

4834 Wreck Report No. 14745

WRECK SECTION REPORT OF TOTAL LOSS, CASUALTY, &c.

No. 42234 in R.B. Wreck Book, p. 13/58 Date of writing this report 31st March, 19 58.

Ship's Name m.s. "SEISTAN" of London Tons Gross 7440 Net 4334

Built at S. Shields When 1957 7 Casualty notice sent to Owner 24.3.58. Owner's reply 25.3.58.

Strick Line Ltd.
F.C. Strick & Co., Ltd.
12-20, Camomile Street, London, E.C.3.

WRECK SECTION No 877

Classification details

*100A1	*LMC N7,57
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	ts 7,57 CL

of Casualty 19th February, 1958.

s of Casualty

Exploded and sank off Bahrein Island while discharging part cargo of commercial explosives following a fire which was thought to be under control.

The Owners concur.

SOURCE OF INFORMATION

SEISTAN.—London, Feb. 17.—British motor vessel Seistan, Liverpool for Khorramshahr, reported this morning: Fire in explosives magazine, steam smothering in operation. Proceeding Bahrein, then attempt extinguish fire; estimated time of arrival 6 a.m., Feb. 18.

SEISTAN.—Bahrein, Feb. 18.—Master of British motor vessel Seistan reports fire in explosives magazine and calling Bahrein for shifting cargo. Fire understood still smouldering but under control as master states fire brigade assistance not required. (Later) Seistan anchored two miles east of South Sitra Beacon at 1 30 a.m. to-day. Fire understood still smouldering and to be among gelatine, but detonators removed. (See issue of Feb. 18.)

Bahrein, Feb. 18.—Motor vessel Seistan anchored 2 miles E. of South Sitra Beacon at 1 30 a.m. to-day. Fire understood still alight or smouldering but steam hampers determination of exact position, believed to be amongst 140 tons of gelatine. Master advises detonators removed. — Lloyd's Agents per Salvage Association.

Bahrein, Feb. 18.—Motor vessel Seistan: Fire now understood to be in No. 5 lower hold and apparently under control. No casualties and believed no danger to vessel.

Bahrein, Feb. 18.—Motor vessel Seistan: Surveyor reports fire apparently under control. No visible fire in No. 5 'tween deck. Steam and water now being applied to No. 5 lower hold. Arranging discharge of explosive and structural material to clear 'tween deck hatch with view to locating seat of fire.—Lloyd's Agents per Salvage Association.

SEISTAN.—Bahrein, Feb. 19.—Motor vessel Seistan, present position: Half explosives discharged, amounting to approximately 80 tons, but work ceased on account of smoke and fumes. Hatch battened down and steam-smothering resumed. Should necessity to flood hold arise, provisional beaching arrangements made but consider this eventuality unlikely.—Lloyd's Agents per Salvage Association. (See issue of Feb. 19.)

Bahrein, Feb. 19.—Motor vessel Seistan reported exploded and sunk by stern. Search for survivors instituted.

P.T.O.

m/m 1968

Suggested Record SUNK BY FIRE & EXPLOSION 2,58

of Committee TUESDAY - 1 APR 1958

Committee's Minute Sunk by fire & explosion 2.58

SEISTAN.—Bahrein, Feb. 20.—Motor vessel Seistan: Serious explosion on board and vessel feared total loss. Feared heavy loss of life. (See issue of Feb. 20.)

Bahrein, Feb. 19.—Motor vessel Seistan blew up and sank here to-night. About half her cargo of commercial explosives had been unloaded. A harbour official said later that the crew were fighting a fire on board the Seistan as she lay at anchor, when a terrific explosion threw flames 300 ft. in the air. A fleet of small boats went to the rescue. Seriously injured survivors were taken to the Government hospital. Two hours after the explosion, the Seistan sank in shallow water with her superstructure a mass of flames. —Reuter.

Bahrein, Feb. 20.—Motor vessel Seistan exploded at 9 35 p.m. on Feb. 19, settled by stern and on fire. Survivors so far: British: Robertson, Evans, Jones, Jones' wife, Jones' child, Palmer, Kemp, Brown, Tong Ling Tong (Chinese), minor injuries, Parker, Dawson, Alcock, seriously ill; total 12, missing six. Indian: Mohamed Ismail, Shaikh Hamza, Ramchand Faquir, minor injuries, Moosaahmed Kutty and two others seriously injured, Dacosta, unhurt; total seven, missing 44. Small tug alongside at time of explosion also sunk, five crew missing. Search for survivors continues.

