

# The Independent Fact Group

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**Subject:** Lies and truths about the salvage of MV Estonia's MOB rescue boat, and further on, The Independent Factgroup present their final investigation report regarding the MOB boat.

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## **Methodology:**

In the course of this task, we have assumed that the solution of a problem is never better than the validity of the basic assumptions. As a result, we have stipulated some methodological principles, of which the following are the most fundamental:

1. All scenarios must be considered to be true until the contrary is proved.
2. All observations, assumptions or statements on which a scenario is based must be considered false until the contrary is proved.

We have defined a number of criteria for concluding that an observation, assumption or statement may be considered to be true or false, and processes and routines for the route to be taken in clarifying an observation, assumption or statement. These criteria involve technical, empirical, statistical and/or semantic requirements which, if they are relevant must all be met if the observation, assumption or statement is to be classified as an objective fact.

The materials we have worked with are primarily the documents, audio recordings and films in the Swedish Accident Investigation Commission's Estonia archive, together with supplementary information from other public sources and, in addition documentation from the Meyer shipyard and its independent commission.

We have also received information from sources in Finland, which includes photo documentation, surveys and analyses, mainly concerning the status of the MOB boat during the period 1994 to 2022.

## Summary

In this report, the Independent Fact Group concludes, due to the circumstances surrounding the MV Estonia's MOB boat, that;

1. The JAIC information of the circumstance's regarding the MV Estonia MOB boat is not correct.
2. The Finnish Accident Investigation Board chairman, Kari Lehtola, did not provide correct information on 1995.03.31 when he stated that they had found all but one of the lifeboats. According to his statement, the MOB boat had "disappeared" despite being salvaged on September 29, 1994 and taken to Hanko for custody. (The interrogation recording with Margus Treu is archived with the Swedish Accident Investigation Board under the file event no. D 34: 176).
3. The MOB boat was spotted and photographed the morning of the catastrophe. It was floating upside down close to the other debris and lifeboats.
4. The survival witness Elmar Sigel states that the MOB boat was launched and used during the MV Estonia capsize and that he saw the MOB boat move away with lit lanterns without trying to save any of those in need. That information appears to be incorrect.
5. According to JAIC, Chapter 8.10 Life-saving equipment, the MOB boat was found "drifting" outside Hanko, but that information was not correct. Moreover, it was contradicted by a criminal investigation made by the National Bureau of Investigation Finland, Criminal Technological Laboratory 4.10.1999. The report states that "M/V Hylje lifted the MOB boat onboard on 29.9.1994 at 14.30 in the position Lat N 59° 16' 40'' Long E 22° 52' 12''.
6. The MOB boat was taken to Hanko, where it later was stored in the Criminal Police warehouse. No investigation of the boat was performed until 1999.
7. On The 29th of September 1999, the German Group of Experts requested further information regarding the MOB-boat in a letter to the Finish Central Criminal Police.
8. Two years after JAIC's final report was published and the JAIC Commission was dissolved, a criminal investigation was conducted on the 4th of October 1999 regarding the MOB boat.
9. The criminal investigation concerning the MOB boat states impossible and untrue facts, and therefore it is full of inaccuracies and false information.
10. There is doubt about where the MOB boat was salvaged though the information is contradictory. We conclude it was not found drifting outside Hanko according to the information in JAIC's final report. Instead, we know that it drifted upside down deep in the water, and all other lifeboats were drifting in a similar course with a speed of around one knot.
11. In 2005, the MOB boat was handed over to the Espoo Sea Rescue Association (Suomen Meripelastusseura). First, it was delivered to Lempinens shipyard in Lovisa where it was repaired. Then it was placed in the youth training of the Espoo Sea Rescue Association.
12. Our investigation shows that the criminal investigation was carried out carelessly without in-depth analyses of the actual circumstances.

## Background

MV Estonia had ten lifeboats of open type, and they were all equipped with engines and propellers. The first boat on the starboard side - lifeboat no. 1 - was a man overboard – MOB rescue boat, i.e., the emergency boat.

The MOB boat was manufactured by Oy Fiskars Ab boatyard in Turku. The production year was 1980, and MV Estonia never changed or replaced the MOB boat. The boat was marked following the regulations "ESTONIA TALLINN 748-234-095 20 PERS" and the lifeboat number "1" was marked on the port side in the bow.



