

The Independent Fact Group

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Subject: In memory of Björn Stenberg

Type: Memory

By: The Independent Fact Group
www.factgroup.uk

Status: In memory

Date: 2020-11-14

Version: English



Björn Stenberg was born the 4th of May 1958 and died sudden and tragically the 20th of January 2008.

Björn Stenberg lost his brother Bertil in the sinking of MV Estonia. Already the morning after the shipwreck Björn understood that everything was not right. Not only was he amazed at the incredible incompetence during the rescue operation but also that it continued to characterize the aftermath of the catastrophe. Björn did not accept this and he really did something about it.

From this tragic morning on September 28 1994, Björn constantly questioned the actions of the authorities, constantly asked the relevant questions and constantly drew the right conclusions when the parties involved continued to show a total lack of competence. This laid the foundation for the international commitment regarding the discoveries of the cover-up of the Estonia shipwreck, which Björn was one of the initiators of investigating professionally.

In 1998, Björn Stenberg together with a number of other committed critics, formed The Independent Fact Group - an investigative group which for a coming 10-year period was undoubtedly the most prominent investigative organization of the Estonia shipwreck acting without any connection to authorities, shipyards or other organizations.

The Fact Group adopted a simple but ingenious method description which constituted a cornerstone in its work. Björn Stenberg was one of the leaders in the group in terms of methodology and was also invaluable when it came to critic examination of his own group's conclusions. Björn loved to be "the devil's advocate" and not infrequently he pushed the internal criticism in the examination of conclusions of the group's reports to the extreme, so that the group would never risk presenting any incorrect facts.

Björn was also a fantastic tactician whose commitment spurred the group's members to deliver and present magnificent data for fact reports regarding MV Estonia.

During these 10 years Björn and the Fact Group came to participate in maritime safety-promoting activities, seminars and meetings around the world. With great power and influence, he was able to contribute to a more positive development of maritime safety thinking in many camps, while a number of other activities, such as inspection of passenger ships increased the pressure on a proper procedure regarding compliance with international maritime safety conventions.

Through the very extensive work within the Independent Fact Group, Björn was finally able to accept the facts for his own part and also within the group, all thanks to the knowledge what really happened this fateful night.

The Independent Fact Group
Troon, Scotland 14th of November 2020