

Exxon Valdez

What Happened?

On March 24 1989, the oil tanker Exxon Valdez ran aground and leaked 237,000 to 750,000 barrels of oil into the Pacific Ocean.

Where?

The Exxon Valdez collided with Bligh Island Reef in Prince William Sound, Alaska after departing from the Valdez Trans-Alaska Pipeline terminal.



Why?

After the vessel left its pier at the marine terminal in Valdez, many changes in control of the vessel occurred.

1. An expert ship pilot, William Murphy, handed over control of the ship to a junior officer, Captain Richard H. Haddock, after arriving through the Valdez Narrows.
2. Haddock's Mate, Gary, was steering the vessel at this time and was told by Captain Haddock to change course to avoid an island.
3. The captain handed over control of the ship to a junior officer, Third Mate Gregory B. Cosentino, with personal authority to turn him back to the shipping lanes when the tanker reached a safe harbor.
4. Haddock's Mate, Gary, was then relieved by Haddock's Chief Officer, Robert S. Ragsdale, for steering of the ship.
5. For some reason, Gregory Cosentino was not able to communicate the instructions to turn back to Robert Ragsdale, and the vessel collided with Bligh Island reef and disaster struck.

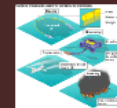
Effects

The oil spill was the first major spill in history and it was a major disaster. It had a huge effect on the environment and the economy of Alaska.



Management Strategies

The experience gained from the Exxon Valdez tragedy has helped to guide future policy related to the environment, transport of high-risk commodities by ship, and the safety standards we set for oil tankers.



Disaster response plans have also been greatly studied and improved. Faster and more efficient ways of cleaning up spills have been developed and many people are now responsible in this area. Legislation is now in place that there must be a clean-up plan for each disaster within the 24-hour delay in response after the Exxon spill.

The way in which oil tankers are constructed is changing. The Alaska government has mandated that by 2005 all tankers must be double-hulled.

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What Happened?

On March 24 1989, the oil tanker Exxon Valdez ran aground and leaked 257,000 to 750,000 barrels of oil into the Pacific Ocean

Where?

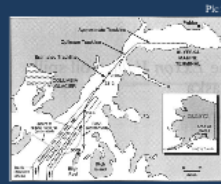
Why?

What Happened?

On March 24 1989, the oil tanker Exxon Valdez ran aground and leaked 257,000 to 750,000 barrels of oil into the Pacific Ocean

Where?

The Exxon Valdez collided with Bligh Island Reef in Prince William Sound Alaska after departing from the Valdez Trans-Alaska Pipeline terminal.



Pic 1
The Exxon Valdez's change of course away from shipping lanes



Pic 2

Why?

After the vessel left its pier at the marine terminal in Valdez, many changes in control of the vessel occurred.

1. An expert ship's pilot William Murphy handed over control of the wheelhouse to Captain Joe Hazelwood after steering through the Valdez Narrows.
2. Helmsman Harry Claar was steering the vessel at this time and was told by Captain Hazelwood to change course to avoid an iceberg.
3. The captain handed over control of the wheelhouse to Third Mate Gregory Cousins with precise instructions to turn back into the shipping lanes when the tanker reached a certain point
4. Helmsman Harry Claar was then relieved by Helmsman Robert Kagan for steering of the ship
5. For some reason Gregory Cousins was not able to communicate the instructions to turn back to Robert Kagan and the vessel collided with Bligh Island reef and disaster struck.

What Happened

On March 24 1989, the oil tanker Exxon Valdez ran aground and leaked 257,000 to 750,000 barrels of oil into the Pacific Ocean

Where?

Exxon Valdez collided with the Prince of Wales Island in the Gulf of Alaska

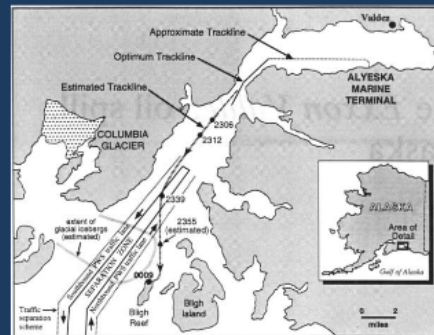
Why?

After the vessel leaked oil, the terminal in Valdez closed. The cause of the vessel accident was a combination of factors, including human error, fatigue, and inadequate training.

Where?

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Pic 1



The Exxon Valdez's change of course away from shipping lanes

Pic 2



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