Picture 1. *The MOB boat on the starboard side.*

### JAIC 3.4.2 Lifeboats and rafts

The vessel was equipped with ten motor-driven lifeboats of open type and of fiberglass construction. The five boats on the port side were approved for in total 368 people and the five on the starboard side for in total 324 people. **One of the boats on the starboard side was a man-overboard (MOB) rescue boat.** Two boats were equipped with searchlights. The boats were suspended under davits on deck 8. Embarkation was from deck 7.

### JAIC 8.10 Life-saving equipment

After the accident, lifeboats, liferafts and lifejackets from the ESTONIA drifted towards the Estonian coast in an east-south-easterly direction and were recovered by vessels and by people on shore.

One lifeboat was observed on the wreck, still attached to its davits. The other nine lifeboats were detached and have been recovered from the sea. However, only two small pieces were found from one of them. **The man-over-board boat (MOB) was found drifting outside Hanko on the Finnish coast.**

### JAIC 17.7.1 ...Lifeboats

The crew did not manage to launch any of the ten lifeboats. Nine broke loose when the vessel sank, and the tenth is still attached to its davits. The rapidly increasing list and the lack of time for organising the crew are considered to be the main reasons for this shortcoming. The lifeboats found drifting during the rescue operation had either capsized or were waterlogged.

## The JAIC investigation

During JAIC's investigation, a vast number of "interrogations" were held. Crew members were heard several times on different occasions and places. Below is a brief account of an interrogation with one of JAIC's main witnesses, 3rd engineer Margus Treu.

### Translation from the interrogation of Margus Treu at Landvetter 1995.03.31, page 12

Participants:

From Sweden: Hans Rosengren, Olle Nord, Bengt Schager.

From Finland: Kari Lehtola.

From Estonia: Enn Neidre.

Estonian is interpreted by Vello Riomar.

All statements from Margus Treu and Enn Neidre are written down as they have been interpreted into Swedish.

On page twelve, a discussion arises about Estonia's MOB lifeboat. Kari Lehtola then states that the MOB boat had disappeared.

*"Margus T: Well, there is a lifeboat then that has engines and that is at the front and it is used, for example, when you are overboard. So a lifeboat. And it is someone who has claimed that you have seen it in the water and with lighting, but I do not know that you have.*

*Bengt S: I have not encountered that task anywhere.*

*Interpreter: His name is Elmar Siegel.*

*Bengt S: Who has said soap or who has seen this or?*

*Interpreter: He claims to have seen that lifeboat in the water with lighting.*

*Interpreter: It was on starboard. It does not sound likely when starboard first came under water.*

*Kari L: All lifeboats have been found except one that has an engine. ... Everyone else I think is found but of one there is only a small piece.*

*Margus T: All lifeboats have engines.*

*Kari L: I mean what it's called in the stern, MOB boat that has disappeared. But all these ordinary, one have found them. Most at Dagö. "*

It was evident that Kari Lehtola did not provide correct information on 1995.03.31 when he stated that all but one of the lifeboats had been found, namely the MOB-boat that, according to him, had disappeared.

Remarkably, the head of the Finnish part of JAIC is constantly returning with new incorrect information. Lehtola undermines all credibility in JAIC's investigation.

## The rescue operation

Early in the morning of the 28th of September 1994, the MOB boat #1 was photographed from one of the Swedish helicopters during the rescue operation. The Swedish journalist Leif R Jansson took the photo.

The MOB boat was floating upside down and had drifted 10,6 nautical miles with an average drifting speed of 1,25 knots. It had been drifting east with other lifeboats, rafts, and debris.



