The Independent Fact Group

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Subject	32 years since the sinking of M/V Estonia
Document type	Memorial statement
Issued by	The Independent Fact Group (IFG)
Date	27 September 2026
Version	1.0

32 years since the sinking of M/V Estonia

In memory of those who died, the survivors, and all their loved ones.

On the night of 27 September 1994, M/V Estonia sank. 852 people lost their lives. Thirty-two years later, that loss remains present for their families and for those who survived. This day belongs first and foremost to them.

For IFG, the passage of time has never answered an unanswered question. We continue to search, examine and test the material that may advance our understanding of the disaster. We will not give up because the work is difficult or because 32 years have passed. We will not let the work fall silent simply because so much time has gone by.

Björn Stenberg and Bertil

IFG was founded by Björn Stenberg, whose brother Bertil died aboard Estonia. For Björn, the search for clarity was also an expression of care for his brother. He wanted to understand what had happened and whether the answers given could withstand scrutiny of the evidence. That determination became a foundation of IFG's work.

Björn died in 2009. We remember him with gratitude and respect, alongside Bertil and all the others whose lives were lost. The work he began continues.

Why we continue

Scrutinising an accident investigation demands care, even when we believe it has shortcomings. Witness accounts, drawings, films, damage, calculations and later investigations must be weighed against one another. A conclusion must be traceable to its evidence. Where the evidence is insufficient, we must say so, including when assessing our own hypotheses.

Critical scrutiny is part of an open society. The conclusions of public authorities must be open to factual, public examination. That right matters especially when a disaster has taken so many lives and families have sought answers for decades.

We cannot promise an answer that we cannot yet substantiate. We promise to keep asking questions, to make the evidence understandable, and to correct ourselves when the facts require it.

In memory of Björn and Bertil Stenberg. In memory of all 852 who died. And with respect for the survivors and those still waiting for answers.

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