

# Examples of international SAR cooperation, national coordination and resources contributing to SAR missions

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# 1<sup>er</sup> example: Sinking of the JOOLA on 26 September 2001



## JOOLA / course of events

- Departure from Ziguinchor on Thursday 26 September 2002 at around 01:00pm in calm weather with a total of 957 passengers, not including free-riders. (note: capacity limited to 550) + vehicles and cargo.
- At anchor at Karabane at 04:30pm to embark passengers (officially 178 pax + 7 military personnel) and cargo.
- Departure from the Karabane anchorage at 06.05pm bound for Dakar
- At 10:00pm : Radio contact with the Senegalese Navy. Nothing special to report
- At around 11:00pm, the vessel experienced manoeuvring difficulties 16.8 nautical miles from the coast under Gambian jurisdiction
- **At around 11.10pm, the vessel capsized. No distress alert sent by the vessel.**





Type : Passenger ferry

LOA: 79.50 m

Crew: 44

Capacity: 536 pax

Management : National Senegalese Navy

- No stability management
- More than 100% passenger overload
- No lashing / goods not in racks
- Manning not compliant with international standards
- Safety equipment missing or not operational
- Absence of valid safety certificates

More than 1,000 dead

65 survivors



In the morning, pirogue fishermen alerted trawlers, who then passed the information on to their management ashore, who in turn informed the authorities.

The resources and services involved included (but were not limited to) :

- Fishing vessels contacted by their management to reach the area
- Implementation of SAR resources and the ORSEC plan by the Senegalese Navy. 1 patrol boat + 2 EDIC + 1 VCR with 18 divers and firemen. Note: 7 to 9 hours sailing. 2 Fokker aircrafts were mobilised by the Senegalese Air Force to transport rescue teams and equipment to Gambia and to repatriate the survivors to Dakar.
- French forces in Cape Verde: aircrafts (Breguet-Atlantique and Transall) and helicopters. mobilisation of the hydrographic vessel Laplace and the maritime transport barge No. 26.
- Port of Banjul (Gambia): two vessels took part in rescue operations.
- 2 tugs from the port of Dakar dispatched
- Divers from Fire brigades and private companies

## JOOLA / Rescue operations (continued) (source: Marine safety investigation report)

The first survivors, many of whom managed to climb onto the ship's hull, were picked up at 6.45am on 27 September by pirogue fishermen who transferred them to trawlers.

The last survivor was picked up on 27 September at 2.45pm by a pirogue boat and transferred to the « AFRICAMER 8 » trawler belonging to the AFRICAMER company.

In all, pirogues and trawlers were able to recover 65 survivors who were transported to Dakar and Banjul.

According to the skipper of the trawler « DIMITROS 2 », the official emergency services (national army, fire brigade) arrived in the area at around 6.00 pm on 27 September 2002.

Previously, two divers had been lowered onto this trawler by the French Cape Verde Forces helicopter.



- **Failure by the master of the "JOOLA"**  
Abandonment drills never organised, no distress alert sent while the captain was on the bridge
- **Shortcomings of the Merchant Navy Department's annual inspection commission**  
During the visit on 23 September, the Commission did not identify the defective condition of the liferafts and the fact that they were secured by tapes together and lashed to the ship.
- **Failure by the Chairman of the Commission for the annual inspection of the Merchant Navy**  
No summons of the Telecommunications Inspector, who should have checked the condition of the JOOLA's communications equipment, to the technical visit on 23 September.
- **The official structures were late in sounding the alarm and launching rescue operations.**
- **Rescue operations by these same structures were poorly organised and coordinated.**



- **Failure of the Senegalese Navy's Operations Coordination Centre (CCO)**
  - Since 1996, no permanent radio watch between the "JOOLA" and the CCO.
  - Sending a simple « navigational warning » to Dakar-Radio, when it should instead have sent a MAYDAY relay message.
  
- **Failures regarding the deployment of military resources**
  - No decision to require take off of the Bréguet Atlantique of the French Forces in Cape Verde on alert.
  - Dispatching of divers via Air Force aircraft was delayed
  - No meeting between Navy and Air Force on 27 Sept. to coordinate the rescue.
  - No SAR exercises organised since the Senegalese Navy had been in charge of JOOLA although they were scheduled to take place once a quarter).

- Neither the "JOOLA" nor the Senegalese coast stations (Dakar Radio and the Centre de Coordination des Opérations de la Marine) were equipped as required by the GMDSS. As a reminder: the GMDSS came into force in 1999.
- If only the JOOLA had been equipped with a full GMDSS station, some of the equipment would only have been useful, in particular the VHF installations, when communicating with other ships.
- But some of the devices required could have proved useful by triggering a medium - or long-range - alert. These include:
  - Two installations capable of transmitting distress alerts from the bridge. (Depending on the navigation zone, either both on VHF, or one on VHF and the second on MF).
  - A satellite EPIRB that can be easily released by hand and carried by a single person aboard a lifeboat or liferaft, and that can be released freely if the vessel sinks and transmits the distress alert automatically when it floats.
  - Three portable VHF sets.
  - In addition, it was mandatory to have the capability to receive, via the NAVTEX or INMARSAT services, maritime safety information messages and in particular weather reports. The master of JOOLA would have thus been informed by the bulletins of 26 September of the likelihood of strong gusts of wind accompanying the storms.