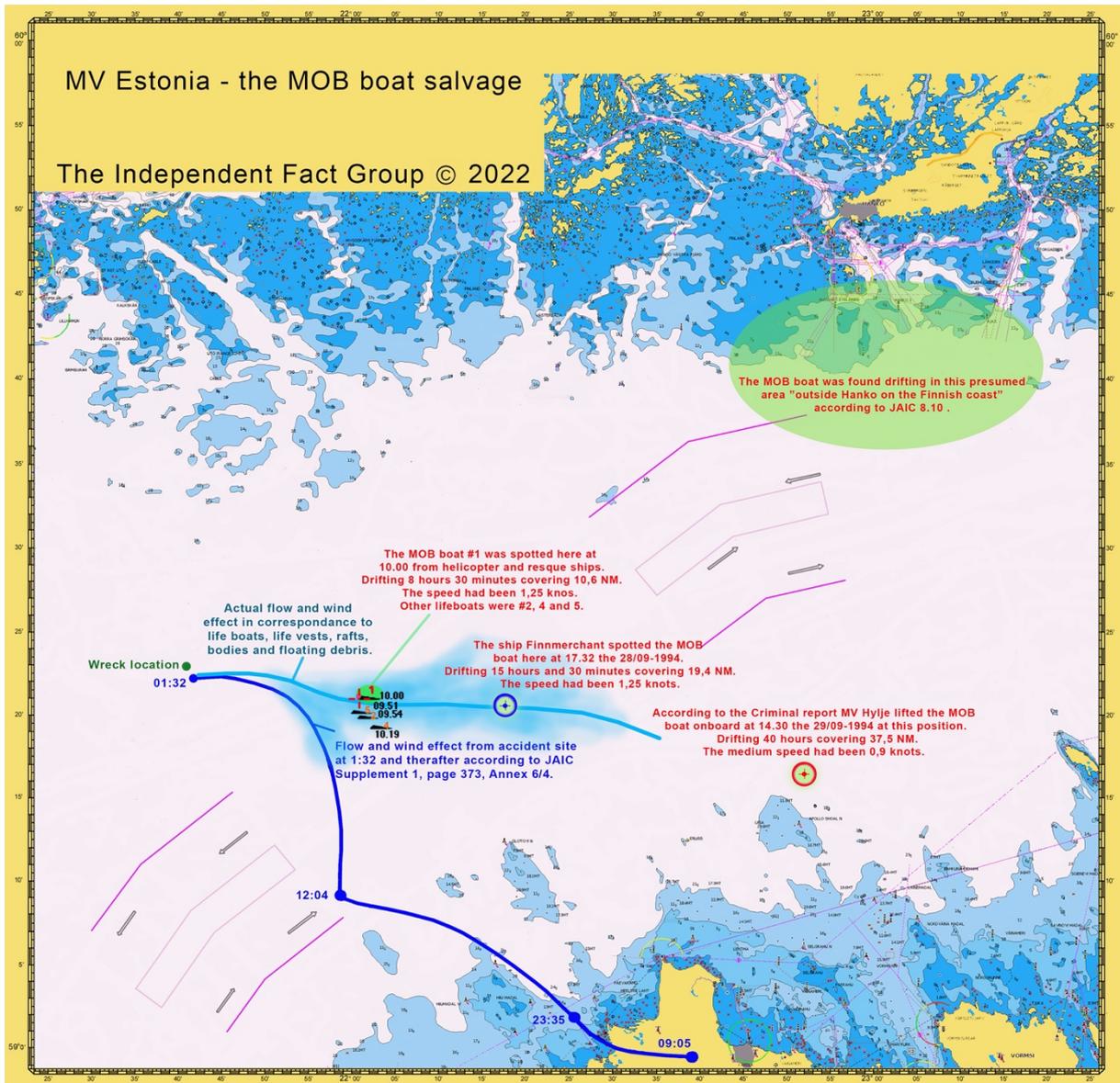
Picture 2. The MOB boat (number 1) photographed in the morning the 28<sup>th</sup> of September 1994. Photo: Leif R Jansson.

## Salvage of the MOB boat

According to JAIC report 8.10, the MOB boat was found drifting outside Hanko. However, this information was unchallenged until 4th October 1999 when the German Groups of Experts, via its representative Peter Jansson, asked for detailed information about the MOB boat.

The answer revealed that the MOB boat had been salvaged from a completely different position near the Estonian coast. This position is more than 20 nautical miles south of the JAIC alleged site.

The map below (picture 3) shows how the MOB boat drifted, where it was spotted, and where it was salvaged, according to information from the Finnish police. We also show the actual course that the objects and debris from MV Estonia followed.



Picture 3. The MOB boat drifting scenario.

### Drifting of life rafts, life vests, rescued people and victims

To further prove how debris, rafts, and bodies drifted, we compiled findings, observations, and positions during the first day after the disaster.

The life rafts were drifting fast due to the effect of catching the wind. It is also clear that lifeboats, life rafts, life jackets, and people in the water were drifting in a mainly easterly direction.