Bahrein, Feb. 20.—Fifty people were to-day reported to have been killed when the British motor vessel Seistan blew up and sank here last night. A spokesman for the Bahrein agents said that the death toll, given by officials, was subject to confirmation. The dead included four of the crew of seven of the Bahrein tug SUHAIL, which was alongside the Seistan when the explosion occurred. The Seistan lay partly submerged in shallow water this morning. She was still smouldering. —Exchange Telegraph Company.

Bahrein, Feb. 20.—A British United Press correspondent who flew over the bulk of the motor vessel Seistan to-day reported: "The vessel is lying smouldering in shallow water about two miles from the south end of the Sitra Oil Company's wharf. The bows apparently have not been damaged by the explosion but the stern is a tangled mess of metal." —British United Press.

London, Feb. 20.—Messrs. Frank C. Strick & Co., Ltd., the owners of motor vessel Seistan, announce the loss of the vessel off Bahrein Island. The Seistan left London on Jan. 27 for Persian Gulf and was carrying a general cargo, including 175 tons of commercial explosives. The explosion occurred following a fire, which broke out when the vessel was at sea on Feb. 17, and the master decided, after applying steam-smothering lines and hoses, to proceed to Bahrein, where the vessel arrived on the following day. The Seistan was carrying a crew of 66, of whom 15 were European and 51 Asian. Also travelling

were Mrs. Jones, wife of the chief officer, and her small child. There were no passengers. The following officers and crew are missing: Captain W. A. Chappell, third officer J. M. B. Blossom, third engineer C. K. Busteed, fourth engineer J. Weatherill, electrician T. M. Bell, second radio officer P. Fox and 44 Asian seamen. The 118 known survivors are being treated in Bahrein for injuries and shock. It is understood that a small tug which was alongside at the time of the explosion also sank and that five of her crew are missing. The search for survivors is continuing.

Bahrein, Feb. 20.—Motor vessel Seistan is now lying in approximately 42 ft. of water three miles east of Sitra pier, sunk by stern up to after end of superstructure. Vessel in upright position, reading 13 ft. forward. Amidship superstructure completely gutted and hull holed in way of engine-room on starboard side, Nos. 1 and 2 holds appear intact, condition of No. 3 hold after bulkhead unknown but foredeck hatch covers appear in order. Cargo on foredeck in good condition but vessel appears to be sinking slowly by the head. Foregoing is report of Register surveyor. —Lloyd's Agents per Salvage Association.

Bahrein, Feb. 20.—Motor vessel Seistan: Fire now dying down aft; forepart of vessel above water and apparently untouched by fire. —Lloyd's Agents per Salvage Association.

Bahrein, Feb. 20.—Motor vessel Seistan: Total survivors 19, little hope of further survivors.

SEISTAN.—Bahrein, Feb. 20.—Motor vessel Seistan: Handling facilities consist of adequate labour, limited barge capacity and adequate storage facilities in Customs premises, but lack of floating cranes, although possibility exists of Bahrein Petroleum Company assisting by provision of floating sheerlegs. For explosives presently in barge and detonators still on board vessel attendance of explosives expert desirable. Storage of explosives major problem, not possible to jettison as cases found to float. —Lloyd's Agents per Salvage Association. (See issue of Feb. 21.)

Bahrein, Feb. 21.—Motor vessel Seistan: Crombie and Lloyd's Register surveyor presently examining vessel but consider extremely doubtful any steps possible to avoiding aggravation of position as vessel settling in 42 ft., with possibly bilge line fracturing to Nos. 1, 2 and 3 holds and no means of preventing further entry of water. Upper works completely gutted and after hatches disintegrated by explosion and under water. Expect vessel finally will settle in 42 ft. at high water, leaving Nos. 1, 2 and 3 hatches above water at low water. No fire damage to Nos. 1, 2 and 3 holds. Engine-room flooded and holed in starboard side. What remains of after end of vessel from engine-room bulkhead resting on bottom. Detonators jettisoned and approximately 80 tons of explosives stored in barge awaiting disposal recommendations of Salvage Association's expert. Tug SUHAIL sunk in 42 ft.; prospect of refloating unlikely, doubtlessly seriously affected by explosion in view of close proximity at time of explosion. —Lloyd's Agents per Salvage Association.