- Creation of a regional Search and Rescue Centre as soon as possible
- Revision of decree no. 68.1274 of 11 December 1968 on the organisation of the search and rescue service in its part relating to maritime rescue to reinforce the rescue and assistance system for ships in distress.

## 2nd example: Rescue of the crew of the "GRANDE AMERICA" on 10 March 2019 in the Bay of Biscay



## "GRANDE AMERICA - the ship



IMO: **9130937**

Name: **GRANDE AMERICA**

Vessel Type : **Ro-Ro/Container Carrier**

Call Sign: **IBPG**

Flag: **Italy [IT]**

Gross tonnage: **56642**

Overall length x Overall width: **213.88 x 32.25 m**

Year of construction: **1997**

Crew: **26**

Passengers: **1**

Ship in transit from Hamburg to Casablanca

Weather conditions: very rough seas (waves 4-6 m) good visibility

One of Grimaldi's 10 Grande Africa class vessels, the "GRANDE AMERICA" was designed to carry a wide range of cargoes, from containers and heavy goods to vehicles and rolling stock. She could carry up to 2,500 cars and 800 TEU (standard container size).

## GRANDE AMERICA: The rescue operation

On 10 March 2019, at around 08:00pm, MRCC Etel (France) was informed by MRCC Rome of the situation on board the Italian vessel **Grande America**. The vessel had declared a fire on board and was stopped. The fire started in the forward garage of the vessel.

The air and sea rescue resources on standby are ready to intervene as quickly as possible. **The British frigate HMS "ARGYLL" is being diverted to provide assistance to the Grande America, if necessary.**



FALCON 50



CAÏMAN NH90



UK frigate HMS « ARGYLL »

## GRANDE AMERICA: SAR capabilities of French assets - FALCON 50

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**French Navy aircraft**

**Crew: 5**

**Range: 1,300 nautical miles**

**Autonomy of 6.5 hours at 370 knots.**

**Carrying capacity: 8 SAR chains, each containing a 25-seater raft.**

**Radar and FLIR equipment**

**INMARSAT communication**

# GRANDE AMERICA: SAR capabilities of French resources deployed - CAÏMAN helicopter

**Range : 450 Nm**

**Autonomy depending on conveyor tanks: 3 hours / 5 hours with additional fuel tanks**

**Maximum speed: 300 km/h**

**Alert at 1 hour during the day, 2 hours at night**

**Crew: 4 (a pilot, a tactician, a winch operator and a diver)**

**20 pax**





## GRANDE AMERICA: The rescue operation (cont.)

Initially, "GRANDE AMERICA" announced that the fire was under control and intention to proceed to La Coruña (Spain).

Shortly before midnight, the master reported a deteriorating situation on board. The fire had broken out again: **several containers were on fire** and the ship was no longer proceeding.

The French Maritime Prefect ordered the Emergency Towing Vessel "ABEILLE BOURBON" to reach the "GRANDE AMERICA".

The "ABEILLE BOURBON" will arrive on scene at 10:00am the following day.



## GRANDE AMERICA: The rescue operation (cont.)

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Shortly after 02:00am, the master of the Grande America decided that the crew should abandon ship in a unique lifeboat. The MRCC immediately coordinated the rescue of the 27 people on board to the HMS "ARGYLL".



## GRANDE AMERICA: The rescue operation (cont.)

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A Falcon 50 maritime surveillance aircraft from the French Navy took off from the Lann-Bihoué naval air base to fly to the area and help with the rescue operation.



## GRANDE AMERICA: The rescue operation (cont.)

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**At around 04:00, the Royal Navy frigate HMS "ARGYL" picked up the 27 people on board.  
No one was injured.**

**The burning vessel sank the following afternoon after drifting in the wind.**

## GRANDE AMERICA: The rescue operation (cont.)

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Please note that the stowage height of the lifeboat used is approximately 25 m.



## GRANDE AMERICA: The rescue operation (cont.)

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**11 March: Transfer of the crew of the "GRANDE AMERICA" from HMS "ARGYLL" to the Navy supply vessel "ARGONAUTE" near Brest. Crew brought ashore by "ARGONAUTE" with medical care.**



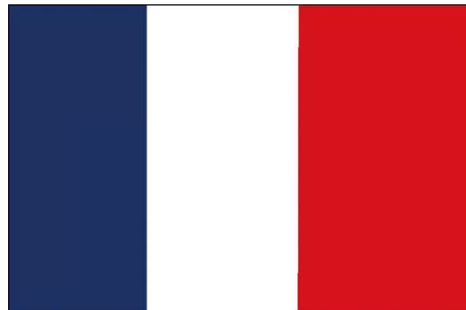
# GRANDE AMERICA: International cooperation

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MRCC ROME



MRCC ETEL



HMS « ARGYLL »



JRCC FAREHAM



The "GRANDE AMERICA" incident also involved an operation to assist a vessel in difficulty and then to combat pollution.