The spread results from the wind turning from southeast to east during the early hours of the morning.



But, as in so many other parts of the investigation, they contradict themselves in this respect. For example, in Supplement 402, they publish a report "The Baltic Sea Storm on 28.9.1994."

In Supplement 401, they publish another statement "Stormy night on Baltic Sea September 27-28, 1994."

In the JAIC report and the Supplements, there are hints of the stormy weather and that meteorological stations have issued storm warnings for the night, storm warnings that were withdrawn during the evening.

**Wind.**

About weather conditions at night of the shipwreck of the ferry "Estonia" we can judge by data observed on meteorological station Ristna (peninsula Kõpu, Hiiumaa), the nearest available station to the place of the shipwreck and characterising best of all the weather condition in the Northern Baltic.

Tab.1 Wind speed in **Ristna** and theoretical heights of waves in Northern Baltic

Data	Time (GMT)	Direction	Mean speed (m/s)	Gusts (m/s)	Height of waves, mean/max (m)
27.09.	11	SW	12	16	2-4/ 5
"	14	SW	12	16-17	2-4/ 5
"	17	SW	8	12-16	2-4/ 5
"	20	S, SW	8	14-15	2-4/ 5
"	23	SW	16	21-22	4-6/ 7
28.09.	02	SW	15	22-23	5-7/ 8
"	05	W	18	24-29	6-7/ 9
"	08	W	17	26	6-7/ 9
"	11	W	12	18	4-6/ 7

Picture 5. JAIC Supplement 401. Wind speed in Ristna. It is clear that the mean speed did not exceed 18 m/s, which is far from a storm (24,5 m/s).

## **The German Group of Experts (GGE) and the Criminal Investigation of the MOB boat**

During JAIC's long investigation period, 1994 – 1997, the construction yard added its expert group, The "German Group of Experts," at the beginning of February 1995. It was following a decision of the Managing Director of Jos. L. Meyer GmbH, in Papenburg.

The group mainly carried out the work from 1995 to 1996 in close cooperation with the Swedish leader of the Technical Group of the Joint Accident Investigation Commission of Estonia, Finland, and Sweden (JAIC).

The experts in GGE continued their investigation at the end of 1999 through initial contacts and questions. The investigation continued from the years 2000 to 2006.

On the 29th of September 1999, Peter Jansson sent the following telefax to the Central Criminal Police in Finland on behalf of the German Group of Experts.

*"Dear Receiver,*

*We are specialized shipping consultants. In Estonia, we are a critic of a working group set up by the German Meyer shipyard. Our assignment is to review the conclusions of the working group report by comparing it with background material.*

*As a special assignment, we have been given the task of finding out how the Estonian so-called. The MOB boat drifted after the accident.*

*We therefore most politely ask you for either a fax copy of the report prepared by the Finnish Maritime Administration, or a brief free-form fax description of the place, time and condition of the boat at the time of discovery. What was the fuel situation.*

*We appreciate your cooperation offer.*

*Best wishes*

*Peter Jansson"*

## **The Finnish National Bureau of Investigation**

On the 4th of October 1999, the National Bureau of Investigation replied with the following report:

*"National Bureau of Investigation 4.10.1999  
Criminal Technological Laboratory  
Heikki Seppänen*

*Oy Mariner's Assistance Ltd, Ab  
Peter Jansson*

*Re: Regarding the Investigations into the M/V Estonia's MOB boat*

**Lifeboat / MOB boat**

*The MOB boat from the M/V Estonia is a boat produced at the Oy Fiskars Ab boatyard in Turku. The production # is 363 001 and the year was 1980. The length is 7.48, beam 2.34 and the draught 0,99 meters.*

*The M/V Hylje has collected floating debris onboard during the rescue operations. M/V Hylje lifted the MOB boat onboard on 29.9.1994 at 14.30 in position Lat N 59° 16' 40" and Long E 22° 52' 12".*

*M/V Hylje also took an open lifeboat from the M/V Estonia in tow on 29.9.1994 at 15.10 in position N 59° 16' 10" and E 22° 51' 90". This open model lifeboat was, however, so badly damaged that it could not be lifted up. Due to the boat's damages the towage proved impossible and M/V Hylje released the open lifeboat from towage on 29.9.1994 at 15.57. Investigations showed this boat to have been M/V Estonia's lifeboat # 6.*

