

Contract: 'AMORGOS'
Client: Ship owners and insurers
Location: Taiwan



Challenge

When the 65,105 tonnes deadweight bulk carrier 'AMORGOS' ran aground in a national marinepark off the south-eastern tip of Taiwan, Noble Denton was called upon by the owners and their insurers to attend and advise on how best to salvage the ship, the cargo, and minimise any environmental risk.

A few days after the incident, the vessel broke in two with the loss of almost 1000 tonnes of heavy fuel oil. Most of the remaining oil was pumped out of the ship and removed; however, operations to remove the wreck were hampered by a series of typhoons, and had to be put on hold during the winter months.

The major environmental issues caused a political debate and ended up as a high profile case; attracting substantial international attention. More than 18 months after the ship ran aground, the Taiwan authorities finally agreed that everything possible had been done to clear the coast and remove the wreck.

Expertise provided

Noble Denton provided an experienced master mariner to advise on the salvage operation which included; site attendance and stakeholder meetings with the local environmental protection agency, national park officials, local fishing community, and the Taiwanese government - to reach consent and completion on all parts of the salvage contract.

Noble Denton took responsibility for preparing the international tender documents for the removal of the wreck, the tender evaluation, and selection of contractors including the recommendation of the contract award. The company also formed part of the team negotiating the contracts and attending operations, as the Independent Assessor, to verify compliance with the agreed scope of work for milestone payments.

The process of removing the wreck - in one piece - was close to completion when a series of typhoons struck, shattering the remains of the vessel. This change of circumstances caused a similar change in the original wreck removal contracts. Much to the frustration of all involved parties, the project had to be re-defined and contracts re-tendered - with intense pressure from the Taiwanese authorities.

All operations were hampered by the severe weather conditions in the northeast winter monsoon, followed by the frequency and severity of the typhoons that affected the area both directly and indirectly.

Outcome and benefits

- Thanks to Noble Denton's expertise the balance of the fuel oil, the cargo and the wreck of the ship were successfully removed to the satisfaction of the Taiwanese Government minimising any further environmental damage
- Noble Denton provided all the technical resources required to advise the ship owners, their underwriters, and their legal advisors throughout the highly charged political situation and was responsible for all presentations made at the highest level of Government