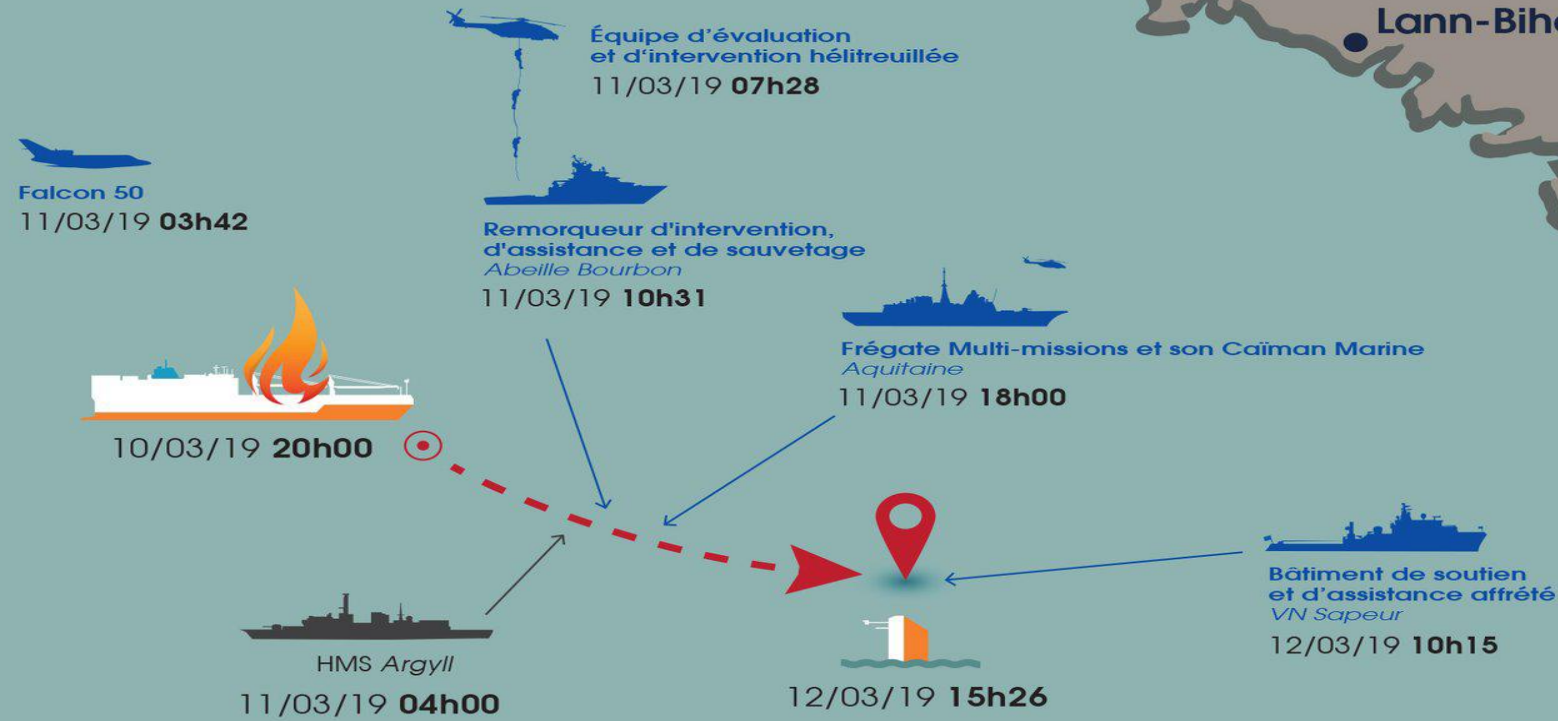


**The burning vessel sank at 3.26pm on the afternoon of 12 March after drifting in the wind.  
Pollution ensued.**



# NAUFRAGE EN ATLANTIQUE

Le 10 mars 2019 en soirée, un incendie s'est déclaré à bord du navire conteneurs-roulier *Grande America* qui se trouvait à 140 Nautiques de la pointe de Penmarc'h (29). Les 26 membres d'équipage et le passager ont été recueillis par la frégate britannique HMS *Argyll* puis transférés à Brest par le BSAA *Argonaute*. Le dispositif ORSEC maritime de niveau 3 est aussitôt activé. Le 12 mars, à 15h26, le navire a coulé par 4600 mètres de fond à environ 180 Nautiques (333 km) à l'ouest des côtes françaises. La FREMM *Aquitaine* et le BSAA *VN Sapeur* continuent d'assurer la sécurité de la navigation sur zone.



**NOM** : *Grande America*  
**NATIONALITÉ** : Italienne  
**TYPE** : Porte-conteneurs-roulier  
**DIMENSIONS** : 213m de long et 32m de large, 27 965 tonnes  
**PROVENANCE** : Hambourg  
**DESTINATION** : Casablanca

Thank you for your attention