**Investigations**

*M/V Hylje brought the M/V Estonia's MOB boat to Hanko on 29.9.1994. During the investigations it has become clear that the MOB boat is in good condition, without hull damages, picture # 1.*

*The propeller shaft is intact and the propeller revolves freely, picture # 2.*

*The aft hook release fastening irons have torn the deck structure. Based on the damages at both hook release arrangements we find reason to assume that the said MOB boat has not been released from its hooks under controlled circumstances, but it has torn loose from its hooks in the same manner as the other lifeboats, picture # 3.*

*The engine clutch is in 'neutral' and the speed lever is in idle position.*

*The total volume of fuel tanks onboard is 186 liters.  
There were about 100 liters of fuel onboard.*

*Signed in Vantaa on October 4th, 1999  
Heikki Seppanen*

*Enclosures Pictures 1-3  
Cc. Kari Lehtola"*

*Enclosures Pictures 1-3*



*National Bureau of Investigation picture # 1*



*National Bureau of Investigation picture # 2*



*National Bureau of Investigation picture # 3*

The MOB boat is mentioned only twice in the JAIC's report. It is in chapters 3.4.2 and 8.10. What you can read is that "one of the boats on the starboard side was a man-over-board lifeboat (MOB boat)" and that the Man-overboard boat (MOB boat) was found drifting off Hanko on the Finnish coast. There is no information whatsoever about the condition and damage of the boat.

The information in October 1999 from the Finnish National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) does not correspond to the JAIC's report regarding the finding position of the MOB boat. They did not find the boat drifting outside Hanko, as stated by JAIC.

Moreover, according to NBI, the MOB boat was in good condition without hull damage. The propeller shaft was intact, as was the propeller that could rotate. The gear was neutral, and the speed lever was idle.

The Independent Fact Group's investigation of the MOB boat's damage and technical status came to a completely different conclusion, reproduced in our enclosed separate report.

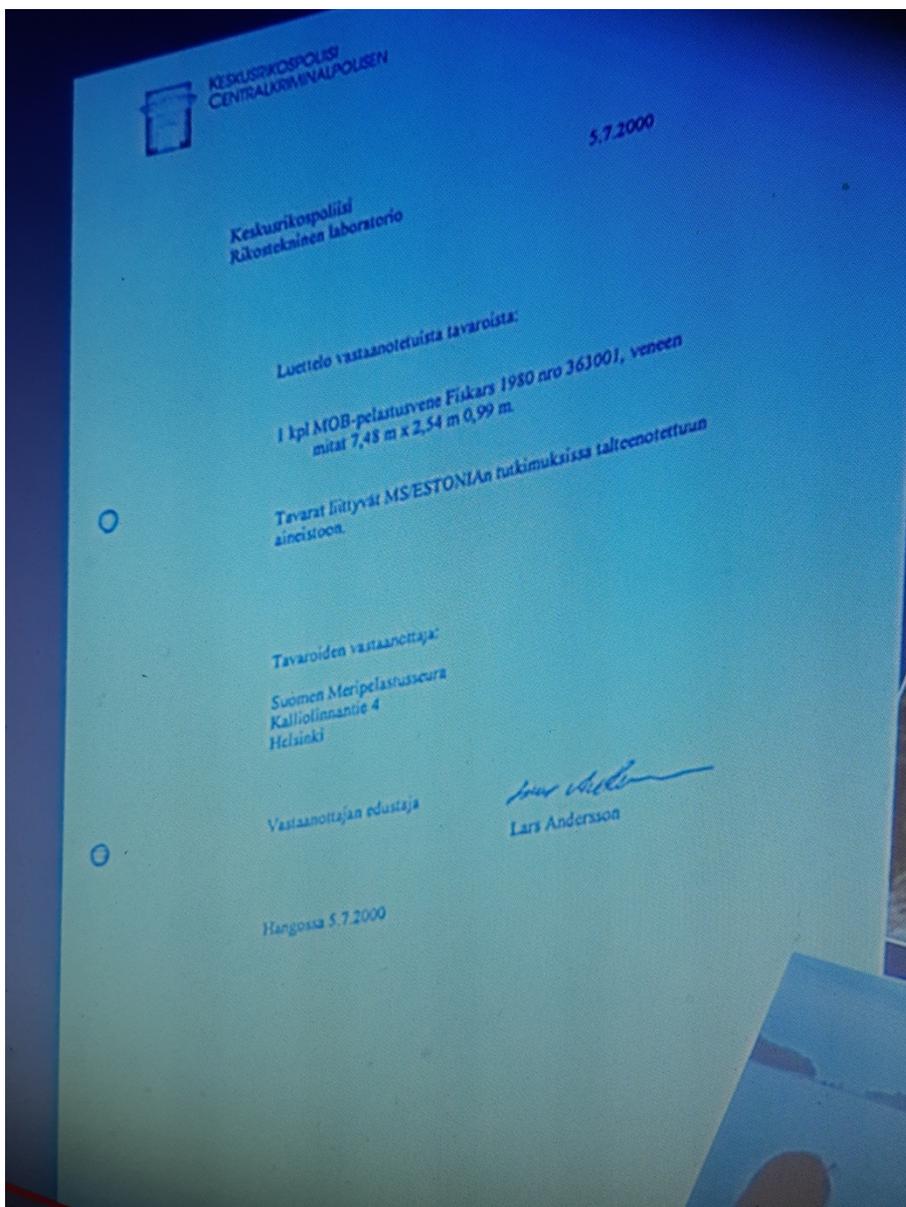
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## The Independent Fact Group's investigation of MV Estonia's MOB rescue boat damage and technical status

