawater with no environmental impact.

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**Source of Information:** The report "Redovisning av operation Martina" by the Swedish Coast Guard.  
(Abstracted June 2002 by Edvard Molitor, Swedish Coast Guard H.Q.)