Bahrein, Feb. 21.—Three of the survivors of the explosion on board motor vessel Seistan died here during the night, bringing the total death roll in the disaster to 57, it was announced to-day. The three survivors who died during the night were Indian seamen, 47 of whom are now known to have died. —Exchange Telegraph Company.

SEISTAN.—Bahrein, Feb. 21.—Motor vessel Seistan: The following is the report of Captain Crombie and Register surveyor: Position of vessel is unchanged. Accommodation amidships examined and found to be completely gutted. Holds sounded and read as follows: No. 1 eight inches, No. 2 approximately six feet, No. 3 fifteen feet at after end. Fire in port bilge space still active; arrangements made for compartment to be flooded. Draught forward 16 ft. 2 in. at 6 p.m. to-day. —Lloyd's Agents per Salvage Association. (See issue of Feb. 22.)

London, Feb. 22.—Motor vessel Seistan: Salvage vessel Salvigil sailed from Karachi on Feb. 21; anticipated arrival at Bahrein Feb. 25. —Cowanjee & Sons.

Bahrein, Feb. 22.—The death roll in the explosion on board the motor vessel Seistan rose to 58 to-day with the death of Michael Parker, the ship's fifth engineer. Another survivor, sixth engineer M. Alcock, of Chester-le-Street, Co. Durham, was reported to be seriously ill. —Reuter.

London, Feb. 23.—The following message has been received from steamer Muristan, via Portishead Radio, timed 3 p.m., Feb. 23: Motor vessel Seistan: Vessel slowly sinking by the head, still upright and stable. Two small pumps now working in No. 2 'tween decks and a third likely to be running to-morrow. No. 1 hold still dry and all entrance hatches sealed off as well as possible. Arrangements made to weld on steel plates over hold ladder access. Draught forward 26 ft. at 3 p.m., G.M.T.

SEISTAN.—Bahrein, Feb. 23.—Motor vessel Seistan: McCormick, explosives expert, condemns explosives in toto. We are arranging best means of safe disposal in consultation with him. (Later) Inspection by McCormick reveals explosives in barge G. M. 48 ex Seistan, amounting to 80 tons, deteriorated and constituting grave hazard; calculations indicate approximately four miles for possible air-blast damage. Reviewing proposal to tow barge to safer area and detonating the lot, involving destruction of barge. All shipping and local authorities and Royal Navy advised. —Lloyd's Agents per Salvage Association. (See issue of Feb. 24.)

London, Feb. 24.—The following message has been received from steamer Muristan, via Portishead Radio, dated Feb. 24: Motor vessel Seistan sank at 8 45 a.m. on Monday, Feb. 24. Fore main deck under water. Forecastle head above water. No. 1 hold still dry but bilges making water.

Bahrein, Feb. 24.—Motor vessel Seistan: No. 2 hold flooded through damaged after end of hatch over coaming. Vessel now settled entirely on bottom in about 45 ft. at high water. No. 1 lower hold leaking slowly; forecastle deck remains dry and No. 1 McGregor-type hatch intact. Weather conditions unfavourable for further examination.

SEISTAN.—Bahrein, Feb. 26.—Motor vessel Seistan: Salvage vessel Salvigil is expected to arrive at Bahrein to-day. —Lloyd's Agents per Salvage Association. (Note.—Lloyd's Form of Salvage Contract has been signed between ship-owners and Mr. Noshirwan Cowasjee, providing for salvaged cargo to be delivered to ship's agents at respective ports of destination as per manifest. See issue of Feb. 25.)

London, Feb. 26.—Motor vessel Seistan: Salvage vessel Salvigil has radioed: Delayed by strong adverse weather; expected time of arrival now midnight, Feb. 26. —Cowanjee & Sons.

SEISTAN.—Bahrein, Feb. 26.—Motor vessel Seistan: Barge (G.M. 48) and explosives safely detonated and barge completely disintegrated at noon on Feb. 26. —Lloyd's Agents per Salvage Association. (See issues of Feb. 25 and 27.)

London, Feb. 27.—Motor vessel Seistan: Salvage vessel Salvigil arrived at Bahrein at 9 p.m. on Feb. 26. Diver's inspection commences on Feb. 27. —East & West Steamship Co.