### New owner of the MOB boat 2000.07.05

According to a contract between the Finnish Central Criminal Police and Finnish Sea Rescue Association, the MOB boat was transferred to the association.



Damage report picture 1. The signed contract regarding the MOB boat in July 2000.

On the 5th of July 2000, the MV Estonia MOB boat was handed over to the Finnish Sea Rescue Association. It was transferred to the association from Hanko free camp after a meeting with the criminal police. The ship's inspector in the sea rescue operation (Paavo Antila) had clarified everything. The contract was signed, and the boat was fetched and transferred to Lovisa for Lempinen's boatyard, with whom an agreement on renovation was made.

When the boat was handed over, it was essentially in the same condition as when it was salvaged in 1994. However, the engine had rusted and could not be rotated.

When it was time to start the renovation, the boat attracted a lot of attention why it was hidden in the back of the hall for a while.

## **Damage**

It had a lot of damage on the outside of the deck and the port side hull. It is clear it had been torn loose from its place on the ship. The front and aft decks were torn by the suspension mechanism, the windscreen and rudder were broken, the port railing was completely deformed. The rudder shaft was skewed and stuck in one direction. The propeller cover was clamped. The engine was water-filled and rusted.

The police had drilled holes in the tanks to check how much fuel was left. The boat was upside down when they found it, also confirmed by pictures in Ilta Sanomat and other newspapers.

The boat had severe damage, and the investigation of the boat showed the present status:

1. Major damage to the deck, the entire port side above the hull with paint residue from MV Estonia,
2. The port side above the waterline had significant damage,
3. In the stern above the waterline was a crevice with holes through the hull (below the lower rubber strip),
4. The davits had torn the fore and aft decks for suspension,
5. The windshield was broken,
6. The roof of the front cab had damage, a large broken crack,
7. The port lantern was broken, and the starboard lantern was missing,
8. The lighting mast only had the deck bracket left,
9. The engine control was broken,
10. The steering wheel was broken. Only ¼-part had no damage,
11. Port railing was utterly deformed,
12. The rudder was broken, had been pushed upwards, and caused severe damage. The rudder could not be turned,
13. The rudder shaft was skewed on the inside of the hull and had got stuck in a starboard direction,
14. The propeller cover was jammed,
15. After removing the propeller cover, the propeller could be moved slightly,
16. The engine, a 4-cylinder Ford industrial engine of about 65hp, was water-filled and had rusted, so it was stuck,
17. The police had drilled holes in the tanks to check how much fuel was left.