SEISTAN.—Bahrein, Feb. 28.—Boarded motor vessel Seistan on Feb. 27. Only parts above water are boat deck, upper bridge deck and long forecastle deck. All boat deck and upper bridge deck collapsed, distorted and burnt out, with after part of long bridge deck blown upwards and forward over same, constituting a tangled mass, difficult of access. All hatchways are under water, except No. 1 on forecastle deck, which intact and secure. Propose to discuss case generally with master of salvage vessel Salvigil and request him to make divers' examination with view to ascertaining especially whether any part of after body of ship remains. Salvigil arrived a.m. on Feb. 27. —Salvage Association's Special Officer. (See issue of Feb. 27.)

SEISTAN.—Bahrein, Mar. 1.—Motor vessel Seistan: Briefly discussed on board salvage vessel Salvigil with salvors, who have taken soundings, showing eight fathoms everywhere over after body of casualty; will make diver's examination shortly. Have arranged to reside on board Salvigil with view to reporting programme, progress and prospects. —Salvage Association's Special Officer. (See issue of Mar. 1.)

SEISTAN.—Bahrein, Mar. 3.—Motor vessel Seistan: Salvage Association's special officer reports: Diver's preliminary examination shows after body disintegrated from aft end of engine-room. One patch of steelwork located 300 ft. astern of wreck, sounding 5 ft. at low water; expect fuller examination in due course. Salvage steamer Salvigil positioned at port bow supplying steam; commencing discharge of No. 1 hold on Mar. 3. Upper part of forecastle 'tween deck unwetted. —Lloyd's Agents per Salvage Association. (See issue of Mar. 3.)

SEISTAN.—Bahrein, Mar. 5.—Motor vessel Seistan: Salvage Association's special officer reports: Discharging to barge from forecastle 'tween deck which freed of water by pumps, which controlling water level to just below upper deck. Naming decks according to shipbuilders' drawings. —Lloyd's Agents per Salvage Association. (See issue of Mar. 4.)

SEISTAN.—Bahrein, Mar. 10.—Motor vessel Seistan: Salvage Association's special officer reports: Forecastle 'tween deck mostly discharged to barge but operations suspended owing to adverse weather. Dutch motor vessel Alice arrived on Mar. 9, understand chartered by salvors to deliver salvaged cargo to destination. —Lloyd's Agents per Salvage Association. (See issue of Mar. 6.)

SEISTAN.—Bahrein, Mar. 12.—Motor vessel Seistan: Salvage Association's special officer reports: Weather has moderated; salvage steamer Salvigil resuming operations. Motor vessel Alice is ready to receive cargo. —Lloyd's Agents per Salvage Association. (See issue of Mar. 11.)

SEISTAN.—Bahrein, Mar. 16.—Motor vessel Seistan: Salvage Association's special officer reports: Forecastle 'tween deck discharged. Now discharging No. 1 'tween deck. Controlling water level to below second deck. —Lloyd's Agents per Salvage Association. (See issue of Mar. 14.)

SEISTAN.—Bahrein, Mar. 19.—Motor vessel Seistan: Following received from Salvage Association's special officer: No. 1 'tween deck discharged except after part. Now working lower hold and motor vessel Alice loading nearing capacity. —Lloyd's Agents per Salvage Association. (See issue of Mar. 18.)

SEISTAN.—London, Mar. 19.—The owners of motor vessel Seistan report: Every effort will be made by the salvage contractors to recover as much property as is practicable and the prospects of salvage from No. 1 hold appear to be good. The position with regard to Nos. 2 and 3 holds is at present uncertain, but we are afraid that the chances of recovery of cargo from Nos. 4 and 5 holds must be low, due to the fact that the afterpart of the vessel was virtually wrecked by the explosion. Motor vessel Alice, which is alongside, will take cargo as and when recovered and deliver it to ports of destination. (See issue of Mar. 20.)

SEISTAN.—Bahrein, Mar. 22.—Motor vessel Seistan: Motor vessel Alice sailed p.m., Mar. 21, with approximately 640 tons of cargo; estimated time of arrival at Abadan a.m., Mar. 23. —Lloyd's Agents per Salvage Association. (See issue of Mar. 21.)

SEISTAN.—Bahrein, Mar. 25.—Motor vessel Seistan: Salvage operations suspended from 10 p.m. on Mar. 24 owing to bad weather. Salvage steamer Salvigil presently bunkering. —Lloyd's Agents per Salvage Association. (See issue of Mar. 24.)