Damage report picture 2. *The MOB boat at the Hanko free camp 2000.07.05. Photo: Lars Andersson.*



Damage report picture 3. *Crane lifting the MOB boat at the Hanko free camp. Note damage in hull, scratches and color marks from MV Estonia bottom blue antifouling color. Severe damage on the railing and windscreen. The roof of the front cab was cracked. Photo: Lars Andersson.*



Damage report picture 4. *The starboard side lantern was missing. Photo: Lars Andersson.*



Damage report picture 5. *The stern with blue antifouling color on the port side and an almost horizontal crack in the middle-upper part of the hull. A number of holes and cracks in the aft port side of the hull. The propeller cover was jammed. Severe damage on the port side railing. Photo: Lars Andersson.*



Damage report picture 6. A number of minor scratches on the starboard white painted hull. Photo: Lars Andersson.



Damage report picture 7. A hole in the orange painted hull just aft the marking "7.48 m." The lighting mast only had the deck bracket left. Photo: Lars Andersson.

**The Fact Group damage report commentary and conclusion:**

- The damage to the MOB boat was considerably more extensive than what was stated by JAIC.
- JAIC stated an incorrect site where the MOB boat would have been salvaged.
- The criminal investigation carried out in 1999 was both careless, and summary performed and omitted essential information and a correct description of the boat's damage.

The conclusion is that it has led to the incorrect spread of rumors, which in turn contributes to complicating research into the real cause of the sinking.

The Independent Fact Group  
Troon, Scotland 4th of Mars 2022

## The renovation and the fate of the boat thereafter

There was a lot of fiberglass work done, and a new engine (Caterpillar 86 hp) was installed as new steering with rudder shaft. Finally, the boat was ready for the 2002 season at the Finnish Sea Rescue Association's training center at Boistö, where it came to be used very little.

The boat was renovated to top condition, and new equipment for navigation and safety was installed. In addition, the newly installed engine contributed to a safer life rescue boat.



Picture 6. *The MOB boat after renovation in Boistö harbor. Photo: Lars Andersson.*



Picture 7. *The MOB boat after renovation in Boistö harbor. Photo: Lars Andersson.*



Picture 8. *The MOB boat after renovation in Boistö harbor. Photo: Lars Andersson.*



Picture 9. *The MOB boat after renovation in Boistö harbor. Photo: Lars Andersson.*



Picture 10. *The MOB boat after renovation in Boistö harbor. Photo: Lars Andersson.*

## Espoo Sea Rescue Association

In 2005 the MOB boat was moved to the Espoo Sea Rescue Association as a boat for the younger ones to train at sea. It was in hard use between 2005 and 2012 and was used 608 hours. As an example, during 2010 it was used for assistance of six persons in distress and three vessels.



Picture 11. The MOB boat in winter camp at Espoo Sea Rescue Association.



Picture 12. The MOB boat and the statistics over the life cycle of ships at Espoo Sea Rescue Association.

The MOB boat was later transferred to the Forum Marinum museum in Turku.

## Lifting the Estonia MOB boat at Forum Marinum Maritime Center

Saturday 28.9.2019

25 years have passed since the tragic car ferry accident in Estonia. The Forum Marinum Maritime Center honors the memory of the events by highlighting the Estonian MOB (Man Over Board) boat from the museum's collections. The boat, which was previously stored, is now out, like a few other ships presented in the yard of the Marine Center.



Picture 13. The MOB boat, honored at the Forum Marinum Maritime Center. Photo: FMMC.

### The MV Estonia was discussed on Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> of October 2019.

In a seminar organized by Forum Marinum, the topics of the day were related not only to the Estonian disaster but also to maritime accidents in general, the history of maritime rescue, and the development of maritime safety. Among the speakers was: Esa Mäkelä, who in the autumn of 1994 led the Estonian rescue operation at sea as the commander of Silja Europa. The seminar can be viewed at the following link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z8wytjkJIUg>

In a follow-up to all the strange tours surrounding MV Estonia's sinking, this article was published in Svenska Yle. It is specifically about the MOB boat, and there Tuomo Karppinen (former JAIC member) states that he inspected the boat. In doing so, it is also clear that Karppinen must have been aware of the extensive damage concealed in JAIC's final report.

## MOB-båten i Åbo

Ett annat fel i haverikommissionens rapport som orsakat en hel del mytbildning gäller man överbord-båten som nu står utanför museet Forum Marinum i Åbo hamn.

En skylt påstår att tre besättningsmän omkom när de försökte sjösätta båten medan Estonia sjönk. Allt tyder på att det här är en urban legend. Inga vittnen har berättat om saken.

"Jag har aldrig hört talas om detta. Men jag inspekterade MOB-båten själv och jag kan intyga att den inte såg ut att ha använts", skriver Tuomo Karppinen.



Mytomspunnen MOB-båt från Estonia står utanför Forum Marinum i Åbo. Bild: Yle/Taisto Lapila

Konspirationsteorier gör gällande att befälspersoner flydde från Estonia med MOB-båten, blev upplockade utanför Hangö där båten enligt haverikommissionen hittades drivande och tom. Det här stöds av att haverikommissionen säger att det var där den plockades upp.

Men två år efter slutrapporten dök plötsligt en polisrapport från Centralkriminalen upp. Där citeras loggboken från oljebekämpningsfartyget Hylje. Där framgår det att en tom livbåt (det talas inte om vilken typ) hade hittats och bärgats 68 km öster om vrakplatsen.

Allt tyder på att MOB-båten sjunkit med Estonia och sedan slitit sig och flutit upp till ytan. Det syntes heller inga tecken på att någon kört med båten, står det i polisrapporten. Förutom att bensintanken som rymde 186 liter var nästan halvtom. Men frågan kvarstår: varför dök det upp en polisrapport fem år efter olyckan, som flyttade haverikommissionens fyndplats hela 50 km?

### **The MOB boat in Turku**

Another error in the Accident Investigation Board's report, which has caused a great deal of myth-making, concerns the man overboard boat that now stands outside the Forum Marinum Museum in the port of Turku.

A sign on the boat states that three crew members died when they tried to launch the boat while Estonia sank. All indications are that this is an urban legend. No witnesses have told the matter.

"I have never heard of this. But I inspected the MOB boat myself and I can certify that it did not appear to have been used," writes Tuomo Karppinen.



Mythical MOB boat from Estonia stands outside Forum Marinum in Turku. Photo: Yle / Taisto Lapila

Conspiracy theories claim that officers fled Estonia with the MOB boat, were picked up outside Hanko where, according to the Accident Investigation Board, the boat was found drifting and empty. This is supported by the Accident Investigation Board's statement that this was where it was picked up.

But two years after the final report was published, a police report from the Central Criminal Investigation Department suddenly appeared. The logbook from the oil-fighting vessel Hylje is quoted there. It appears that an empty lifeboat (it is not said what type) had been found and salvaged 68 km east of the wreck site.

All indications are that the MOB boat sank with Estonia and then tore and floated to the surface. There were also no signs that anyone was driving the boat, the police report states. Except that the gas tank that held 186 liters was almost half empty. But the question remains: why did a police report appear five years after the accident, which moved the salvage position 50 km?

### **MV Estonia's MOB boat today**

The boat, which in 2002 had been renovated to top condition, has not been maintained and is in poor condition. It is stored in Forum Marinum's repository and is not exhibited to the public.



Picture 14. *The stored MOB boat at Forum Marinum Maritime Center, front deck view. Photo: FMCC.*



Picture 14. *The stored MOB boat, front starboard side. Photo: FMMC.*



Picture 15. *The stored MOB boat, front hull view. Photo: FMMC.*



Picture 16. The stored MOB boat. The identity marking during its time at the Finnish Sea Rescue Association. Photo: FMMC.



Picture 17. The stored MOB boat. The boat's cockpit, view to the stern. Photo: FMMC.



Picture 18. *The stored MOB boat. View to the stern port side. Photo: FMMC.*

In appearance, the boat has decayed to a condition that is almost similar to the condition it was in before the sinking.

### **The Fact Group commentary and report conclusion:**

We find, once again, that the JAIC investigation was carried out unprofessionally. As a result, they could not prove the sinking scenario, nor were they able to find and carry out the easiest tasks like the circumstances of the MOB boat.

The conclusion is that it has led to the incorrect spread of rumors, which contributes to complicating research into the real cause of the sinking.

We have maintained our view for 24 years and call for an International Independent Investigation into the sinking without the involvement of Sweden, Finland, or the flag state of Estonia.

### DEDICATION

We dedicate the report to all those who lost their lives in the shipwreck and to all those that still, 28 years after the tragedy, struggle to find the truth.

If MV Estonia had been seaworthy many of the more than 850 persons who lost their lives would have had a chance to survive no matter what caused the sinking.

The Independent Fact Group  
Troon, Scotland 11th of April 2022